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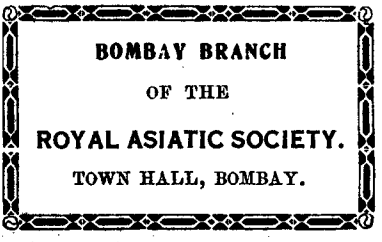

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PREFACE.

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THE first English translation of the Essays of Montaigne was executed by John Florio, Italian and French tutor to Prince Henry, son of James I., and is entitled: "The Essaies, or Morall, Politike, and Militarie Discourses of Lord Michael de Montaigne, Knight of the Noble Order of St. Michael, &c." It was first published in 1603, and was reprinted in 1613, and again in 1632. The form is a single volume folio, and it is dedicated—"To the most Royal and Renowned Majestie of the High-borne Princess Anna of Denmark, by the grace of God, Queene of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland, &c." The Essays are prefaced by a copy of verses, in Italian, addressed to the same princess; a preface to the reader, and some complimentary verses to "his deare brother and friende, Mr. John Florio," from "Samuel Daniel, one of the Gentlemen Extraordinary of her Majestie's most Royal Privie Chamber." There is also an engraved title-page, of the most ornate description.

The translation by Charles Cotton appeared somewhere about the year 1680, but I have not been able to ascertain the exact date. It is dedicated in the following terms:—

"*To the Right Honourable* GEORGE, *Marquiss, Earl, and Viscount Halifax, Baron of Eland, Lord Privy Seal, and one of his Majesty's most Honourable Privy Council.*

"My Lord,—If I have set down the only opportunity I ever had of kissing your lordship's hands amongst the happy encounters of my life, and take this occasion, so many years after, to tell you so, your lordship will not, I hope, think yourself injured by such a declaration from a man that honours you; nor condemn my ambition, when I publish to the world that I am not altogether unknown to you. Your lordship, peradventure, may have forgot a conversation so little worthy your remembrance: but the memory of your lordship's obliging fashion to me all that time, can never die with me; and though my acknowledgment arrives thus late at you, I have never left it at home when I went abroad into the best company. My lord, I cannot, I would not flatter you, I do not think your lordship capable of being flattered, neither am I inclined to do it to those that are; but I cannot forbear to say that I then received such an impression of your virtue and noble nature, as will stay with me for ever. This will either excuse the liberty I presume to take in this dedication, or, at least, make it no wonder; and I am so confident in your lordship's generosity that I assure myself you will not deny your protection to a man whose greatest public crime is that of an ill writer. A better book (if there be a better of the kind—in the original I mean) had been a present more fitly suited to your lordship's quality and merit, and to my devotion. I could hardly wish it such: but as it is, I lay it at your lordship's feet, together with, my lord, your lordship's most humble and most obedient servant,

"CHARLES COTTON."

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The dedication is followed by this letter from Lord Halifax :—

"*This for* CHARLES COTTON, *Esq., at his House at Berisford.—To be left at Ashburne in Derbyshire.*

"Sir,—I have too long delayed my thanks to you for giving me such an obliging evidence of your remembrance: that alone would have been a welcome present, but when joined with the book in the world I am the best entertained with, it raiseth a strong desire in me to be better known, where I am sure to be so much pleased. I have till now thought wit could not be translated, and do still retain so much of that opinion, that I believe it impossible, except by one whose genius cometh up to that of the author. You have the original strength of his thought, that it almost tempts a man to believe the transmigration of souls, and that his, being used to hills, is come into the moor-lands, to reward us here in England, for doing him more right than his country will afford him. He hath, by your means, mended his first edition. To transplant and make him ours is not only a valuable acquisition to us, but a just censure of the critical impertinence of those French scribblers who have taken pains to make little cavils and exceptions to lessen the reputation of this great man, whom nature hath made too big to confine him to the exactness of a studied style. He let his mind have its full flight, and sheweth, by a generous kind of negligence, that he did not write for praise, but to give the world a true picture of himself and of mankind. He scorned affected periods, or to please the mistaken reader with an empty chime of words. He hath no affection to set himself out, and dependeth wholly upon the natural force of what is his own, and the excellent application of what he borroweth.

"You see, sir, I have kindness enough for Monsieur de Montaigne to be your rival; but nobody can now pretend to be in equal competition with you: I do willingly yield it is no small matter for a man to do to a more prosperous lover; and if you will repay this piece of justice with another, pray believe that he who can translate such an author without doing him wrong, must not only make me glad but proud of being his very humble servant,

"HALIFAX."

Mr. Cotton prefaces his translation in the following terms :—

"My design in attempting this translation was to present my country with a true copy of a very brave original. How far I have succeeded in that design, is left to every one to judge; and I expect to be the more gently censured, for having myself so modest an opinion of my own performance, as to confess that the author has suffered by me as well as the former translator; though I hope, and dare affirm, the misinterpretations I shall be found guilty of are neither so numerous nor so gross. I cannot discern my own errors; it were unpardonable in me if I could, and did not mend them; but I can see his (except when we are both mistaken), and those I have corrected; but I am not so ill-natured as to shew where. In truth, both Mr. Florio and I are to be excused, where we miss the sense of the author, whose language is such, in many places, as grammar cannot reconcile, which renders it the hardest book to make a justifiable version of that I ever yet saw in that or any other language I understand; insomuch that, though I do think, and am pretty confident, I understand French as well as any man, I have yet sometimes been forced to grope at his meaning. Peradventure, the greatest critic would, in some place, have found my author abstruse enough. Yet are not these mistakes I speak of either so many, or of so great importance, as to cast any scandalous blemish upon the book, but such as few readers can discover, and they that do will, I hope, easily excuse.

"The errors of the press I must in part take upon myself, living at so remote a distance from it, and supplying it with a slubbered copy from an illiterate amanuensis, the last of which is provided against in the quires that must succeed."

With reference to this translation, the editor of a later edition remarks :—

"Mr. Cotton has, indeed, succeeded to a miracle in his translation of so celebrated a piece, and we are thoroughly persuaded that very few Frenchmen now living, were they to undertake the

task, would find themselves capable of turning Montaigne's Essays into modern French with the same spirit and justice to the author; but still our translator was not altogether infallible: he had certainly one of the most difficult books in the world to struggle with, and he complains of it himself in his preface: it is no wonder, then, that he fell into such mistakes, which we should not only have fallen into ourselves, but probably have committed a great many more, had he not first trod the rugged way before us."

The same Editor states that he has altered Mr. Cotton's prose in above three thousand places, and changed his language where fifty years had rendered it obsolete or harsh.

In 1776 appeared a new edition of Cotton's translation, "with very considerable amendments and improvements from the most accurate and elegant French edition of Peter Coste." Of this version there was a reprint in 1811. It exhibits, in many places, just corrections of Mr. Cotton, where that gentleman has obviously misapprehended his author; but it leaves a far greater number of errors untouched; while its constant "improvements," in the way of modernizing Mr. Cotton's style and language, divest his translation of nearly all its spirit and *naïveté*. I also, no doubt, subject myself, in the opinion of many persons, to the charge of presumption, for having in my turn, ventured to correct Mr. Cotton; and, indeed, I have had it roundly objected, that in any way to alter Cotton is to damage Montaigne. Having, however, read and re-read both the original work and the translation, the careful comparison I have made of the two has shewn me that not to alter Cotton, in many places, were gross injustice to Montaigne; and it is solely with this conviction that I have ventured upon the emendations here made. I most readily admit that Cotton's translation is, as a whole, a master-piece; but then there occur in it, and at no very long intervals, instances of carelessness which greatly detract from the value of the translation, by making it fall short of, and in some cases absurdly misrepresent, the author's meaning. I could easily collect enough of these instances to make a new chapter in the Curiosities of Literature, but this would be as ungracious as it is unnecessary. One or two illustrations will, I conceive, suffice to form my justification. In chapter 55, Montaigne, chatting about smells, remarks, *En la plus espesse babarie, les femmes Sycthes*, &c. "in an age of the darkest barbarism, the Scythian women," &c.; which in Cotton's version assumes the following shape: "in the wildest parts of Barbary, the Scythian women," &c. In chapter 56, Montaigne, after quoting a curious opinion set forth by Margaret de Valois, who speaks of a young man's saying his prayers in a church regularly after visiting another man's wife, as a testimonial of singular devotion, says,—*Mais ce n'est pas par ceste preuve seulement qu'on pourroit verifier que les femmes ne sont guères propres, à traicter les matières de la theologie:* "But this is not the only proof we have that women are not very fit to treat of theological matters," which Cotton thus renders:—"But it is by this proof only, that a man may conclude few men very fit to treat of theological affairs!" Again, in chapter 57, Montaigne observes, *Il me semble que, considerant la foiblesse de nostre vie et à combien d'escueils ordinaries et naturels elle est exposée, on n'en debvroit pas faire si grande part à la naissance, à l'oysifveté et à l'apprentissage,*—"Methinks, considering the frailty of life, and the many natural and ordinary wrecks to which it is exposed, we should not give so large a portion of it to idleness, either in childhood or in apprenticeship to the world,"—which Cotton reads,—"For the frailty of life, and the many natural and accidental rubs to which it is obnoxious and daily exposed, birth though noble, ought not to share so large a vacancy, and so

tedious a course of education." Book ii., chapter 2, Montaigne says, *Laissons cette autre secte* (the Stoic) *faisant expresse profession de fierté;*—"Let us leave that other sect, which makes an express profession of haughty superiority;" which Cotton converts into this sentence:—"Let us leave that other sect, and make a downright profession of fierceness." In another place, Cotton subjects his author to a sad imputation: Montaigne (book ii. chapter 6), speaking of an accident that threw him into a swoon, says that, however, *Je m'advisais de commander qu'on donnast un cheval à ma femme, que je veoyois s'empestrer et se tracasser dans le chemin, qui est montueux et malayse,* "I had so much sense about me as to order them to give a horse to my wife, who, I saw, was toiling and labouring along the road, which was a steep and uneasy one;" this Cotton renders, "I had so much sense as to order that a horse I saw trip and falter on the way, which is mountainous and uneasy, should be given to my wife," &c.

I trust that these illustrations will suffice to justify me, even with the warmest admirers of Cotton,—and he has no sincerer admirer than myself,—for the departures which I have made from his translation. They are frequent, it is true, but for the most part, only where absolutely required to restore the author's meaning. The style and spirit of Cotton's version it would be impossible to improve upon; and I have no hesitation in expresssing the opinion that, the inaccuracies in question being now carefully corrected, the present edition of the essays of Montaigne fully comes up to the definition of a good translation suggested by Lord Woodhouselee, viz.—"That in which the merit of the original work is so completely transfused into another language as to be as distinctly apprehended, and as strongly felt, by a native of the country to which that language belongs, as it is to those who speak the language of the original work." Here, indeed, as in the case of Ozell's Rabelais, the position might be even more strongly put.

THE LIFE

OF

MICHAEL DE MONTAIGNE.

Michael de Montaigne was born, as he himself tells us, "betwixt eleven and twelve o'clock in the forenoon, the last of February, 1533." He was the third son of Pierre Eyquem,[1] *Ecuyer*,[2] a brave and loyal soldier, who had seen service in the wars beyond the mountains, and had brought back with him from Italy and Spain a cultivated mind. The description which his son gives of him, is highly interesting:—"He spoke little and well, ever mixing his language with some illustration out of modern authors, especially Spanish; and amongst them Marcus Aurelius was very frequent in his mouth. His behaviour was grave, humble, and modest; he was very solicitous of neatness and decency in his person and dress, whether a-foot or on horseback. He was exceedingly punctual to his word, and of a conscience and religion tending rather towards superstition than otherwise. For a man of little stature, very strong, well proportioned, and well knit; of a pleasing countenance, inclining to brown, and very adroit in all noble exercises. I have yet in the house to be seen canes full of lead, with which, they say, he exercised his arms for throwing the bar or the stone; and shoes with leaden soles, to make him afterwards lighter for running or leaping. Of his vaulting he has left little miracles behind him; and I have seen him, when past threescore, laugh at our agilities, throw himself in his furred gown into the saddle, make the tour of a table upon his thumbs, and scarce ever mount the stairs up to his chamber without taking three or four steps at a time."

This gentleman, with some instinctive prescience apparently, of his son Michael's mental superiority, formed a wish to have him educated in a manner altogether different from the routine then gone through. Even before his birth, he consulted learned and clever men on the subject, and on these consultations and his own admirable judgment, he formed a system, as Mrs. Shelley observes, such as may in some sort be considered the basis of Rousseau's; and which shows that, however we may consider one age more enlightened than another, the natural reason of men of talent leads them to the same conclusions, whether living in an age when warfare party struggles, and the concomitant ignorance, were rife, or when philosophers set the fashion of the day: "The good father that God gave me," says he, "who has nothing of me but the acknowledgment of his bounty, but truly 'tis a very hearty one, sent me from my cradle to be brought up in a poor village of his, and there continued me all the while I was at nurse, and even longer, bringing me up to the meanest and most common way of living. This humour of

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[1] Scaliger, in the *Scaligerana Secunda*, is reported as saying that Montaigne's father was a seller of herrings,—whether in gross or detail is not specified,—but the statement is a mere falsehood. In the supplement to the *Chronique Bordelaise*, by Jean Darnal, there is an account of the various gradations by which Pierre Eyquem, *Seigneur de Montaigne*, ascended from the office of first jurat of Bordeaux, in 1530, to that of mayor, in 1533.

[2] Montaigne himself mentions the surname of Eyquem, though it does not appear that he ever made use of it himself. He says the name was still borne by a family in England; its English form was probably Egham.

his yet aimed this end, to make me familiar with those people, and that condition of men, which most need our assistance; believing that I should be more holden to regard them who extended their arms to me, than those who turned their backs upon me: and for this reason also it was that he provided me godfathers of the meanest fortune, to oblige and bind me to them."

Next came the question of education. The Greek and Latin tongues, our author's father felt, are an acquisition of great worth; but at the same time they were somewhat dearly bought under the system which, at that period, universally prevailed, and does so even now, to a great extent. The elder Montaigne's own reading being confined to works written in the living tongues, he was the more anxious that his son should be early made acquainted with the languages of Athens and Rome, and he meditated long on the received modes of introducing youth into these chief vestibules of knowledge. He was struck by the time given to, and the annoyances a child suffers in, the acquirement of the dead languages, and this had been exaggerated to him as a cause why the moderns were so inferior to the ancients in greatness of soul and wisdom. But the difficulty which he felt, the expedient he devised to obviate it, and the result of this expedient, cannot be better told than in Montaigne's own words:—

"My late father having made the most precise enquiry that any man can possibly make amongst men of the greatest learning and judgment, of an exact method of education, was by them cautioned of the inconvenience then in use, and informed that the tedious time we applied to the learning of the languages of those people who, themselves, had them for nothing, was the sole cause we could not arrive to the grandeur of soul and perfection of knowledge of the ancient Greeks and Romans: I do not, however, believe that to be the only cause; the expedient my father, however, found out for this was that, in my infancy, and before I began to speak, he committed me to the care of a German (who since died a famous physician in France), totally ignorant of our language, but very fluent and a great critic in Latin. This man, whom he had sent for out of his own country, and whom he entertained, at a very great salary, for this only end, had me continually with him. To whom there were also joined two others of the same nation, but of inferior learning, to attend me, and sometimes to relieve him; who all of them conversed with me in no other language but Latin. As to the rest of his family, it was an inviolable rule that neither himself, nor my mother, nor man, nor maid, should speak anything, in my company, but such Latin words as every one had learnt to gabble with me. It is not to be imagined how great an advantage this proved to the whole family; my father and my mother, by this means, learning Latin enough to understand it perfectly well, and to speak it to such a degree as was sufficient for any necessary use; as also those of the servants did who were most frequently with me. To be short, we did *Latin* it at such a rate that it overflowed to all the neighbouring villages, where there yet remain, and have established themselves by custom, several Latin appellations of artizans and their tools. As for myself, I was above six years of age before I understood either French or Perigordian any more than Arabic, and without art, book, grammar, or precept, whipping, or the expense of a tear, had by that time learned to speak as pure Latin as my master himself. If, for example, they were to give me a theme, after the College fashion, they gave it to others in French, but to me they gave it in the words Latin, to turn it into that which was pure and good; and Nicholas Grouchy, who wrote a book *de Comitiis Romanorum;* William Guerente, who has written a Commentary upon Aristotle; George Buchanan, that great Scotch poet, and Marc Antony Muret, whom both France and Italy have acknowledged for the best orator of his time, my domestic tutors [at college], have all of them often told me that I had in my infancy that language so very fluent and ready that they were afraid to enter into discourse with me. Buchanan, whom I since saw attending the late Mareschal de Brissac, then told me that he was about to write a Treatise of Education, the example of which he intended to take from mine, for he was then tutor to that Count de Brissac, who afterwards proved so valiant and so brave a gentleman."

"As to Greek, of which I have but little smattering, my father also designed to have taught it me by art, but in a new way, and as a sort of sport; tossing out declensions to and fro, after the manner of those who, by certain games, at tables and chess, learn geometry and arithmetic; for he, amongst other rules, had been advised to make me relish science and duty by an unforced will, and of my own voluntary motion, and to educate my soul in all liberty and delight, without any severity or constraint. Which he was an observer of to such a degree,

even of superstition, that some being of opinion it troubles and disturbs the brains of children suddenly to wake them in the morning, and to snatch them violently and over-hastily from sleep (wherein they are much more profoundly involved than we), he caused me to be waked by the sound of some musical instrument, and was never unprovided of a musician for that purpose. By which example you may judge of the rest, this alone being sufficient to recommend both the prudence and affection of so good a father; who, therefore, is not to be blamed if he did not reap the fruits answerable to so excellent a culture. Of which, two things were the cause: first, a sterile and improper soil; for though I was of a strong and healthful constitution, and of a disposition tolerably gentle and tractable, yet I was, withal, so heavy, idle, and sluggish, that they could not rouse me even to any exercise of recreation, nor get me out to play. What I saw, I saw clear enough; and under this lazy complexion nourished a bold imagination, and opinions above my age. I had a slothful wit, that would go no faster than it was led, a slow understanding, a languishing invention, and, above all, an incredible defect of memory; so that it is no wonder if, from all these, nothing considerable could be extracted. Secondly, like those who, impatient of a long and steady cure, submit to all sorts of prescriptions and receipts, the good man being extremely timorous of any way *failing* in a thing he had so wholly set his heart upon, suffered himself, at last, to be over-ruled by the common opinion, which always follows the lead of what has gone on before, like cranes; and falling in with the method of the time, having no longer about him those persons he had brought out of Italy, and who had given him his first models of education, he sent me, at six years of age, to the College of Guienne, at that time the best and most flourishing in France. And there it was not possible to add anything to the care he had to provide me the most able tutors, with all other circumstances of education, reserving also several particular rules contrary to the College practice; but so it was that, with all these precautions, it was a College still. My Latin immediately grew corrupt, and, by discontinuance, I have since lost all manner of use of it; and so this new plan of education served me to no other end than only, at my first coming, to prefer me to the first forms: for at thirteen years old, that I left the College, I had gone through my whole course, as they call it, and, in truth, without any manner of improvement, that I can honestly brag of, in all this time." The vigorous idiom of Tacitus and Seneca, which had thus become his natural language, had doubtless, through life, an influence in him greatly over the French, which he learned at a later period, as it were a foreign tongue, and which, having only just been nationalized by Francis I., was as yet anything but a *langage fait*, took the more freely, in an organ still young, the form given it by the earlier impressions. Locke, in his Treatise on Education, seems to have paid great attention to that of Montaigne; so far admitting the plan pursued with our Essayist, that, while he requires that a child should, in the first instance, learn his maternal language, he at the same time lays it strongly down that he should be provided with a master to teach him Latin also, by conversing with him in that tongue.

As a child, though of a gentle and tractable disposition, it was difficult to rouse him from his quiet, even to join in boyish games; but when he once began to play, then all the sports of his youthful companions seemed to him in the light of serious actions; and he had an entire repugnance to mix up with them any finesse or trickery, going always the straight way to play as to work, and keeping to it. Yet his mind, which seemed inactive, did not fail to form judgments upon the objects which he became acquainted with, and he digested his thoughts freely and at leisure. "Yet for all this heavy disposition of mine," says he, "my mind, when retired into itself, was not altogether idle, nor wholly deprived of solid inquiry, nor of certain and clear judgments about those objects it could comprehend, and could also without any helps digest them; but, amongst other things, I do really believe it had been totally impossible to have made it to submit by violence and force. Shall I here acquaint you," he adds, "with one faculty of my youth? I had great boldness and assurance of countenance, and to that a flexibility of voice and gesture to any part I undertook to act; for before

Alter ab undecimo tum me vix ceperat annus,

I played the chief parts in the Latin tragedies of Buchanan, Guerente, and Muret, that were acted in our college of Guienne with very great form; wherein Andreas Govеanus, our pro-

cipal, as in all other parts of his undertaking, was, without comparison, the best of that employment in France, and I was looked upon as one of his chief actors." The first taste for reading that Montaigne acquired, arose in the manner which he himself thus relates:—"The first thing that gave me any taste of books was the pleasure I took in reading the fables of Ovid's Metamorphoses; and with them I was so taken that, being but seven or eight years old, I would steal from all other diversions to read them, both by reason that this was my own natural language, the easiest book that I was acquainted with, and for the subject the most accommodated to the capacity of my age: for as for Lancelot of the Lake, Amadis of Gaul, Huon of Bourdeaux, and such trumpery, which children are most delighted with, I had never so much as heard their names, no more than I yet know what they contain; so exact was the discipline wherein I was brought up. This made me think the less of the other lessons prescribed me; and here it was infinitely to my advantage to have to do with an understanding tutor, who was wise enough to connive at this and other truantries of the same nature; for by this means I ran through Virgil's Æneids, and then Terence, and then Plautus, and some Italian comedies, allured by the pleasure of the subject; whereas had he been so foolish as to have taken me off this diversion, I do really believe I had brought nothing away from the college but a hatred of books, as almost all our young gentlemen do. But he carried himself very discreetly in that business, seeming to take no notice, and heightened my appetite by allowing me only such time for this reading as I could steal from my regular studies. For the chief things my father expected from them to whom he had delivered me for education, was affability of manners and good humour; and, to say the truth, my temper had no other vice but sloth and want of mettle. The fear was not that I should do ill, but that I should do nothing. Nobody suspected that I should be wicked, but most thought I should be useless; they foresaw idleness, but no malice in my nature; and I find it falls out accordingly. There is nothing," he adds, "like alluring the appetite and affection, otherwise you make nothing but so many asses laden with books, and by virtue of the lash give them their pocket full of learning to keep." Montaigne thus grew towards maturity, with an education more like that of our day than of his own. In the management of those first years of life, it is impossible not to see the source of much that afterwards marked him out from others. The main principle of teaching him every thing without requiring any conscious effect, or producing any sense of struggle on his part, doubtless disinclined him, as such a system always must, to encounter hardships, or engage in conflict: whence partly the indolence, though a busy indolence, of his life: hence, too, in a great degree, his reluctance to admit any views of man and duty which required him to regard life as a long battle against ignorance and weakness, in a word, against evil; and which estimate the highest and best of our thoughts and feelings as only then pure and active, when consciously toiling against the stream of self-indulgence. But as his education gave him not only ease, but also knowledge, and opened to him an inexhaustible source of mental pleasure, no wonder that he became a literary epicure, and made the gratification of every whim in speculation, and to a great degree in practice, the only aim, if so it can be called, of his existence. Thanks, however, to the sound structure of mind and body, to the sturdy manly nature which he partly inherited from his father, partly owed to his care, to the strong and honest minds and the admirable books with which he was early familiarized, there is under and around all this capricious idleness pre-eminent, clear, homely sense and apprehensiveness for truth, accompanied by sincerity and kindness of will, the natural yoke-fellows of such endowments, which give both the most sterling value and the most exquisite charm to his works.

On attaining the age of thirteen, Montaigne's taste for study, and perhaps his dislike to military discipline and vexation, were so decided that, although the son of a gentleman and soldier of the sixteenth century, he preferred the business of a law-court to that of a camp; and although the same distaste for restraint must have disinclined him for the study of the mass of custumal jurisprudence which at that time overwhelmed not only justice, but law, he went through the requisite preparations, and became, in the year 1554, one of the counsellors of the Parliament of Bordeaux, to which office he, in all probability, succeeded in place of his paternal uncle Busaguet, who died young. The functions of this office he fulfilled until the death of an elder brother gave him an independent income. He has been accused by Balzac of allowing his quality of gentleman to make him so ashamed

of having filled this situation, that he never makes mention of it; but this is a mistake, for even so late as 1563, in writing publicly to his father, he signs himself, counsellor of Bordeaux. It is true that, in the long course of so egotistical a work as the Essays, he but very rarely refers to this period of his life; but whatever may have been his feelings with regard to his own professional career, it is certain that, while engaged in it, he gained, and through life retained, a bitter and scornful disgust at the mass of arbitrary pedantries and cruel wrongs involved in the system which then regulated all the social interests of his countrymen. Notwithstanding the ordonnance of Francis I., in 1539, by which all public acts were ordered to be drawn up in French, these acts continued, in Gascony, to be written in Latin. Montaigne protested against this practice:—"What can be more strange," he observes, "than to see a people obliged to obey and pay a reverence to laws they never heard of, and to be bound in all their affairs, both private and public, as marriages, donations, wills, sales, and purchases, to rules they cannot possibly know, being neither writ nor published in their own language, and of which they have, of necessity, to purchase both the interpretation and the use?" He was, besides, a warm advocate for simplifying the law and making it uniform. He observes, in his Essays, that there are more books to explain law-books than books on any other subject. There is no end, he says, of commentary upon commentary.

During his life as a counsellor at Bordeaux, he seems to have made, probably on business connected with his office, frequent journeys to Paris and to the Court, where his conversational powers obtained for him the favour and patronage of Henry II., by whom he was appointed a gentleman of the king's bed-chamber. From this monarch, also, according to Dom de Vienne, he received the collar of the order of St. Michael, which, when young, he tells us, he had coveted above all things, it being at that time the utmost mark of honour among the French nobles, and rarely bestowed; but at the time Montaigne received it, it had got into discredit. Pasquier, his contemporary and personal friend, tells us, however, that this latter distinction was conferred upon Montaigne by Charles IX. As to his fulfilment of his duties, his close intimacy with the Sieur de Pibrac and Paul de Foix, his countrymen and fellow-counsellors, and, above all, his familiar connexion with the Chancellor de l'Hospital and de Thou, announce the high degree of confidence with which he was honoured, more especially as a magistrate representing the interests of an important town, in a period full of the most important events. It is quite clear that he was at different times consulted by men of a prominent position in that most troublous and intricate whirl of politics which then agitated France. The result for us is, that Montaigne knew mankind on many sides, and in the most different classes. He was in a station to associate early with the highest ranks, even with kings, and of habits and a temper that smoothed his intercourse even with the lowest. He had learning to make him an apt companion for scholars; practical shrewdness and knowledge to procure him respect from the world; and the secure and easy circumstances which gave him perfect leisure to indulge his tastes and fancies, to speculate upon those of others. But the most important event of his counsellor's life at Bourdeaux, was the friendship which he there formed with Stephen de la Boëtie, an affection which makes a streak of light in modern biography almost as beautiful as that left us by Lord Brook and Sir Philip Sydney. Our essayist and his friend esteemed, before they saw each other. La Boëtie had written a little work, entitled "*De la Servitude Volontaire*,"[1] in which Montaigne recognized sentiments congenial with his own, and which, indeed, bespeak a soul formed in the mould of classic times. Of Montaigne, La Boëtie had also heard accounts, which made him eager to behold him, and at length they met at a large entertainment given by one of the

[1] This little book, observes a writer in the *Westminster Review*, seems to have been written when the author was only sixteen. It is a declamation against the lawless government of many by one, with much that recals Tacitus, and something that resembles the political writings of Milton, but having a pervading tone of idle, imitative rhetoric, which is all but inevitable in the work of one so young. Though doubtless in some degree prompted by the miseries of France in that day, it is chiefly a reproduction of the sonorous and statuesque republicanism of the classical writers; the eloquent, headlong, youthful utterance of a sharp, clear brain and glowing heart, to whom the world was yet but a stage for declamation, while almost all the outward facts of life lay concealed from him, behind the scene-curtain. Warmth and reasonableness are finely blended in the book, though weakened by a kind of abstract vagueness, a dateless no-where-ness of the facts and topics. There is no trace of the wayward, fantastic self-questioning which gives such charm and peculiarity to Montaigne. But probably, at La Boëtie's age, his friend's writings would have shown much less of this than now appears in them. For passionate life and keenness of style, the "Treatise" is more remarkable even than the Essays.

magistrates of Bordeaux. They saw and loved, and were thenceforward all in all to each other. The picture that Montaigne in his Essays draws of this friendship is in the highest degree beautiful and touching; nor does La Boëtie's idea of what is due to this sacred bond betwixt soul and soul, fall short of the grand perception which filled the exalted mind of his friend. In the treatise just named, its youthful author thus expresses himself on the subject:—"Friendship is a sacred name; it is a holy thing; it never arises but between good men; exists only by mutual esteem; supports itself not so much by services on either part as by goodness of life. That which makes one friend certain of the other, is the knowledge he has of his integrity. The sureties which he has for him are his good disposition, fidelity, and steadfastness. There cannot be friendship where there is cruelty, where there is disloyalty, where there is injustice." Indeed, judging from the whole of this brief but admirable work, La Boëtie, observes Mrs. Shelley, evidently deserved the high esteem in which Montaigne held him, though apparently very dissimilar from him in character. Boldness and vigour mark the thoughts and style; love of freedom, founded on a generous independence of soul, breathes in every line; the bond between him and Montaigne rested on the integrity and lofty nature of their dispositions, on their talents, on the warmth of heart that distinguished both, and a fervid imagination, without which the affections seldom rise into enthusiasm. The friendship of Montaigne for this admirable person yielded only in force to his tenderness for his father, if even to that; for while, it is true, he speaks of his father, in several places of his Essays, with the highest veneration and love, to Friendship he dedicates one whole chapter, in which it is observable that his style rises and becomes as energetic as it is full of soul. Nor was this friendship, glowing and enthusiastic as it was, a passing effervescence. Nine years after the death of La Boëtie,—whose calm and considerate last moments, Montaigne, in a letter to his father, has described in the most eloquent and touching manner,—he tells us: From the day that I lost him, I have only had a sorrowful and languishing life; and the very pleasures that present themselves to me, instead of administering any thing of consolation, double my affliction for his loss. We were halves throughout, and to that degree that, methinks, by out-living him, I defraud him of his part." Nay, even eighteen years after, during his journey in Italy, in 1580, he tells us that, while writing to the Cardinal d'Ossat, the recollection of his loss came across his mind, and *il se trouva mal, en pensant à son ami.* Montaigne did not regard women as capable of the same high order of friendship, but his physical complexion was such as made him fond of female society, and the character of his mind led him more especially to seek the friendship of those ladies of his time who were distinguished for their wit and imagination, or for their graver powers of mind. It was this that induced him, in the one case, to pay his court to the authoress of the Heptameron, the gay and *spirituelle* Marguerite de Valois, at whose request he wrote one of the longest and most carefully studied chapters of his Essays; and, in the other, to address to Diana de Foix his chapter "On the Education of Children," and to Madame d'Estissac that "On the Affection of Fathers to their Children." It is possible that his notion of a perfect tender friendship, which he in vain sought for among his female acquaintance, might have been realized in Mademoiselle de Gournay, had she been born twenty-five years earlier; and, indeed, Madame de Bourdic, in her *Eloge de Montaigne*, describes the lady in question as being in existence at the same time with La Boëtie, and sharing with him the heart of Montaigne; but this is a mere poetic fiction, the offspring of a wild enthusiasm.

Montaigne married at the age of thirty-three; but, as he informs us, not of his own wish or choice. "Might I have had my own will," says he, "I would not have married Wisdom herself, if she would have had me: but 'tis to much purpose to evade it, the common custom and use of life will have it so; the most of my actions are guided by example, not choice. And yet I did not go to it of my own voluntary motion; I was led and drawn to it by extrinsic occasions; and I was persuaded to it when worse prepared and more backward than I am at present, that I have tried what it is. And as great a libertine as I am taken to be," he adds, "I have in truth more strictly observed the laws of marriage than I either promised or expected." His wife, Françoise de la Chassaigne, was the daughter of Joseph de la Chassaigne, one of the most celebrated counsellors of the Parliament of Bordeaux, and sister of Geoffroi de la Chassaigne, Sieur de Pressac, author of several works. She found, in Montaigne, a husband kind and considerate, though not enthusiastically attached. We read, for instance, that on the occasion of an

accident, of which he gives a picturesque description, the first thing he did on arousing from the swoon into which he had fallen, was to give a horse to his wife, "who he saw was toiling and labouring along the road, which was a steep and uneasy one." Again, when at Paris, he heard of the death of a daughter of theirs, he sent his wife a letter full of sympathy and kindness, accompanying it with Plutarch's Letter of Consolation to his Wife, written under similar circumstances.

It was from the same natural kindness and ready disposition to oblige and please those whom he loved, that at the desire of his father he translated and addressed to him the Natural Theology of Raymond Sebond. The elder Montaigne, animated with the ardour which influenced Francis I. in encouraging literature, had for a long time kept his house open to learned men, though not a learned man himself. Among others, he had received as a guest Peter Bunel, who warmly recommended to him this work of Sebond's as one very useful to read, at a period when the innovations of Luther were beginning to get into credit, and menaced to shake in many places the ancient faith. Montaigne hastened to translate the volume, and presented it, in its French dress, to his father, who was so delighted with its contents that he had it printed and published. It is from proofs drawn from natural reason that Sebond, after the example of Raymond Lully, here undertook, not to explain the mysteries, but simply to oppose to the innovators, in support of the old faith, the same reason with which they sought to combat it. The work had great success, especially with the ladies; and Montaigne, as their champion, and as the vindicator of the book he had translated, afterwards came forward in its defence, both against those who charged the author with unlicensed boldness in his opinions, and those who sneered at his arguments as devoid of strength or foundation.

It was soon after the publication of this translation that Montaigne succeeded to the château and estate[1] of Montaigne, in consequence of the death of his excellent father, who, according to our essayist, was somewhat apprehensive that the inheritance in the hands of his son Michael, would be wasted by his indolence and carelessness; but Montaigne's faults were negative; and he easily brought himself to regard his income as the limit of his expenses, and even kept within it. His hatred of business and trouble, joined to sound common sense, led him to understand that ease could be best attained by limiting his desires to his means; and by the degree of order necessary to know what these means were; and his practice accorded with this conclusion.

One of the first things that engaged our author's attention, on thus becoming entirely master of himself, was the publication of La Boëtie's *Opuscula*, which, together with his library, that beloved friend had bequeathed him, and which he now sent forth to the world, dedicated to the writer's relations. To the volume thus published, Montaigne added his own account, as addressed to his father, of the circumstances of La Boëtie's death; but, probably out of consideration for those of the author's connections who were attached to the court or to the public service, Montaigne did not deem it advisable to reprint on this occasion the *Treatise on Voluntary Servitude*, which he perhaps thought might be made a sinister use of by party spirit, in a time of fierce faction and civil trouble.

From this period Montaigne seems to have lived chiefly at his château. At the time of his succeeding to this property, he was under thirty-nine, and thenceforth his time was chiefly spent in reading and writing. It is not to be supposed, however, that he loved a wholly sedentary and inactive life. Though he adhered to no party, and shewed no enthusiasm in the maintenance of his opinions, his disposition was inquisitive to eagerness, ardent, and fiery. The troubles that desolated his country throughout his life, fostered the activity of mind of which his writings are so full. He often travelled about France, and, above all, was well acquainted with Paris and the Court. He loved the capital, and calls himself a Frenchman only through his love of Paris, which he names the glory of France, and an ornament of the world. In one of his essays, he says that a chief reason with him for wishing to live longer, is that he may see the completion of the *Pont-Neuf*, which was then in course of construction. He attended the Court at the same time with the famous Duc de Guise, and the King of Navarre, afterwards

[1] The estate to which he succeeded comprised the château, and eighteen *metairies*, or farms, around it, comprising one or two small villages. The revenue thence accruing was about 2,000 crowns of the money of the time.

Henry IV. He predicted that the death of one or the other of these princes could alone put an end to the civil war, and he even foresaw the likelihood there was that Henry of Navarre would change his religion. At a later period he was at Blois, when the Duc de Guise was assassinated; and he was a contemporary of the massacre of St. Bartholomew, at the particular period of which our philosopher, humane from sentiment, tolerant from reason, kept himself at home, apart altogether from either party, and attached to his king by an affection, as he says, "purely and entirely legitimate and political; neither attached nor repelled by private interest." In the whole course of the fierce contest between the Catholic party and the Huguenot, Montaigne, though a firm Catholic, abstained from mingling in the mortal struggles that were going on. One of his reasons for not attacking the Huguenots may perhaps be found in the circumstance that one of his brothers, M. de Beauregard, had been converted to the reformed religion. So high an opinion, however, was entertained, not only of his knowledge of the events that were passing around, but of his honesty and good faith, that he was requested to draw up the history of them, but he declined. "I am solicited," he says, "to write the affairs of my own time, by some who fancy I look upon them with an eye less blinded with prejudice or partiality than another, and have a clearer insight into them, by reason of the free access fortune has given me to the heads of both factions; but they do not consider that to purchase the glory of Sallust I would not give myself the trouble, sworn enemy as I am to all obligation, assiduity, and perseverance: besides that there is nothing so contrary to my style as a continued and extended narrative, I so often interrupt and cut myself short in my writing, only for want of breath."

We have now come to a period in the life of Montaigne, to which the highest interest attaches. It was towards the year 1572 that he commenced, in his retreat, the composition of his Essays. "When I lately retired myself to my own house," says he, "with a resolution, as much as possibly I could, to avoid all manner of concern in affairs, and to spend in privacy and repose the little remainder of time I have to live, I fancied I could not more oblige my mind than to suffer it at full leisure to entertain and divert itself, which I hoped it might now the better be entrusted to do, as being by time and observation become more settled and mature; but I find,

Variam semper dant otia mentem,

that, quite the contrary, it is like a horse that has broken from his rider, who voluntarily runs into a much wilder career than any horseman would put him to, and creates me so many chimæras and fantastic monsters, one upon another, without order or design, that, the better at leisure to contemplate their strangeness and absurdity, I have begun to commit them to writing, hoping in time to make them ashamed of themselves." "This faggotting-up of so many divers pieces," he adds elsewhere, "is done in this way: I never set pen to paper but when too great idleness becomes troublesome, and never any where but at home; so that it is made up at several interruptions and intervals. I never correct my first by my second conceptions: perhaps I may alter a word or so; but it is only to vary the phrase, and not to omit my former meaning." In this particular, however, Montaigne's statement of the matter is not consistent with fact; for the edition of 1588, for example, contains several passages, which the author afterwards altered, or entirely omitted, to the advantage certainly of the work. The materials which he possessed for adding to the wealth of his own mind, the stores of classic intellect and experience, were unusually great for that period. His own library was already a good one, when it was considerably enlarged by the collection of books bequeathed him by La Boëtie. In this library he spent the principal portion of his time, reading, meditating, and writing, or dictating. His custom was to walk about as he read and meditated, "for," says he, "my thoughts go to sleep, if I sit down." His mode of proceeding appears to have been altogether of a most desultory character. He would turn over the leaves, now of one book, then of another, without order or apparent design; now he noted, then he meditated, and anon dictated, as he walked, what he had thus digested, more or less maturely. He had a memory, rather of ideas, than of words; what remained in his mind, he no longer remembered as the property of another. But let us hear his own account of the matter: "I make no doubt but that I often happen to speak of things that are much better, and more truly handled by those who are masters of the trade. You have here purely an essay of my natural, and not acquired, parts; and whoever shall take me tripping in my

ignorance, will not in any sort displease me; for I should be very unwilling to become responsible to another for my writings, who am not so to myself, nor satisfied with them. Whoever goes in quest of knowledge, let him fish for it where it is to be found; there is nothing I so little profess. These are fancies of my own, by which I do not pretend to discover things, but to lay open myself. They may, perhaps, one day be known to me, or have formerly been, according as fortune has put me upon a place where they have been explained; but I have forgotten them; and if I am a man of some reading, I am a man of no retention; so that I can promise no certainty, if not to make known to what point the knowledge I now have rises. Therefore let nobody insist upon the matter I write, but my method in writing it: let them observe in what I borrow, if I have known how to choose what is proper to raise or help the invention, which is always my own; for I make others say for me what, either for want of language or want of sense, I cannot so well myself express. I do not number my borrowings, I weigh them. And, had I designed to raise their value by their number, I had made them twice as many. They are all, or within a very few, so famed and ancient authors, that they seem, methinks, themselves sufficiently to tell who they are, without giving me the trouble. In reasons, comparisons, and arguments, if I transplant any into my own soil, and confound them amongst my own, I purposely conceal the author, to awe the temerity of those forward censurers that fall upon all sorts of writings, particularly the late ones, of men yet living, and in the vulgar tongue, forsooth, which puts, it would seem, every one into a capacity of judging, and which seems to convict the authors themselves of vulgar conception and design. I would have them give Plutarch a fillip on my nose, and put themselves in a heat with railing against Seneca, when they think they rail at me. I must shelter my own weakness under these great reputations. I shall love any one that can unplume me, that is, by clearness of understanding and judgment, and by the sole distinction of the force and beauty of reason: for I, who, for want of memory, am at every turn at a loss to pick them out by their national livery, am yet wise enough to know, by the measure of my own abilities, that my soil is incapable of producing any of those rich flowers that I there find set and growing; and that all the fruits of my own growth are not worth any one of them. I have no other officer to put my writings in rank and file, but fortune. As things come into my head I heap them in; sometimes they advance in whole bodies, sometimes in single files. I am content that every one should see my natural and ordinary pace, ill as it is. I let myself jog on at my own rate and ease. Neither are these subjects which a man is not permitted to be ignorant in, or casually, and at a venture, to discourse of. I could wish to have a more perfect knowledge of things, but I will not buy it so dear as it will cost. My design is to pass over easily, and not laboriously, the remainder of my life. There is nothing that I will break my brain about; no, not knowledge, of what price soever."

The extraordinary knowledge that Montaigne displays of man, in all his several relations, and the infinite variety of historical illustrations, ancient and modern, foreign and domestic, that he adds to his own experiences, have induced many persons to suppose that he had travelled beyond the limits of France, at the time he composed his work, and M. Villemain, among others, appears to entertain this opinion, but it is certain that Montaigne's journey into Germany, Switzerland, and Italy, was posterior to the publication of the Essays, in March, 1580. That which has deceived some biographers, is the circumstance that several features in the Journey were inserted by Montaigne himself, as early as 1582, in the edition of the Essays which preceded that wherein that work received the last form it assumed under its author's hands. But this circumstance proves nothing; for in every new edition that Montaigne published, he added something or other, by way of *bonus*, to those former purchasers, who might thereby be induced to buy a copy of the new edition. But Montaigne had travelled sufficiently about France, and in sufficiently stirring times, to give him an extensive and varied insight into human character; indeed, for that matter, there is hardly a village so small, wherein a man who understandingly seeks for this sort of information may not learn a great deal, and our philosopher was precisely the person to obtain it. "I observe in my travels this custom," he says, "ever to learn something from the information of those with whom I converse (which is the best school of all others), and to put my company upon those subjects they are the best able to speak of." We have mentioned his frequent visits to Paris, where, indeed, his attendance was required at intervals, by the place he filled of one of the gentlemen of the king's bed-chamber. He was at Bar-le-Duc with Henry II.,

and he accompanied Charles IX. to Rouen, probably at the time of the declaration of the majority of this prince, to whom, at our author's instance, were presented the South American Indians, of whom he speaks in his chapter *On Cannibals*. The Abbé Talbert, in his *Eloge de Montaigne*, speaks of it as a well known fact, that Montaigne not only acted as secretary to Catherine de Medici, when she wrote her letter of instructions to Charles IX., but that the letter itself was the composition of our essayist, a statement which some of the recent editors of Montaigne have concurred in.

As Montaigne advanced in life, he lost his health. The stone, which he believed he inherited from his father, and painful nephritic cholics that seized him at intervals, put his philosophy to the test. He would not allow his illnesses to disturb the usual tenor of his life, and, above all, refused medical aid, having also inherited, he tells us, from his father, a contempt for physicians. There was a natural remedy, however, by which he laid great store, one much in favour at all times on the continent—mineral and thermal springs. The desire to try these, as well as a wish to quit for a time his troubled country, and the sight of all the misery multiplying around him, caused him to make a journey into Italy. His love of novelty and of seeing strange things sharpened his taste for travelling; and, as a slighter motive, he was glad to throw household cares aside; for though the pleasures of command were something, he received perpetual annoyances from the indigence and sufferings of his tenants, or the quarrels of his neighbours: to travel was to get rid of all this at once.

Of course his mode of proceeding was peculiar: he had a great distaste for coaches or litters; even a boat was not quite to his mind; and he only really liked travelling on horseback. Then he let every whim sway him as to the route; it gave him no annoyance, but rather pleasure, to go out of his way: if the road was bad to the right, he took that to the left; if he felt too unwell to mount his horse, he remained where he was till he got better: if he found he had passed by any thing he wished to see, he turned back. On the present occasion, his mode of travelling was, as usual, regulated by convenience: sumpter-mules or hired vehicles carried the luggage, while he proceeded on horseback. He appears to have been accompanied on this journey by four gentlemen, his brother, the Sieur de Mattecoulon, M. d'Estissac, M. de Caselis, and M. de Hautoy; Montaigne retaining throughout the direction of the journey, and having things apparently all his own way.

Our traveller set off from the Chateau de Montaigne on the 22d June, 1580, and after stopping for a short time at the camp of the Marshal de Matignon, who was then besieging the town of La Fere; and, after accompanying to Soissons the body of the Count de Grammont, who had been killed at the siege, he went on to Beaumont-sur-Oise, where he arrived on the 5th of September, and where he was joined by M. d'Estissac; the other gentlemen were already, apparently, with him. The party then proceeded through the north-east of France to Plombieres, where Montaigne took the waters; and then went on by Basle, Baden, in the canton of Zurich, to Constance, Augsburg, Munich, and Trent. It is not to be supposed that he went to these places in a right line: he often changed his mind when half-way to a town and came back; so that at last his zig-zag mode of proceeding rendered several of his party restive. They remonstrated; but he replied that, for his own part, he was bound to no place, but that in which he was at the time; and that he could not go out of his way, seeing that the only object he had proposed to himself, was to wander in places before unknown to him; and so that he never followed the same road twice, nor visited the same place twice, his scheme was accomplished. If, indeed, he had been alone, he tells us, he had rather have gone towards Cracovia, or overland to Greece, instead of at once to Italy; but, he adds, he could not impart the pleasure he took in seeing strange places, which was such as to cause him to forget ill health and suffering, to any other of his party; so that he was obliged to pursue the uneven tenor of his way to Italy; and, after many windings, having visited Venice, which "he had a hunger to see," he at length found himself at Rome, on the last day of November, having the previous morning risen at three hours before daylight, in his eagerness to behold the Eternal City. Here he had food in plenty for his inquiring mind; and, getting tired of his guide, rambled about by himself, finding out remarkable objects, making his shrewd remarks, and trying to discover those ancient spots with which his mind was familiar; for Latin being his mother-tongue, and Latin books his primers, he

was more familiar with Roman history than with that of France; and the names of the Scipios and the Metelli were less strange to his ear than those of many Frenchmen of his own day. He was well received by the pope, Gregory XIII., who felt almost grateful to any man of talent and rank who would still abide by, and stand up in defence of, the old religion. Montaigne, before he left home, had printed two books of his Essays; a copy of these was taken from him at the Custom-house at Rome, and underwent a censorship; several faults were found, which he particularizes in the Diary, but Montaigne took this fault-finding very easily, saying that he had put down the things in question as his real opinions, and did not regard them as errors, and that, in several cases, the censor had altogether mistaken his meaning. The authority to whom the matter was referred was a man of sense, who readily admitting the explanations offered by our essayist, the censures were not insisted upon; and when Montaigne left Rome, and took leave of the prelate who had discoursed with him on the subject, the latter paid him a high compliment as to the uprightness of his intentions, his affection for the church, and his talents; adding, that the authorities at Rome thought so highly of his candour and conscientiousness, that they left it entirely to him to make what alterations he thought necessary, in another edition; and, finally, our author was earnestly requested to continue to aid the church with his eloquence, and to remain where he was, away from the troubles of his native country. Montaigne's vanity was highly tickled with all these courtesies, though he speaks of them as mere words of course; and his satisfaction was completed by his being invested with the citizenship of Rome, in a papal bull, pompous in seals and golden letters, and most gracious in its expressions. Nothing, he tells us, ever pleased him more than this honour, empty as it might seem, and he had employed to obtain it, he says, all his five senses, for the sake of the ancient glory and present holiness of the city.

The descriptions (observes Mrs. Shelley) which he gives of Rome, of the Pope, and all he saw, are short, but drawn with a master's hand—graphic, original, and just; and such is the unaltered appearance of the Eternal City, that his pages describe it as it now is, with as much fidelity as they did when he saw it in the sixteenth century. Its gardens and pleasure-grounds delighted him; the air seemed to him the most agreeable he had ever felt; and the perpetual excitement of inquiry in which he lived, his visits to antiquities, and to various beautiful and memorable spots, delighted him; and neither at home nor abroad was he once visited by gloom or melancholy, which he calls his death.

On the 19th of April, he left Rome, and, passing by the eastern road and the shores of the Adriatic, he visited Loretto, where he displayed his piety by presenting a silver *ex-voto*, and performing various religious duties, which prove the sincerity of his Catholic faith. In the month of May he arrived at the Baths of Lucca, whither he had repaired for the sake of the waters, and took up his abode at the Bagno della Villa, where, with the exception of a short interval, during which he visited Florence and Pisa, he remained till September. On the 7th of that month, he received letters to inform him that he had been elected mayor of Bordeaux, a circumstance which forced him to hasten his return, though he did not leave Italy without again visiting Rome. His journey home during winter, although rendered painful by physical suffering, was yet tortuous and wandering among the northern Italian towns. He re-entered France by Mont-Cenis, and, visiting Lyons, continued his route through Auvergne and Perigord, and arrived at the Château de Montaigne on the 30th of November, having been absent seventeen months and eight days.

Of the journey thus performed, we have a Diary, written partly in Montaigne's own hand, partly dictated to his valet, who, though he speaks of his master in the third person, evidently wrote only the words dictated. This work, observes Mrs. Shelley, is singularly interesting. It seems to tell us more of Montaigne than the Essays themselves; or rather, it confirms much said in those, by relating many things omitted, and throws a new light on various portions of his character. For instance, we find that the eager curiosity of his mind led him to inquire into the tenets of the Protestants; and that at the Swiss towns he was accustomed, on arriving, to seek out with all speed some theologian, whom he invited to dinner, and from whom he enquired the particular tenets of the various sects. There creeps out, also, an almost unphilosophical dislike of his own country, springing from the miserable state into which civil war had brought

it. The work abounds, too, with amusing illustrations of the vanity which formed so prominent a feature in our author's character. He loved to stop at places where, taking him for a noble of high degree, the local authorities waited upon him in state, bearing the portion of wine, accustomed to be offered to the more distinguished of their visitors, and accompanying it with long complimentary harangues, to which he would gravely reply with all corresponding dignity, and at proportionate length.

Montaigne, though, of course, highly flattered by the unsought-for, and, by him, utterly unexpected, election of the citizens of Bordeaux, which he himself affects to attribute solely to their recollection of his father's former good administration of the office, yet, from ill health, and constitutional dislike to public employments, would have excused himself, as he tells us, had not the king interposed with his commands. On his arrival, he represented himself to his electors, such as he conceived himself to be, "a man without memory, without vigilance, without experience, and without vigour; but withal, without hatred, without ambition, without avarice, and without violence." It has been, indeed, insinuated against him, by M. Balzac, who, however, assigns no grounds for the imputation, that he exhibited indolence and indifference in the execution of the duties of his office; while he himself deemed his negative merits deserving praise, at a time when France was distracted by the dissensions of contending factions; and the citizens themselves gave unequivocal proof of their approbation of his administration, by conferring upon him a second election to the two years' mayoralty, an honour so distinguished and rare, that it had never occurred but twice before, in the persons, namely, of M. de Lansac, and of Marshal de Matignon, to whom Montaigne succeeded, and proud was he, he tells us, of so noble a fraternity.

For some time after his return home, Montaigne, amidst all the fierce and licentious struggles of the contending parties, was suffered to remain unmolested in his retreat. "Peradventure," he writes, "the facility of entering my house, amongst other things, has been a means to preserve it from the violence of our civil wars; defence allures an enemy, and mistrust provokes him. I enervated the soldiers' design by depriving the exploit of danger, and all matter of military glory, which is wont to serve them for pretence and excuse. Whatever is bravely is ever honourably done, at a time when justice is dead. I render them the conquest of my house cowardly and base; it is never shut to any one that knocks. My gate has no other guard than a porter, and that of ancient custom and ceremony, who does not so much serve to defend it, as to offer it with more decency and the better grace. I have no other guard or sentinel than the stars. A gentleman would play the fool to make a show of defence, if he be not really in a condition to defend himself. He that lies open on one side is every where so. Our ancestors did not think of building frontier garrisons. The means of assaulting, I mean without battery or army, and of surprising our houses, increase every day, above all the means to guard them; men's wits are generally bent that way; invasion every one is concerned in; none but the rich in defence. Mine was strong for the time when it was built; I have added nothing to it of that kind, and should fear that its strength should turn against myself; to which we are to consider that a peaceable time would require it should be dismantled. There is the danger never to be able to regain it, and it would be very hard to keep it, for in intestine dissensions your valet may be of the party you fear; and where religion is the pretext, even a man's nearest relation may be distrusted with a colour of justice. The public exchequer will not maintain our domestic garrisons; it would be exhausted; we ourselves have not means to do it without ruin, or, which is more inconvenient and injurious, without ruining the people. As to the rest, you there lose all, and even your friends will be more ready to accuse your want of vigilance and your improvidence than to pity you, and the ignorance and heedlessness of your profession. That so many garrisoned houses have been lost, whereas this of mine remains, makes me apt to suspect that they were only lost by being guarded; this gives an enemy both an invitation and colour of reason; all defence shows a face of war. Let who will come to me, in God's name; but I shall not invite them. 'Tis retirement I have chosen, for my repose from war. I endeavour to withdraw this corner from the public tempest, as I also do another corner in my soul. Our war may put on what forms it will, multiply and diversify itself into new parties; for my own part, I shall not budge. Amongst so many garrisoned houses, I am the only person of my condition, that I know of, who have purely entrusted mine to the protection of Heaven, without removing

either plate, deeds, or hangings. I will neither fear nor save myself by halves." His quiet, however, was at length intruded on, and he was made to feel in his own person the disturbances that desolated his country. It is a strange and instructive thing to picture France divided into two parties, belonging to which were men who risked all for the dearest privilege of life, freedom of thought and faith; and were either forced, or fancied that they were forced, to expose life and property to attain it; and to compare these religionists in arms with the tranquil philosopher, who dissected human nature in his study, and sounded the very depths of all our knowledge in freedom and ease, because he abstained from certain watch-words, and had no desire for proselytes or popular favour. "I regard our king," he says, "with a merely legitimate and political affection, neither attached nor repelled by private interest; and in this I am satisfied with myself. In the same way, I am but moderately and tranquilly attached to the general cause, and am not subject to entertain opinions in a deep-felt and enthusiastic manner. Let Montaigne, if it must be so, be swallowed up, in the public ruin; but, if there is no necessity for it, I shall be thankful to Fortune to save it. I treat both parties equally; I say *nothing* to one that I could not say to the other, with the accent only a little changed; and there is no motive of utility that could induce me to lie." It was in 1585 that the factious, excited by their chief, the Duc de Guise, at once against the Navarrese and against the king himself, who had now entirely given himself up to the society of his favourites, began to make onslaughts both against the sincere royalists and against the moderate Catholics.

Montaigne's account of the Reformers, it may be observed, is by no means flattering; he represents them as men who "go towards reformation by the worst of deformations; who advance towards their salvation by the most express causes that we have of most assured damnation; who by overthrowing the govérnment, magistracy, and laws, in whose protection God has placed them, by tearing their mother (the Church) to pieces, and giving the lacerated limbs to her old enemies to gloat over, by inspiring fraternal minds with parricidal animosities, by calling devils and furies to their aid, think they can assist the holy sweetness and justice of the divine laws. Ambition, avarice, cruelty, and revenge, have not sufficient natural impetuosity of their own; let us bait them with the glorious titles of justice and devotion. The common people," he proceeds, "then suffered therein very much, not present damages only, but future too: the living were to suffer, and so were they who were yet unborn: they pillaged them, and consequently me too, even of hope, taking from them all they had laid up in store to live on for many years. - - - Besides this shock, I suffered others; I underwent the inconveniences that moderation brings along with it in such diseases; I was curried on all hands; to the Ghibelline I was a Guelph; to the Guelph a Ghibelline. The situation of my house, and my friendliness to my neighbours, presented me with one face; my life and my actions with another. They did not lay formal accusations against me, for they had no hold. I never slink from the laws, and whoever would have questioned me, would have done himself a greater prejudice than me; they were only mute suspicions that were whispered about, which never want appearance in so confused a mixture, no more than envious or idle heads. I commonly assist the injurious presumptions that fortune scatters abroad against me, by a way I have ever had of evading to justify, excuse, or explain myself, conceiving that it were to compromise my conscience to plead in its behalf: *Perspicuitas enim augmentatione elevatur.* - - - At what then befel me an ambitious man would have hanged himself, and a covetous one would have done the same. I have no manner of care of getting; but the losses that befel me by the injury of others, whether by theft or violence, go almost as near my heart as they would do to that of the most avaricious man. The offence troubles me, without comparison, more than the loss. A thousand several sorts of mischief fell upon me in the neck of one another; I could better have borne them all at once. - - - - I had already begun considering," he continues, "to whom amongst my friends I might commit a necessitous and degraded old age: and, having turned my eyes quite round, I found myself altogether at a loss. At last I concluded that it was safest for me to trust to myself in my necessity; and if it should fall out that I should be put upon cold terms in Fortune's favour, I should so much more recommend me to my own, and so much the closer attach me to myself."

It was well for him that he had philosophy to bear him up against all the evils that now

assailed him; for, to complete his misery, and that of his countrymen, a pestilent fever broke out in 1586, and devastated Guyenne. Montaigne's own account of this horrible visitation runs thus:—"But behold another aggravation of the evil, which befel me in the tail of the rest. Both without doors and within, I was assaulted with a plague, most violent in comparison of all others: I had to suffer this pleasant condition, that the sight of my house was frightful to me; whatever I had there was without guard, and left to the mercy of every one. I myself, who am of so hospitable a nature, was myself in very great distress for a retreat for my family; a wild and scattered family, frightful both to its friends and itself, and filling every place with horror where it attempted to settle; having to shift abode as soon as any one's finger began to ache; all diseases are then concluded to be the plague, and people do not stay to examine what they are. And the mischief is, that, according to the rules of art, in every danger that a man comes near, he must undergo a quarantine in the suspense of his infirmity, your imagination all that while tormenting you at pleasure, and turning even your health itself into a fever. Yet all this would have gone the less to my heart, had I not withal been compelled to be sensible of others' sufferings, and miserably to serve six months together for a guide to this caravan; for I carry my own antidotes within myself, which are resolution and patience. Apprehension, which is particularly to be feared in this disease, does not much trouble me; and if, being alone, I should have taken it, it had been a more sprightly and a longer flight: 'tis a kind of death that I do not think of the worse sort; 'tis usually short, stupid, without pain, and consoled by the public condition; without ceremony, without mourning, and without a crowd. But as to the people about us, the hundredth part of them could not be saved. In this place, my greatest revenue is manual: what a hundred men ploughed for me lay a long time fallow."

In another place he gives a very interesting account of how, on one occasion, by presence of mind and self-possession, he saved his castle from pillage; and elsewhere he relates a somewhat similar anecdote of the manner in which he got out of the clutches of a party of the gentlemen freebooters, who then perambulated the country, seeking what they might devour.

Montaigne's family were long-lived; but he himself attained no great age, and his latter years were disturbed by great suffering. Living in constant expectation of death, he was always prepared for it; his affairs were arranged, and he was ready to fulfil all the last duties of his religion, as soon as he felt himself attacked by any of the frequent fevers that assailed him. One of the last and most agreeable events of his life was his friendship with Mademoiselle de Gournay. In his Third Book he tells us nothing of this friend, so worthy of the name, who came to console the philosopher, suffering under the public miseries and his own afflictions of body; but he makes her the subject of an addition to the 17th chapter of Book II.; where, in the enumeration he gives us of the persons of his own time, possessed of more than ordinary greatness of mind, he distinguishes his *fille d'alliance*, Marie de Gournay. His picture of her is not only delightful as a testimony of her merits, but a proof of the unfailing enthusiasm and warmth of his own heart, which even in suffering and decay equally allied itself to kindred merit. Mademoiselle de Gournay was afterwards esteemed one of the most learned and excellent women of her time, and was honoured by the abuse of pedants, who attacked her personal appearance and her age, in revenge for her transcending even their sex in accomplishments and understanding; while, on the other hand, she was regarded with respect and friendship by the first men of the day.[1] At the time when Montaigne first saw her, which was during a long visit he made to Paris, after his mayoralty at Bordeaux was ended, she was very young, but she had conceived an enthusiastic love and admiration of him from reading his Essays, and she called upon, and requested and obtained his acquaintance, which soon ripened into earnest friendship. She afterwards, in company with her mother, visited him at Montaigne, and he paid them, in return, several visits at their chateau in Normandy, where he remained, on the whole, three months. Another adoption, very agreeable to his vanity, was that of his philosophy by Charron, who became acquainted with him at Bordeaux, in 1589, and with whom he after-

[1] Besides her other works, this lady is the author of a little volume, not mentioned or contained in the editions of her writings, that appeared in 1626, 1634, and 1641, and unknown to M. Barbier: *Bienvenue de monseigneur le duc d'Anjou, dédiée à la sérénissime république de Venise, son parrain désigné, par mademoiselle de G. Paris, Bourriquant*, 1608. This Duke of Anjou was Gaston, duc d'Orléans, second son of Henry IV.

wards contracted a warm friendship. The theologian became the pupil of the philosopher, and his Treatise on Wisdom is little more than a development of the maxims and lessons of his master, fully justifying, if it were needed, the title of *Breviaire des honnetes gens*, that Cardinal du Perron assigned to Montaigne's Essays. The pupil, however, was much less read than the master, who, very soon after the first publication of his work, was so much in vogue,—notwithstanding Mademoiselle de Gournay's somewhat unaccountable complaint as to the coldness of its reception,—that edition after edition was called for, and the Essays of Montaigne were to be found on the table of every gentleman in France that could read aught beyond his other *breviary*, and, ere long, became known, by the medium of translations, in Italy, England, and other countries.

The disease which more immediately occasioned the death of Montaigne was a quinsy, that brought on a paralysis of the tongue, in which condition he remained three whole days, with all his senses about him, but unable to speak. Even now his presence of mind, his philosophy, and his kind heart, did not forsake him. It is related of him, by Bernard Antoine, in his *Commentaire sur la Coutume de Bordeaux*, that Montaigne, "feeling the approach of death, got out of bed in his shirt, and, putting on his dressing-gown, opened the door of his chamber, and, writing word for all his servants and others, to whom he had left legacies, to be called together, paid them the sums he had respectively bequeathed them, foreseeing the difficulty they might have in obtaining the amount from his heirs." Getting worse and worse, he requested his wife, in writing, to send for some gentlemen, his neighbours; and when they were all assembled, he caused mass to be celebrated in his chamber. At the moment of the elevation, he attempted to rise, but could not, and, with his hands crossed, fell back fainting, and in this act of devotion expired, on the 13th September, 1592, in the sixtieth year of his age, presenting in his death, says Pasquier, a fine mirror of the interior of his soul. He was buried at Bordeaux, in the church of the Feuillans, where his widow had a monument erected to him, with inscriptions in Latin and Greek, as follow:—

D. O. M. S.

Michaeli Montano Petrocorensi Petri F. Grimundi. N. Remundi Pron. Equiti torquato, civi Romano, civitatis Piturigum Viviscorum ex-Majori, viro ad naturæ gloriam nato. Quojus morum suavitudo, ingenii acumen, ex temporalis facundia, et incomparabile judicium supra humanam sortem æstimata sunt. Qui amicos usus reges maximos, et terrâ Galliæ primores viros, ipsos etiam sequiorum partium præstites, tamen etsi patriarum legum, et sacrorum avitorum retinentissimus, sine quojusquam offensâ, sine palpo, aut pipulo, universis populatim gratus, utque antidhac semper adversus omnes dolorum minacias mœnitam sapientiam labris et libris professus, ita in procinctu fati cum morbo pertinaciter inimico diutim validissime conluctatus, tandem dicta factis exæquando, polcræ vitæ polcram pausam cum Deo volente fecit.

Vixit ann. LIX. mens. VII. dieb. XI. Oblit anno salutis CIƆIƆVIIIC. idib. Septemb.

Francisca Chassanea ad luctum perpetuum heu relicta marito dolcissimo univira unijugo, et bene merenti mœrens P. C.

Ηρίων, ὅστις ἰδὼν, ἠδ' οὔνομα τοὐμὸν ἐρωτᾷς,
Μανθανε Μοντανός· Παύεο θαμβεοπαθείν.
Οὐχ ἐμὰ ταῦτα, δέμας, γένορ ἐυγενὲρ, ὄλβος ἄνολβος,
Προσταιαὶ, δυνάμεις, παίγνια θνητὰ τύχης.

Οὐρανόθεν χατέβην, θεῖον φυτὸν, εἰς χθόνα Κελτῶν,
Οὐ σόφος Ελλήνων ὄγδοος, ὄντε τρίτος.
Αὐσονίων' αλλ' εἷς πάντων ἀντάξιος ἄλλων,
Τῆς τε βαθεῖ σοφίης ἀνθέσι, τ' εὐεπίης.

Ος χαὶ χριστοσεβεῖ ξυνώσα δεδάγματι σχεψιν
Την Πυρρώνειην, Ελλάδα δ' ἔιλε φθόνος,
Εἶλε καὶ Αὐσονίην, φθονερὴν δ' ἔριν αὖτς, επισχων,
Τάξιν ἐπ' Θυρανίδων, πατρίδα μεν, ανέβην.

Thus rendered by M. de la Monnoye:

Quisquis ades, nomenque rogas, lugere paratus,
Montani audito nomine, parce metu.
Nil jacet hic nostri, nec enim titulosque, genusque
Fasces, corpus, opes, nostra vocanda puto.

Gallorum ad terras superis demissus ab oris
Non alter cecidi Chilo, Cato ve novus;
Ast omnes equans unus, quoscumque vetustas
Enumerat, celebres corde vel ore Sophos;
Solius addictus jurare in dogmata Christi,
Cætera Pyrrhonis pendere lance sciens.
Jam mihi de sophia Latium, jam Græcia certent,
Ad Cœlum reducem lis nihil ista movet.

Montaigne's adopted daughter and her mother, to whom information of his illness had been immediately forwarded by the family, hastened from their chateau in Normandy, by the assistance of passports, to traverse almost the entire of France, disturbed as it was, but arrived only in time to mix their tears and lamentations with those of the philosopher's widow and daughter.

The only child that Montaigne left was a daughter, Leonora, who was afterwards twice married: she had no children by her first husband, but by her second, Charles, Viscount de Gamaches, she had a daughter, Marie de Gamaches, who married Louis de Lur de Saluces, Baron de Fargues, to whom she bore three daughters. The youngest, Claude Madeline de Lur, married Elias Isaac de Segur, whose son, Jean de Segur, was grandfather to M. le Compte de la Roquette, to whom the chateau of Montaigne duly descended, in accordance with the testamentary arrangements of the philosopher from whom it received its sole celebrity.

The present may, perhaps, be the most suitable place for inserting a very interesting account of this chateau, as it appeared, a few years ago, to the eyes of an intelligent contributor to the *Westminster Review*.

"At Castellan we exchanged our caleche for a small char-a-banc, with one horse, which took us to Montaigne St. Michel, along a detestable road, mostly somewhat ascending. We found the higher ground to be a wide, broken plain, out of sight of the Dordogne, and studded with small stone windmills, each carrying a conical roof.

"The first memorial of the days of Montaigne which we discovered was the parish church, a very old building. There is a massive square tower, covered by a slightly pointed roof, and having two large openings near its summit, in each side, which look like windows, but are without shafts, and seem to distinguish a good deal of the church architecture of the neighbourhood. There is a round apsis beyond the tower, at the east end, with only two small loop-hole windows, and at the west end is raised a small, curiously complicated wooden superstructure, designed to contain the bell of a large clock, to which access is obtained by a rude, external wooden gallery, painted red, and stretching all the length of the body of the church, close under the eaves. From this building runs a straight road, perhaps a quarter of a mile long, to the chateau.

"The part of Montaigne's house which we first reached was the tower, described by him in his essay 'On the Three Commerces' (iii. 3.) as containing his library and study. It is a plain round structure, at the south-eastern corner of the chateau; a dead-wall runs from it on either side, at right angles, and rises to about half its height. This is in reality the exterior of ranges of out-buildings, which form two sides of the court-yard. In this wall, close to the tower, and facing us as we approached, was a small gate, through which we found entrance. The chateau itself was now on our left, running along the western side of the quadrangle. It is a high building of grey stone, evidently very ancient, and probably untouched, except for repairs, since the days of Montaigne's father. There are a considerable number of windows scattered very irregularly over the front. Near the middle, at either side of the small unornamented entrance, are two large and high towers, of unlike architecture; the one with deep machicolations, the other without them, and both with conical roofs. If erected, as I presume, by Montaigne's father, the building must be about three hundred years old; the whole place has now an air of sluttish neglect, though not at all of decay. It is now inhabited by an old gentleman, formerly a military man, whose civility we should ill repay by recording any idle accounts of his simple establishment and very agreeable conversation. The house is only one room deep, and behind it runs a long and broad terrace, covered with grass, and with some trees growing upon it, among others, a large horse-chesnut. It is bordered by a stone ballustrade, which rises on the edge of a steep, wooded bank, and has beyond it a very extensive prospect over a flat

country, with slight eminences on the horizon, marked towards the north by the village and chateau of Mont Peyroux, which in Montaigne's day was a sort of dependence on his seigneurie, and belonged to his younger brother. Near it, and still higher against the sky, are the ruins of the chateau of Gurson, destroyed in the Revolution, and which seems to have been a castle in our English sense of the word, that is, a feudal abode constructed for defence. It was probably the residence of the lady to whom Montaigne addresses his "Essay on Education" (i. 25). The whole prospect is woody and cultivated, but without water or any remarkable outlines, open, airy, quiet, and sufficiently prosperous. The old gentleman told us that he was possessed of eleven *métairies* or farms, with the chateau, but that Montaigne had held eighteen. The property had come by marriage to the Ségur family, who had taken the name of Ségur de Montaigne. They sold the estate to the present owner, who, in turn, was ready to dispose of it, if he could find a purchaser.

"After taking leave of our host, we returned to the corner tower, which we examined throughout, and were much interested by the minute agreement of its present state with everything recorded in Montaigne's description. This, too, was evidently not a modern and factitious correspondence, but secured by the abstinence of the successive owners from any changes, however slight. The ground-floor retains the appearance of having been once a small chapel, though now dark and dilapidated. The first floor, which was the sleeping apartment of the Gascon philosopher, does not look as if it had been applied since his day to any other purpose. The third and last story is that so particularly described by its occupant, as having contained his library and study, and his words would answer in most respects as a description of the spot at this hour, though he who wrote them has been dead two hundred and fifty years. The room still overlooks the entrance of the chateau, and from three windows, in different sides of the circuit, commands the garden, the court, the house, and the out-houses. The books, indeed, are gone; but the many small rafters of the roof are inscribed in their lower faces with mottoes and pithy sentences, which recal, as by a living voice, the favourite studies and thoughts of Montaigne. Such are these few hastily transcribed in a note-book:—'1. *Solum certum nihil esse certi, et homine nihil miserius aut superbius.* 2. Αλλοιων ἀλλου θεων τε χάνθρωπων μηδε 3. Ταρασσει τους ανθρωπους ὁυ τα γραμματα, ἀλλα ταπεσι χάνθρωπον δογματα. 4. *Quid superbis, terra et cinis?*—Eccl. x. 5. *Væ qui sapientes estis in oculis vestris.*—Eccl. v. 6. *Favere jucunde præsentibus. Cætera extra te.* 7. Παντι λογω λογος ισος ἀντιχειται. 8. *Nostra vagatur in tenebris, nec cæca potest mens cernere verum.* 9. *Fecit Deus hominem similem umbræ post solis occasum.*—Eccl. vii.'

"The chapel still shows the recess where stood the altar, and there are the remains of colours and gilding on the defaced coats-of-arms around the walls. The bed-room floor presents nothing remarkable; but that above, in which are the inscriptions on its rafters, preserves the exact form described by its ancient occupant. The paces of Montaigne must have been of about a foot and a half, for the diameter of the tower inside is about twenty-four feet. The circle is at one part cut by two straight walls, joining in an angle, being the portion which he speaks of as adapted for his seat and table. The three windows, affording a rich and free prospect, are still unchanged. There is a sort of closet opening off the room, with the traces of painted ornaments on the walls, a fire-place, as he mentions, at one end, and a window, which entitles it to be spoken of as *très plaisammant percé*—having a pleasant window-light—and which, though directly overlooking the court-yard, furnishes a view, above the northern line of offices, towards Mont Peyroux and Gurson.

"The whole appearance and position of this apartment seem especially characteristic of Montaigne. The cheerfulness, the airiness, the quiet, the constant though somewhat remote view of natural objects, and of the far-spread and busy occupations of men—all are suitable to him. The ornamenting the joists of his chamber-roof with several scores of moral sentences was the work of a speculative idler, and their purport is always, so far as I saw, suitable to his sceptical but humane and indulgent temper. The neglect of all elegance and modern convenience in the house, together with its perfect preservation from decay, add to the interest, and seem to prove that it is maintained in its old completeness and bareness, not from any notion of use, but out of respect for the memory of its celebrated owner."

Montaigne had five brothers: Captain St. Martin, who was killed at the age of twenty-three, by the blow of a tennis-ball; the Sieur d'Arsac, possessor of an estate in Medoc, that was buried under the sea-sands; the Sieur de la Brousse, not mentioned by Bouhier in his Life of Montaigne, but referred to in the Essays, ii. 5; the Sieur de Mattecoulon, who accompanied him on his journey through Italy; and the Sieur de Beauregard, who became a convert to Protestantism. Montaigne had one sister, named Eleonora, who married the Sieur de Cumain, counsellor to the Parliament of Bordeaux, and of whom mention is made in the will of Charron, in which the grateful disciple leaves the bulk of his property to the family of his master.

We have thus brought together the principal facts connected with the life of our philosopher. It would have been easy to fabricate a very long biography, by reprinting in a consecutive form the information which the Essays themselves afford, for these are nearly taken up by narrations of what happened to himself, or dissertations on his own nature, so that there is scarcely any man into whose character we have more insight than that of Montaigne. The reader, however, will find in the Index a complete reference to all those passages in which our author thus speaks of himself; and the critical opinions and *éloges* that precede the body of the work, will afford those who as yet have not read Montaigne, but have bowed their heads at his name, on the authority of prescription—an authority that empowers so many thousands to look unutterable things, as they repeat of men of whose works they know nothing—abundant justification for the faith that is in them, and will lead them on, with a prepared and understanding mind, to the Essays themselves.

END OF THE LIFE OF MONTAIGNE.

CRITICAL OPINIONS

UPON

MONTAIGNE AND HIS WORKS.

I.
MADEMOISELLE DE GOURNAY.

Si vous demandez au Vulgaire quel est Cesar, il vous respondra que c'est vn excellent Capitaine: si vous le luy monstrez luy-mesme sans nom, voire en guerre, à l'exercice de ces grandes qualitez par lesquelles il estoit tel: sa prudence, labeur, vigilance, preuoyance, precautions, perseuerance, ordre, art de mesnager le temps, et de se faire aymer et craindre, sa resolution, sa vigueur à ne rien relascher, et ses admirables conseils sur les nouuelles et promptes occurrences: plus, ces contrarietez d'action en temps et lieu: craindre, oser, reculer, courre sus, prodiguer resserrer, et mesmes rauir ou besoin est: cruauté, clemence, simulation, franchise. Si, dis-ie, apres luy auoir fait contempler toutes ces qualitez et ces actions où y mesmes en guerre, comme il est dit, mais hors l'apparat de Chef et hors la victoire, vous luy demandez quel homme c'est-là; il vous donnera s'il nient à poinct, pour vn des fuyars de la bataille de Pharsale: parce qu'il ne sçait si c'est par telles parties qu'on se rend grand Capitaine: et que pour iuger sur elles purement, d'vn qui le soit ou puis estre, il le faut estre soy-mesme, ou capable de le deuenir par instruction. Enquerez semblablement ce mesme vulgaire, ce qu'il luy semble de Platon, il vous rebattra l'oreille des loüanges d'vn celeste Philosophe: mais si vous laissez tomber en ses mains le Sympose ou l'Apologie desnuez de ce haut nom de leur pere, il en fera des farces: et s'il entre en la boutique d'Apelles, il emportera bien tost son tableau, mais il n'achetera que le nom du Peintre. Ces considerations m'ont tousiours mise en doute de la valeur des esprits, que le credit populaire suiuoit de son mouuement, et sans authorité precedente des belle ames: authorité certes encore, meurie par diuers âges: i'entens, passée en vsage fixe, qui est l'vnique estoille du Pole, qui peut droitement guider les approbations populaires. Car le Peuple n'a garde de connoistre par luy-mesme, la valeur des esprits, manquant d'esprit: ny de mettre à prix, ou de suiure sainement en cela, vne approbation ou authorité, pour equitable qu'elle soit, qui pour estre nouuelle, reste, debatue: puis qu'il ne sçauroit par ce mesme defaut d'esprit, connoistre le poids des tenans et des assaillans en ce debat. Celuy qui gaigne multitude d'admirateurs parmy la commune, et de son iugement propre, ne peut pas estre grand: puis que pour auoir beaucoup de bons iuges, il faut auoir beaucoup de [illegible], outre qu'il est vray, que la fortune et la vertu fauorisent rarement vn mesme sujet. Le Peuple est vne foule d'aueugles; quiconque se vante de son approbation, se vante de paroistre honneste homme à qui ne le void pas: adioûtons, que c'est vne espece d'iniure d'estre loüé de ceux que vous voudriez pas ressembler. Qu'est-ce que le dire de la presse? (si cette question n'est desia trop vuidée par les anciens) ce que nulle ame sage ne voudroit ny dire ny croire: qu'est-ce que la raison? le contrepoil de son opinion: et ie trouue la reigle de bien viure aussi certaine, à fuir l'exemple et le sens du siecle, qu'à suiure la Philosophie ou la Theologie. Il ne faut entrer chez le Peuple spirituellement ou corporellement, que pour auoir le plaisir d'en sortir: or Peuple et vulgaire s'estant iusques-là, qu'il est en vn Estat, sur tout en nostre saison, moins de personnes entierement non vulgaires, que de Princes, pour rares que les Princes y soient. Ie lairray toutefois à Senecque, touchant, ce me semble, cette corde de la neantise populaire, la charge de lire le reste mieux que moy. Xerxes contemplant ses dixsept cens mil hommes, s'escria de douleur, sur ce que dans cent ans il n'en resteroit vn seul en vie. Il nous faudroit tous les iours faire vn cry bien diuers, sur pareille nombre; de ce qu'il ne s'y trouueroit pas à l'aduenture vn sage, ny qui pis est vn iuste. Tu deuines desia, Lecteur, qui ie veux rechercher les causes du froid recueil, que nostre vulgaire fit d'abord aux Essais: mais trouuées, ou non, laissons-là ses opinions, qui ne nous doiuent peut-estre pas engendrer plus de soucy, hors les suiets ausquels elles blessent nostre fortune, qu'elles engendrent d'honneur à leur maistre. Le Prouerbe est tres-vray; que s'il faut souhaiter de la loüange, c'est de ceux qui sont loüable. Certes ie rends à ce propos vn sacrifice au bonheur, qu'vne si fameuse et digne main que celle de Justus Lipsius, ait ouuert par Escrit public les portes de la loüange aux Essais: et en ce que la fortune l'a choisi pour en parler le premier de cette part, elle a, ce me semble voulu luy deferer vne prerogatiue de suffisance en son siecle, et nous aduertir tous l'escouter comme nostre maistre. L'admiration dont ils me transsirent, lors qu'il me furent fortuitement mis en main au sortir de l'enfance, m'alloit faire reputer visionnaire: si quelqu'vn pour me remparer contre vn tel reproche, ne m'eust descouuert l'Eloge tres-sage, que ce Flamand en auoit rendu depuis quelques années à leur Autheur mon pere.

Lecteur, ayant à desirer de t'estre agreable, ie me pare du beau titre de cette alliance, puisque ie n'ay point d'autre ornement: et n'ay pas tort de ne vouloir appeller que du nom paternel, celuy duquel tout ce que ie puis auoir de bon en l'ame est issu. L'autre qui me mit au Monde, et que mon desastre m'arracha dés l'enfance, tres-bon pere, orné de vertus, et habile homme, auroit moins de ialousie de se voir vn second, qu'il n'auroit de gloire de s'en voir vn tel.

Le don du iugement est la chose du Monde que les hommes possedent de plus diuerse mesure: le plus digne et auare que Dieu leur fasse: leur perfection; Tous biens ouy les essentiels, leur sont inutiles, si cettuy-là ne les mesnage: et la vertu mesme tient sa forme de luy. Le seul iugement esleue les humains sur les bestes, Socrates sur eux, les Anges sur Socrates: et le seul iugement nous met en droite possession de Dieu: cela s'appelle l'ignorer et l'adorer en la foy. Pythagoras disoit aussi, que la connoissance de Dieu ne pouuoit estre en nous, que l'extréme effort de nostre imaginatiue vers la perfection. Or vous plaist-il auoir l'esbat de voir eschauder plaisamment les froids estimateurs des Essais? mettez leur iugement sur le troittoir à l'examen des Liures anciens. Ie ne dis pas pour leur demander, si Plutarque et Senecque sont de grands Autheurs, car la reputation les dresse en ce point-là, mais pour sçauoir de quelle part ils le sont plus: si c'est en la faculté de iuger, si c'est en elle d'inuenter et de produire, et comme eux que deuisent de ces facultez les entendent ou comprennent: qui frappe plus ferme que son compagnon en tel endroit: quelle a deu selon leur matiere estre leur conduite et leur fin en escriuant, quelle des fins d'escrire est la meilleure en general: quelles de leurs pieces ils pourroient perdre auec moins d'interest: quelles ils deuroient conseruer auant toutes, et pourquoy. Faites leur apres esplucher vne comparaison de l'vtilité de la doctrine de ces deux ou de leurs semblables, contre celle des autres Escriuains: et finalement trier en raisonnant sur les causes, ceux de cette plantureuse bande des Muses et Minerue, qu'ils aymeroient mieux ressembler et dissembler. Quiconque sçaura pertinemment respondre de tout cela, ie luy donne loy de gouuerner, sceller et canceler ma creance sur nostre Liure.

Pour venir aux reproches que ces personnes font aux Essais, ie ne les daignerois rabattre, à dessein de les mettre en grace auec elles, malades non curables par les mains de la raison: toutefois i'en veux dire vn mot en consideration de quelques esprits, qui meritent bien qu'on employe vn aduertissement afin de les garder de chopper apres les choppeurs; si desormais le credit qu'vn Ouurage de telle excellence s'est acquis aupres de toutes les belles ames, par la force de la verité, ne nous releue de ce besoin: et sans doute la guerre qu'il a soufferte entre les cerueaux foibles, et la faueur qu'il a nettement gaignée entres les forts, ont esté aussi necessaire appendances de son merite l'vne que l'autre. Premierement on l'accuse de quelque vsurpation du Latin, de la fabrique de nouueaux mots, et d'employer quelques phrases nonchalantes ou Gasconnes. Ie responds, que ie leur donne gaigné, s'ils peuuent dire, pere, ny mere, frere, sœurs, boire, manger, dormir, veiller, aller, voir, sentir, ouïr et toucher, ny tout le reste en somme des plus communs vocables qui tombent en nostre vsage, sans parler Latin. Ouy, mais le besoin d'exprimer nos conceptions, dit quelqu'vn d'eux, nous a contraints à l'emprunt de ceux-cy. Ma replique est, que le besoin de mon Pere tout de mesmes, l'a contraint de pa.ter en ceux-là ses emprunts outre les tiens, pour exprimer ses conceptions, qui sont outre les tiennes. Ie sçay bien qu'on a tourné les plus nobles conceptions, et les plus excellens Liures en nostre langue, où les traducteurs se sont par fois rendus plus superstitieux d'innouer et puiser aux sources estrangeres: mais on doit considerer, que les Essais resserrent en vne ligne, ce que ces traducteurs osent alonger en quatre: ioint que nous ne sommes peut-estre pas assez sçauans, ny moy, ny ceux qui deuisent ainsi, pour sentir si ces traductions sont par tout aussi vigoureuses que leur texte. I'ayme à dire Gladiateur, i'ayme à dire, Escrimeur à outrance, aussi fait ce Liure: cependant qui m'astreindroit à quitter l'vn des deux, ie retiendrois Gladiateur: et si sçay quel bruit on en menera: par tout en chose semblable, ie ferois de mesme. I'entens bien, qu'il faut vser de bride aux innouations et aux emprunts: mais n'est-ce pas vne sottise de dire, que si l'on n'en defend que l'abus, et qu'on reconnoisse qu'auec la bride et la prudence il soit loisible de les employer, on defende aux Essais de l'oser entreprendre comme incapables, le Roman de la Rose en ayant esté iugé capable autrefois? veu mesmes que le langage de son siecle, n'estoit pressé non plus que les nostre, sinon de la seule necessité d'amendment: et qu' auant ce vieil Liure, on ne laissoit pas de parler et de se faire entendre autant qu'on vouloit. Horace vrayement ne s'en tairoit pas.

> Ce que Rome a souffert de Plaute et de Cæcile,
> Le peut-elle interdire à Varie ou Virgile?
> Ne doy-ie orner langue, enflañt mes vers hardis,
> Puis qu'Ennie et Caton l'osoient orner jadis?
> Il semerent de fleurs le Poëme et la Prose,
> Prestans de nouueaux noms à mainte et mainte chose,
> Et tousiours à bon droict les chemins sont ouuers,
> A forger par les temps phrases et mots diuers.

A qui la force d'esprit manque, comme à ceux du temps de ce Roman; les vocables suffisans à s'exprimer, ne manquent iamais: et suis en doute au contraire, qu'en cette large et profonde vberté de la langue Grecque, ils ne se trouuassent encore souuent manques et taris chez Socrates et chez Aristote et Platon. On ne peut representer que les imaginations communes, par les mots communs: quiconque a des conceptions ou pensées extraordinaires, doit chercher des termes inusitez à s'exprimer. N'ont-ils pas aussi raison ie vous prie: qui pour huict ou dix mots qui leur sembleront estrangers ou hardis, ou pour trois manieres de parler Gasconnes, et vingt bisarres ou nonchalantes, et desreglées s'ils veulent, qu'ils espieront en cette piece si transcendante par tout, et mesmement au langage; n'y trouueront à parler que pour mesdire? Est-il defendu d'appliquer quelques lustre sur vn beau visage, pour en releuer la blancheur? Quand ie defend mon Pere des charges du dialecte, ie me mocque. Pardonnerions-nous à ces correcteurs, s'ils auoient forgé cent dictions à leur poste, pourueu que chacune d'elles en signifiast deux ou trois ordinaires: et dictions qui perçassent vne matiere iusques à la mouëlle, tandis que les autres la frayent ou frappent simplement? S'ils nous representoient mille nouuelles phrases tres-delicates, viues, basties et inuentées d'vne forme inimitable; qui dissent en demy signe, le sujet, le succez et la louange de quelque chose? mille metaphores esgalement admirables et inouyes, mille tres-propres applications de mots enfoncez et approfondis à diuers et nouueaux sens?

(car voila l'innouation qu'ils nous repriment, et qu'ils craignent que les Essais fassent passer en exemple) et tout cela, dis-je, sans qu'vn Lecteur y pût rien accuser que nouueauté, mais bien Françoise? Or à mesure que iardiner et prouigner à propos vne langue, est vne plus belle enterprise, à mesure est-elle permettable à moins de gens, ainsi que remarque mon Pere. C'est à quelques ieunes discoureurs du siecle, qu'il faudroit donner de l'argent pour ne s'en mesler plus, soit pour edifier ou démolir: *comme* à ce mauuais flusteur antique, qui prenoit simple loyer pour sonner, et double pour se taire. Ayant traité du langage ailleurs, i'y renuoye le Lecteur: et la seule necessité de l'occasion presente est cause que ie range icy ce dernier des Essais, il le faut transcrire: il n'ennuye iamais le Lecteur que quand il cesse, et tout y est parfait, s'il n'auoit point de fin. Vn si glorieux langage, deuroit estre par edict *assigné* particulierement à *proclamer* les grandes victoires, absoudre l'innocence, faire sonner le commandement des Loix, planter la Religion aux cœurs des hommes, et à loüer Dieu. C'est en verité l'vn des principaux cloux, qui fixeront la volubilité de nostre vulgaire François, continué iusques icy: son credit qui s'esleuera chaque iour, empeschant que de temps en temps on ne trouue suranné ce que nous disons auiourd'huy, parce qu'il preseruera de le dire: et le faisant iuger bon, d'autant qu'il sera sien.

On proscrit apres non seulement pour impudique et dangereuse, mais pour ie ne sçay quoy de nefas, vsons de ce terme, sa liberté d'anatomiser l'Amour surquoy ie n'oserois respondre vn seul mot, ny consequemment sur plusieurs autres articles touchez en cette Preface, apres les belles responses que luy-mesme y fait: n'estoit que nos hommes qui iugent toutes choses par opinion, gousteront à l'aduenir mieux sa defense d'vne autre main, bien que pire, qu'ils ne feront de la sienne propre. Cela s'appellera prester ma foiblesse, à seruir de lustre à sa force: mais c'est tout vn, ie luy dois assez pour subir cét *inconuenient*. Est-il donc raisonnable de condamner la theorique de l'Amour pour coupable et diffamable, establissant sa pratique pour honneste, legitime et sacramentale par le Mariage? Consentons neantmoins, s'il plaist à ces gens, qu'elle soit coulpable, et diffamable, il reste à nier qu'elle soit impudique, pour celuy qui la traitte, ny pour son Lecteur: specialement traitée par vn personnage, qui demeslant cette fusée, comme correcteur et scrutateur perpetuel des actions et des passions humaines, presche soigneusement la modestie et la bien-seance exemplaire aux Dames, et les dissuade de faire l'amour, ainsi que l'Autheur dont il est question. Car outre que ce Liure prouue fort bien le maquerelage, que l'art de la ceremonie et ses exceptions prestent à Venus; quels suffragans de chasteté sont ceux-cy, ie vous prie, qui vont encherissant si haut la force et la grace des effets de Cupidon, que de faire accroire à la ieunesse, qu'on n'en sçauroit pas simplement ouïr deuiser sans peril et sans transport? s'ils le disent à des femmes, n'ont-elles pas raison de mettre leur abstinence en garde contre vn prescheur qui soustient, que c'est chose impossible, d'ouïr seulement parler de la table sans rompre son ieusne? Ie diray donc, qu'à peine S. Paul eust-il refusé la langue ou l'oreille au besoin, sur l'examen de l'Amour, puis qu'il fonde sa vertu à sentir et supporter les aiguillons mesmes de cette passion en son corps: *nam virtus in infirmitate perficitur*. Et quoy, Socrates, qui se leuoit continent d'aupres ce bel et brillant sujet, dont la Grece, à ce qu'on disoit, n'eust sceu porter deux; faisoit-il alors moins acte de chasteté, d'autant qu'il auoit oüy, veu, dit et touché que ne faisoit Timon, se pourmenant seul tandis en vn desert? *Liuia*, selon l'opinion des Sages, parloit en Imperatrice et capable Dame, telle qu'on l'a reconnuë, soustenant qu'aux yeux d'vne femme chaste, vn homme nud n'estoit non plus qu'vne image. Que si quelqu'vn croid neantmoins que cela veüille dire, qu'elle leur eust conseillé d'aller voir vn tel spectacle exprés, ou de se leuer plus matin, pour lire toutes les folies des Poëtes Grecs et Latins, il declare assez, sa bénevë. Cette Princesse iugeoit, sans doute, qu'il faut que le monde bannisse du tout l'Amour et sa mere au loin: ou que s'il les reserue chez luy, c'est vne basteleric à quiconque ce soit de faire le pudique, pour sequestrer des yeux, de la langue et des oreilles les *images et les discours* de la cabale de ce Dieu. Outre que les hommes et les femmes pour qui l'Amour est banny; i'entens qui n'ont aucune part reelle ou presente en luy; sont forcez d'aduoüer, qu'ils y ont part presomptiue, ou du moins acceptable, par le mariage: raison qui les doit diuertir de refuser au besoin l'œil, la langue ou l'oreille, à telles appendances de ce mesme Dieu, cela s'appelle telles images, et tels discours. Ie n'approuue pas pourtant les licences de ces Poëtes-là, *non plus* que l'allegation que mon Pere en fait par fois, ny mesmes quelque emancipation de son creu; tant pource qu'elles repugnent à mon goust, que d'autant que ie suis tousiours d'auis que chacun contienne autant qu'il peut ses faicts et ses paroles sous le ioug des formes et ceremonies communes: mais i'accuse encores plus que telles erreurs ceux qui les accusent outre leur mesure. La plus legitime consideration que les Dames puissent apporter au refus et fuite d'escouter ces choses, c'est de craindre qu'on ne les tente par leur moyen. Mais outre qu'au contraire, ainsi que i'ay dit, la ceremonie est ministre de Venus, soit par son intention originaire, soit par accident; ces Dames doiuent auoir grand'honte de ne se sentir de bon or que iusques à la coupelle, et continentes, que parce qu'*elles ne rencontrent rien* qui hurte la continence. L'assaut est le labeur du combattant, mais est aussi pere de sa victoire et de son triomphe, et toute vertu desire l'espreuue, comme tenant son essence mesme du contraste. Si n'entens-ie pas pourtant, que la chasteté deust désirer ou souffrir l'assaut, en plus amples termes, que ceux dont il est question: c'est à dire vagues, generaux, et hors tout interest et dessein particulier qui pût estre aposté pour la surprendre. Ce ne sont pas donc les discours francs et speculatifs sur l'Amour, qui sont dangereux; ce sont les mols et delicats, les recits artistes et chatoüilleux des passions amoureuses, et de leurs effets, qui si voyent aux Romans, aux Poëtes, et en telles especes d'Escriuains: dangereux dis-je tousiours, mais que le seroient beaucoup moins, sans l'encherissement et le haut prix où les loix de la ceremonie et leurs exceptions, ont esleué Cupidon et Venus. Toutesfois certes i'ay grand peur, que le genre humain ne puisse sçauoir plus dangereusement quel Animal est l'Amour, que quand personne ne luy dit. Ie crains, en somme, que si l'on conjoint en vn la ieunesse, l'inclination naturelle, les delices, vne gentillesse natale auec vne nourritute polie, animées d'abondant par l'art et le succez des ceremonies alleguées; *on* ne loge Cupidon à tel degre parmy ceux où toutes ces choses se trouueroient ensemble, que pour beau que ces

Romans, et Poëtes, et le grand Platon mesme le peussent, descrire, il ne reste profondement inferieur, à l'image que des gens de cette dangereuse trempe luy supposent: en vn mot, la plus friande peinture de l'Amour qu'on leur puisse tracer, ternit en leur imagination l'idée qu'ils conçoiuent de luy naturellement.

Pour quelque legere obscurité qu'on reprend apres en nos Essais, ie diray; que la matiere n'estant pas aussi bien pour les nouices, il leur a deu suffire d'accommoder le style à la portée des profez seulement: on ne peut traitter les grandes choses, selon l'intelligence des petites et basses ames: car la comprehension des hommes ne va guerre outre leur inuention. Ce n'est pas icy le rudiment des apprentifs, c'est l'Alcoran des maistres: Oeuure non à gouster par vne attention superficielle, mais à digirer et chilifier, auec vne application profonde: et de plus, par vn tres-bon estomach? encore est-ce d'auantage, vn des derniers bons Liures qu'on doit prendre comme il est le dernier qu'on doit quitter. Qu'est-ce diray-ie à ce propos, que Plutarque trouueroit plus à dire au bon-heur de son siecle, que le manquement de la naissance de ce Liure? et que feroit plus volontiers Xenophon, s'il retournoit, que de l'estudier auec nous? Il se peut enfin nommer la quintessence de la vraye Philosophie, le throsne iudicial de la raison, l'hellebore de la folie, le hors de page des esprits, et la resurrection de la verité morale et humaine; c'est à dire la plus vtile et seule accessible: ie laisse toûjours à part celle que Dieu nous communique par le don l'Euangile, et de sa grace paternelle.

Ie voy qu'on le galoppe en suitte du reproche de foiblesse, sur la peu d'obligation qu'on pretend qu'il s'est donné, de traitter les matieres au long. Surquoy considerant s'ils auoient raison, ie n'ay seu trouuer aux Opuscules de Plutarque, guere ou point du tout, de sujets traittez à pleine voile, outre le nombre qui s'en void aux Essais: Comme de l'Amitié, sur laquelle il a recontré ce que les autres semblent auoir seulement cherché iusques icy: de la Neantise et vanité de l'homme en l'Apologie de Sebond, piece si pleine en son espece, que le souhait n'y peut qu'adiouster: de la Vertu: de l'Art de conferer: le discours qu'il manie sur des Vers de Virgile: contre la Medicine: de l'institution des enfans: du Pedantisme: de la Solitude: Que le goust des biens et des maux dépend en partie de l'opinion que nous en auons: du Repentir: de la Diuersion: de l'Experience: de l'Exercitation: sur la Simplicité des discours de Socrates au Traitté de la Physionomie: le poinct des Fins de l'homme qu'il agite si pleinement en diuers lieux: comme aussi celuy de l'Erreur des opinions vulgaires, accompagné de leur correction: sa Peinture: le tres-difficile Examen du poids et merite de tant de diuerses actions des hommes et l'Anatomie parfaite de leurs passions et mouuemens interieurs: sur lesquelles actions, passions et mouuemens interieurs des hommes, ie ne sçay si iamais autre Autheur dit ny considera ce qu'il a dit et consideré. Somme, faisant exception des choses qu'il a traittées amplement, ie les trouue en tel nombre, qu'elles occupent presque la masse complete de l'ouurage. Mais à bon escient quand il n'auroit approfondy qu'vn de ces articles de la sorte, qu'ils le sont, luy pourroit-on imputer que sa foiblesse l'empeschast d'en faire autant des autres? ou si bien Hercules n'auoit battu qu'vn homme, seroit-il peu vaillant, pourueu que celuy-là fust Anthée ou Gerion? La cause qui fait sembler que cét Autheur comprenne moins de matieres pleines que les autres; c'est que, parce qu'il ressetre en vn volume toutes les matieres de la Philosophie Morale, il est force qu'outre les pleines et combles il entasse de surcroist, infinies manques ou courtes, plus que cés autres-là ne font: lesquelles à l'aduis de ces repreneurs excluent les pleines et combles, ou font qu'elles ne doiuent pas estre considerées: outre la bestise de ces gens, de manquer maintefois de reconnoistre la suitte par laquelle il continuë et accomplit les matieres afin d'y apporter ce comble, à trauers de quelque gaillardise d'intermede où son style est porté. Mais qu'est-ce que de traitter les matieres tout du long? il n'est rien, dit-il, dont il voye le tout: et moins le voyent ceux qui luy promettent de l'escrire. Quiconque n'espuise vn theme sans laisser que dire apres soy, ne le traitte pas tout du long: toutefois ie ne voy point que Platon, escriuant de Lysis, ait soustrait le moyen à son disciple Aristote, à Ciceron, à Plutarque, à Lucien, et fraischement aux Essais, de nous entretenir de l'Amitié: ny que luy-mesme par sa Republique, pour entiere et plantureuse que nos accusateurs la reconnoissent ait empesché de composer cent autres Republiques: ainsi du reste. Voila doncques, que manier à leur mode vn poinct tout entier, ce n'est autre chose, que le laisser à manier tout entier encores comme vne source inépuisable, à cent autres Escriuains qui viendront apres. Que si corrigeans leur plaidoyer, ils disent; qu'on le doit au moins manier amplement: ie leur consens, que cette amplitude soit quelque chose; mais non pas de tel poids, qu'elle ne se puisse trouuer en vn ouurage indigne de recommendation: tant s'en faut que son manquement, accordé qu'il fust en nostre Liure pût stestrir par coherence, la transcendante sagesse de ses conceptions. Ie leur demande s'ils n'aymeroient pas autant auoir escrit ce seul mot d'Aristote; Que l'amitié est vne ame en deux corps, que tout le Toxaris, bien que ce soit vn bon Escrit, voire le Lælius peut-estre, qui vaut encores plus? Enquerez Platon, s'il n'ayme au Sympose l'Oraison d'Agathon, que parce que celle d'Aristophanes l'accompagne, estendant l'Oeuure: mais aduisez que deuient Platon en ses plus amples et longs Ouurages mesmes, si c'est le plus, et non le mieux dire, qu'on cherche? Or si c'est le poids des conceptions qui fait valoir vn Ouurage, autant le fait-il en celles de diuers obiets ramassez ensemble, que d'vn seul, oüy plus à mon aduis: de ce qu'outre que l'on void par cette diuersité, que l'esprit qui parle est plus vniuersel, il paroist aussi qu'il est plus grand: puis qu'il a pû frapper de bons coups, si bons coups y a, sans se donner l'aduantage de s'ouurir si à plein qu'il feroit, s'il prenoit loisir de s'acharner sur vne matiere: en laquelle d'abondant vn trait enfante l'autre, lors qu'on vient à la filer de long, relayant et secondant l'ouurier. Celuy qui prend six fueilles de papier pour escrire vn Traité de la Medecine, ie ne me soucie gueres s'il n'en occupe que deux sur ce texte, pourueu qu'il me rechausse les quatre autres feüilles, de quelque aussi riche couleur: qui perd morceau pour morceau, ne perd rien. Et me rapporte bien au Lecteur, sçauoir, si la couleur dont les Essais luy rechaussent les Chapitre des Boiteux, des Choses, de la Physionomie, de la Vanité, sans aller plus loin; se doit contenter d'estre simplement appellée aussi riche que celle qu'on luy promettoit par la tiltre. Puis qu'estans hommes on ne nous peut faire voir vne chose pleinement et

parfaitement; il faut que les Autheurs s'efforcent à mettre ordre que nous les voyons toutes ou plusieurs, le moins imparfaitement qu'ils se puisse. Ainsi quand mes parties auroient prouué, que ce Liure ne traite rien amplement, qu'ils choisissent à leur poste autant de sujets qu'il en comprend, pour nous donner sur chacun à son exemple, vn des meilleurs mots qui s'y puissent dire: et lors i'ay recouuré maistre en eux, auec pareille ioye qu'vn autre le trouua jadis en Socrates: quand apres l'auoir oüy haranguer, il quitta ses disciples, afin d'estre disciple luy-mesme. Il n'est point de discours ny trop longs ny trop briefs, ny diuagans indeuëment, pour toucher vne de leurs autres censures, si l'on ne perd temps à les lire.

Dauantage, ie viens de rencontrer deux ou trois nouuelles obiections contre mon pere en Baudius: autheur que ie respecte ailleurs, et par son esprit, et par obligation, m'ayant du fond de la Holande honoré de ses Eloges. Il le dément, de publier pour foible sa memoire, qui paroist vigoureuse, à son aduis, par les authoritez, les allegations, et les exemples des Essais. *Il se trompe*: car mon mesme pere escriuant sans aucune prouision de ces choses, il lisoit aux interualles de sa composition les descouurant de hazard çà et là dans les Liures: et puis assortissoit chaque piece, en sa place. Baudius l'arguë aussi de vanité, de ce qu'il escrit, que ce defaut de memoire le portoit à ne pouuoir retenir le nom de ses gens, que par celuy de leur nation: semblant à cét autheur, que cela doit presupposer vn nombre infiny de domestiques. Qu'elle conclusion? Nostre dame! veu que le nostre ne parle nullement qu'ils fussent en quantité: et veu qu'il ne peut non-plus esperer, de faire par ce recit imaginaire le nombre grand: puis que s'il eust esté tel, il estoit aussi facile d'en oublier les nations, ou les prouinces, que les noms propres. Cét objet est assez rabattu par vn seul mot: c'est qu'en tout son liure, il ne s'attribuë pas seulement secretaire ny maistre d'hostel, et n'appelle pas gouuernante, la femme dont il parle, qui seruoit l'enfance de sa fille: l'vn et l'autre de ces titres neantmoins, estans en nostre siecle si commun parmy les domestiques des maisons mediocrement qualifiée, et moindres que la sienne. Qui plus est, Baudius pretend, que bien qu'il triomphe en metaphores, il s'y laisse par fois emposter de licence à l'exemple, dit-il, des grand orateurs. Ie ne voy point ces licences: il en deuoit remarquer quelques-vnes, à faute dequoy son propre silence luy sert de response. Il le querelle apres d'estimer la science *indigne de sa noblesse*, pource qu'il presche en diuers lieux son ignorance. Cette atteinte est encores autant indirecte: car parmy ses defauts il est forcé d'aduoüer cettuy-là, puis qu'il est veritable, d'ignorer certaines et plusieurs choses: ayant promis sa peinture complete et iuste. S'il honore la science ou non, au partir de là, nous le pouuons comprendre de cette parole, qu'il prononce autrepart; que ceux qui la dédaignent monstrent assez leur bestise: et dit au chapitre, De l'art de conferer; que le sçauoir en son vray et droict vsage est le plus noble ot le plus puissant acquest des hommes. Baudius en toutes ces censures, se deuoit souuenir d'vn *mot* de Sertorius, ce me semble, ayant battu son ieune ennemy, qui ne se deffioit et ne s'armoit que d'vn costé; qu'vn suffisant capitaine doit *autant regarder derriere luy, que deuant*: ce que si Baudius eust fait, il auroit trouué en vn passage le correctif de l'autre; quand le besoin l'eust requis.

Au surplus, ceux qui pretendent calomnier la pieté de nostre autheur, pour auoir si meritoirement inscrit vn heretique au roolle des excellens poëtes de ce temps, ou sur quelqu'autre puncti̇lle de pareil air; me ietteroient volontiers en soupçon, qu'ils essayassent à nous faire croire, qu'ils ont des compagnons en la desbauche de la leur. Tout ainsi qui iamais homme ne voulut p.us de mal aux illegitimes et querelleuses religions, que celuy dont est question; de mesme par consequent, il fust partysan formel de ce qui regardoit respect de la vraye: et la touche de celle-cy, c'estoit pour luy, comme les essais le publient, et pour moy sa creature, la saincte loy de nos peres, leur tradition et leur authorité. Qui pourroit aussi supporter ces nouueaux tirans du siecle, ces escheleurs de ciel; qui pensent arriuer à connoistre Dieu par leurs moyens, et circonscrire luy, ses œuures et leur creance aux limites de leur perquisition et de leur raison: ne voulans rien receuoir pour vray, s'il ne leur semble vray-semblable? Ou toutes choses sont plus immenses et plus incroyable, là sont Dieu et ses faicts plus certainement: Trismegiste à costé de ce propos, appellant la Deïte, cercle dont le centre est par tout, et le circonference nulle part. Quant à Baudius qui touche aussi cette corde, il nous deuoit marquer en quoy consistoient ces passages contre la mesme religion, qu'il dit meriter la liture en nos Essais: ou se resoudre à souffrir luy-mesme, vne liture, de celuy par lequel il accuse en eux ce defaut. Mais il est bien vray, que ce liure estant ennemy profez des sectes nouuelles, plus Baudius huguenot l'accuse en l'article de la Religion, et plus il magnifie son triomphe, et le declare loüable en ce poinct-là. Sur ce lieu principalement, faut-il escouter nostre Liure d'aguet; et se garder de broncher en quelque inique interpretation de ses intentions, par sa libre, brefue et brusque façon de s'exprimer. M'amuseray-ie à particulariser quelques regles, pour se gouuerner en cette lecture: il faut dire en vn mot; ne t'en mesle pas, ou sois sage. Aucuns liures ne sont sages, pour ceux qui ne sont point assez sages pour eux: En effect ie n'ay iamais veu personne l'attaquer, soit du costé de la religion ou d'autre, qui n'ait rabattu son atteinte de luy-mesme; faisant voir sur le champ, qu'il luy imposoit, ou qu'il ne l'entendoit pas.

Pro captu lectoris habent sua fata libelli. Ce que ie ne dis nullement pour Baudius, lequel comme i'ay remarqué, n'a choqué ce lieu que par interest et passion. Ie rends graces à Dieu, que parmy la confusion des creances effrenées qui trauersent et tempestent aujourd'huy son Eglise, il luy ait pleu de l'estayer d'vn si puissant pillier humain. La foy des simples ayant à desirer d'estre fortifiée mondainement contre tels assauts, ainsi qu'elle l'estoit spirituellement par cette faueur diuine, qui luy est acquise auant les siecles; la bonne fortune luy fit vn present tres-propre à ce besoin, de luy produire vne ame de si haute suffisance, qui la verifiast par son approbation. En effect, si la Religion Catholique, à la naissance de ce personnage, eust sceu combien il deuoit estre excellent, quelle apprehension eust esté la sienne de l'auoir pour aduersaire? Certes il a rendu vraye sa proposition, que des plus habiles et des plus simples ames, se faisoient les bien-croyans; comme aussi la mienne, que de ces deux extremitez se faisoient les gens de biens. Car ie tiens le party de ceux que iugent que le vice procede de sottise, et conse-

quemment, que plus on approche de la haute suffisance, plus on s'esloigne de luy : proposition que ie me suis peut-estre efforcé de prouuer en autre lieu. Quelle teste bien faite, ne fieroit à Platon sa bource et son secret, ayant seulement leu ses oeuures ? Par cette consideration, ie m'esprisay le reproche d'extrauagance dont on me chargeoit, alors que i'honorois et cherissois si fort cét esprit sur la simple lecture des Essais ; qu'auant l'auoir ny pratiqué, ny veu, i'estois aussi cordialement sa fille que depuis. Ie me representois, que toute bien-veillance estoit mal fondée, si elle ne l'estoit sur la suffisance et la vertu de son objet, et que non seulement la suffisance de l'ouurier paroissoit en ces escrits là, mais y paroissoit en appareil si haut, que le vice ne pouuoit loger chez luy, ny la vertu luy manquer : et que par consequent, nul ne deuoit differer à luy departir cette bien-veillance, iusques à l'entreueuë ; si ce n'estoit quelqu'vn auquel il faschast de confesser, que sa raison eust plus de credit à luy noüer vne alliance, que les yeux ; et faschast d'aduoüer consequemment encores qu'il pust rien faire de bien, s'il les auoit bandez. Pour engendrer l'amour, intelligence corporelle et spirituelle, la presence et la veue sont autant requises que le discours : mais la bien-veillance ou amitié, comme estans vne intelligence toute spirituelle, doit germer spirituellement par le pur discours et la connoissance : bien qu'elle se puisse enrichir de presence, par la conuersation assistée et confortée des offices qui la peuuent suiure.

Reuenons cependant, pour dire, que la plus generale censure qu'on fasse sur nostre liure, c'est que son autheur s'y depeint. Quoy le vulgaire le blasme, d'auoir parlé de soy-mesme, et ne loue pas de n'auoir rien fait qu'il n'ait osé dire en public, ny de la plus meritoire verité de toutes, celle qu'on dit de soy pleinement et sincerement ? Il n'adjouste pas aussi, que ceux qui le rabroüent le plus asprement de nous auoir donné sa peinture, osent encore moins qu'ils ne veulent en faire ainsi de la leur : et que nul ne peut auoir bonne grace à l'accuser de produire sa vie nuë aux yeux du monde, sauf celuy-là, qui perd de la gloire à s'abstenir d'en faire autant. Il est aduis au peuple qu'il seroit bien loisible, d'exposer au iour quelques actions publiques, suiuant Cesar et Xenophon, mais non pas les priuée. Veritablement, outre que ces deux-là declarent aussi force menuës actions de leur vie, comme de nostre âge, Messieurs de Monluc et de Noüe racontent iusques à leurs songes ; le peuple n'entend pas que valent, ny les privées, ny les publiques, ny que public mesme n'est fait que pour le particulier. Mon Pere a pensé ne te pouuoir rien mieux apprendre, que l'vsage de toy-mesme : et te l'enseigne tantost par raisons, tantost par espreuue : si sa pointure est vicieuse ou fausse, plains-toy de luy : si elle est bonne et vraye, remercie-le, de n'auoir pas voulu refuser à ta discipline le poinct plus instructif de tous, c'est l'exemple. Tu prends, au reste, singulier plaisir, qu'on te fasse voir, ou qu'on te fasse toy-mesme vn chef d'armées et d'estat : il faut estre honneste homme auant que d'estre l'vn ny l'autre parfaitement ; nos Essais te donnent, aux exemples de leur ouurier, tablature de particuliere efficace pour deuenir tel : oüy certes, il est requis de passer par leur escole, pour esueiller tes facultez à la capacité de monter en ces deux grades, quand besoin seroit. *Præcepta docent, exempla mouent.* Il est bien vray, que le commun estime la science de viure, c'est à dire de se rendre honneste homme et sage, si facile, qu'il croid que c'est chose superfluë de l'enseigner : car mesmes, ainsi que Plutarque remarque, il sent bien que les enfans ne sçauroient *dancer*, ny piquer cheuaux, ny trancher à table, ny saliier encore, qui ne le leur apprend : mais quant à l'art de viure, cét animal à plusieurs testes ne l'y trouua iamais à dire. Il s'abuse fort : il est beaucoup plus aisé de vaincre que de viure, et plus triomphans que de sages : dont il arriue, que mon pere imagine bien Socrates en la place d'Alexandre, Alexandre en celle de Socrates, il ne peut. Les exemples de ce personnage te semblent-ils bons : remercie la fortune qu'ils soient tombez deuant tes yeux : te semblent-ils mauuais ? ne crains pas aussi que beaucoup de *gens* soient pour les suiure. Ouy, mais apres tout, on n'a pas accoustumé de se dépeindre soy-mesme ; voila le gref. N'est-ce pas vn grand cas, de la tyrannie de la coustume sur le vulgaire ? ou n'est elle pas importune en cét endroit sur tous ; de le reduire à ne s'*en*querir iamais de ce qui se doit faire, mais de ce qui se fait ? Vulgaire prest à commettre toute vilenie par bien-seance, si ses voisins continuent vn temps de la commettre : renonçant à faire tout bien, voir à soy-mesme, si comme leur singe ils ne l'y traisnent par exemple : et prest dauantage à iustifier tous maux que les puissans s'aduiseront de luy faire souffrir ; pourueu que par la suitte d'vne année, ces excez occupent quelque mine d'vsage. La coustume luy met-elle l'homme en honneur ? il n'adore plus les Dieux mesmes que sous sa forme. Au reste ie ne consens non plus au sous-reproche qu'on fait à nostre autheur, de ce qu'il rapporte en cette sienne peinture, iusques aux moindres particularitez de ses mœurs ; et la iuge autant instructiue par ces punctilles que par les traicts plus solemnels ; tant à cause que les grands efforts dépendent ordinairement des petites actions, que d'autant aussi que la vie mesme n'est qu'vne contexture de punctilles et niaiseries. Obseruez pour vne des preuues de ma these, sur quelles matieres le propre conseil des roys prend de trois fois l'vne ses mœurs deliberations. Les autres escriuains ont eu tort, de ne s'arrester pas à nous instruire en des actions pour petites qu'elles fussent, où plusieurs pouuoient faillir, et que nul ne pouuoit éuiter : et n'est aucune chose meslée dans les interests de l'homme, qui soit petite ou legere de poids : elle pese assez si elle touche. Il a certainement eu raison d'enseigner comme il se portoit en l'amour, au deuis, à la table, et à la garderobe encore : puis que tant de gens se sont perdus, ou fort incommodez, pour ne sçauoir pas se gouuerner en ces choses là.

Quelqu'vn le lapide d'inuectiues en particulier, de ce qu'il declare ses erreurs et ses fautes en cette description de soy-mesme. Vrayement c'est vne chose monstrueuse ! comme le monde est composé, nul de ses compagnons ne l'estime pire, pour estre défaillant de cette part qui le dit estre : ou plutost, chacun d'eux auroit à plaisir qu'on creust qu'il seroit semblable, si mesme il n'en estoit rien ; mais il l'estiment pire, de ne s'estre feint autre : et se presument fort honnestes gens et bien exemplaires, parce qu'ils se gardent d'aduoüer leurs vices. Heureux les trouuay-ie certes, qui pour se rendre vertueux, n'ont qu'à dénier leur vice. Mais quand ses fautes et preuarications seroient plus odieuses, seroit-il pourtant blasmable de les confesser ? veu mesmes qu'il les confesse sans impu-

dence, et auec reconnoissance d'auoir tort. Dieu reduit toutes les loix à ce mot: Ayme-moy sur toutes choses, et ton prochain comme toy-mesme: et nous voyons que de mille outrages que nous faisons à nostre prochain, nous ne luy en ferions pas quatre, si nous n'estions déguisez: parle déguisement font leur coup, les larrons, les empoisonneurs, assassins, liureurs de villes, brigands, tyrans en herbe, faux contracteurs, faux amis, faux Iuges, et qui non? En somme leuez le masque d'entre nous, vous en extirpez presque du tout l'offence sur autruy: l'uniuers est au calme: car les hommes seroient bons par tout, si par tout on les voyoit. Aussi sçauons-nous qu'il n'est rien, que Iesus-Christ reproche si griefuement aux Pharisiens que l'hypocrisie: *et notez* aux Pharisiens, ausquels il auoit lors pourtant à reprocher le complôt de sa mort. Dont il arriue que Dauid n'escrit pas plus de loüanges à son Seigneur, que de publiques confessions de ses delicts: et Sainct Augustin ny S. Ierosme ne se sont pas oubliez aux mesmes confessions. Outre plus, la Iustice ne tire son effet que de la découuerte des crimes: donnant la gehenne aussi, pour y contraindre les hommes: et l'Eglise parfait sa confession auriculaire, par la generale et publique. Chacun au reste se doit constituer Iuge sur soy-mesme: comme tel, mon Pere declare et foüette ses vices, non en priué seulement, mais en public: puis que le preuost ne se contente pas de punir son coupeur de bource, si ce n'est en pleines *hales*: afin que le *chastisement* de celuy que plusieurs peuuent ressembler, aduertisse plusieurs de *ne luy* ressembler pas. Nos correcteurs disent; qu'il y a de l'effronterie à prescher ses *imperfections* et ses tares: noble *information*, qui veut guarantir l'ordure du faict par la pudeur de la negation! reformation que le plus meschant ayme le mieux, et soustient le plus entre les bourreaux et les tourmens! Or apres tout, celuy vers qui la pudeur n'a point eu la force de le pouuoir garder d'estre ingrat, lasche ou traistre; s'il le cele ou dénie, ce n'est pas la pudeur qui peut desormais auoir la force de le luy faire dénier: c'est quelqu'autre respect. Grande faueur au criminel, que ce luy soit vertu de voiler *ou démentir la verité. Ceux qui craignent*, que qui nous permettroit de publier nos vices, nous leueroit le frein de la vergogne, se trompent: il est plus de personnes qui feroient banqueroute à la paillardise, s'*ils estoient contraints* de dire tout ce qu'ils font; qu'*ils* n'en est qui osassent continuer d'estre larrons, *meurtriers* et traistres, estans necessitez de se declarer tels. Sans doute vne telle coustume sçauroit arracher seule à dix millions d'hommes, des crimes que l'apprehension de la corde ne leur arrache pas. Puis comme dit nostre penitent: Il faut voir son vice, et l'estudier pour le redire: ceux qui le celent à autruy, le celent ordinairement à eux-mesmes: ils ne le tiennent pas pour assez couuert, s'ils le voyent: *et les* maux de l'ame s'obscurcissent en leur force, le plus malade les sent le moins: d'autant que l'ame perd le sentiment, perdant la santé, au contraire du corps. Voila pourquoy il les faut souuentefois remanier au iour: les ouurant et les euentrant du fond de nos entrailles, d'vne main impiteuse. Ce sont ses mots enuiron. Or de la méconnoissance de nos vices et de nos taches vient, outre l'empirement, le defaut de satisfaction vers Dieu, comme de la plus ample connoissance, vient la satisfaction plus ample. Ioint que pour nous apprendre à hayr la crasse, qui nous difforme le visage de la conscience, il sert de luy presenter à toute heure son miroüer; obtenez qu'elle trauaille à se contempler en cét estat, comme elle fait en s'estudiant pour se décrire, vous la portez à l'auoir en horreur. Mais laissons ce propos, aussi bien ne sçaurions-nous dire que se sornettes sur ce sujet, apres les excellentes choses que nostre autheur dit luy-mesme, aux Chapitres qui s'appellent, Sur des Vers de Virgile, et de l'Exercitation. Il est bien vray qu'en saison telle que la nostre, où les choses plus excellentes ont moins de credit, il faut que les sornettes en esperent.

Quant à quelques gros bonnets, qui le pretendoient taxer d'ignorance, ils montrent assez qu'ils veulent deuiser, et nous contenterons de les escouter pour toute réponse. Non seulement pour les respect des discours et considerations que cét Escriuain apporte sur l'ignorance et sur la science, si riches et sublimes, qu'on reconnoist assez, qu'il ne peut estre ignorant qu'où, et quand il luy plaist: et quiconque connoist l'ignorance, et n'est ignorant qu'à sa mode et à son mot, surpasse la science que d'autant qu'il publie aussi; que celuy qui le surprendra en ce vice, ne fera rien contre luy, voire mesmes que l'ignorance est sa maistresse forme; adjoûtons qu'encores ces gens ne la connoissent-ils en son ouurage, que par la profession qu'il fait d'estre son partysan. *Nul ne doit auoir honte d'ignorer*, s'il n'ignore les choses necessaires à l'homme en general, ou à luy en particulier par sa condition, ou celles qu'il veut qu'on croye qu'il sçache. Or non seulement nostre Autheur n'est blessé d'aucune de ces trois ignorances; mais toutes les fois qu'il parle de quelque science que ce soit, parlant presque de toutes par occasion, s'il n'en parle fort amplement, au moins ne s'y differre-t'il iamais, nonobstant sa profession d'ignorance. A quel prix ie vous supplie se tailleroit la science, telle que ces Messieurs mesmes la puissent figurer et allonger sa portée; si l'ignorance de cettuy-cy se taille au prix de l'Apologie de Sebonde, et du Chapitre de la Medecine, pour ne toucher que ces deux pieces seules de son liure? et notamment considerables, en cette occasion de monstrer, en cas que besoin fust, s'il est sçauant, ou s'il ne l'est pas; veu qu'elles sont hors de son principal gibier en la plus-part de leur estenduë, et presque vniuerselles en ce qu'on appelle vulgairement science et doctrine. Quel precieux ignorant, au surplus, qui conçoit si pompeusement l'ignorance que cettuy-cy? ignorant qui se connoist, qui se proclame, et qui reconnu pour tel, que par où il luy plaist qu'on le reconnoisse? quel precieux *ignorant*, qui fait voir où bon luy semble, que s'il n'a appris les sciences, c'est qu'il a senty qu'il pouuoit enseigner les meilleures sans les apprendre? ignorant enfin, qui sçait choisir aux mesmes sciences ce qui luy fait besoin; taxer à iuste prix la part qu'il en eslit, et celle qu'il en rebutte, et nous montrer le droict vsage de cette-là. Certes les sciences sont de si facile acquisition et distribution, qu'eux mesmes qui parlent, et deux mille autres dans Paris, feroient en trois ans dix mille docteurs en toutes les parties de la doctrine, qui peuuent à leur compte mesme défaillir à ce personnage; langue Grecque, Grammaire, Physique, Metaphysique, Mathematique: mais ie leur donne quinze, s'ils peuuent, s'amissans tous ensemble, forger en l'espace entiere de leur vie, ie ne dy pas vn pareil esprit et iugement; ouy bien seulement, vn esprit qui ait aussi bonne grace à tympaniser la science, que cettuy-cy l'ignorance. Qui peut trouuer telles sciences

de College, où communes, a dire, en cette hautesse d'entendement et de iugement, au cas mesmes qu' elles luy manquassent du tout; sinon celuy qui ne sçait que valent l'entendement ny le iugement en autruy, pource qu'il ne les possede pas? Si la science outre plus, se vante d'enrichir la suffisance, la suffisance se vante aussi d'auoir engendré la science: et le sçauant ne porte pas son talent par tout, ce que le suffisant fait: ny la science ne controlle iamais la suffisance: si fait bien la suffisance, la science: et l'instruit des mesures de sa force et de sa foiblesse, non au reuers. De plus, l'effet de celle-là s'exprime souuent à limiter, par fois à recuser de tout celle-cy: dont nostre Sage escrit; que le suffisant est suffisant à ignorer mesmes. Or l'appelle Sciences de College, ou communes, ces disciplines que ie viens de nommer, et toutes celles en vn mot qui sont hors la discipline de l'homme et de la vie: c'est à dire hors la Morale, consistant en la faculté d'agir, raisonner et iuger droitement: doctrine pour laquelle assister et seruir apres tout, les autres doctrines sont forgées, où elles le sont auec nul ou peu de fruict. Partant quiconque la tient en haut degré, comme faisoit ce mesme personnage, peut oublier ou negliger toutes les autres, quand il luy plaira: qui s'appellent purs amusemens scholastiques eu ceux qui ignorent celle-cy: et simples ornemens et adminicules en ceux qui la sçauent. Alcibiades trouuant vn iour Pericles empesché à dresser les comptes de son administration pour les rendre au peuple, iugea qu'il se deuoit plutost occuper à chercher le moyen de n'en rendre point. Et combien donc a plus dignement fait, que d'acquerir les sciences vulgaires dont il est question, celuy qui a releué son esprit à tel degré de hauteur par vne autre seule bien choisie, en luy dédiant tout ce soin que le commun des sçauans dissipe entre-elle et cette quantité de ses compagnes; que le manquement de celles-là ne luy peut apporter aucune imperfection ou perte, ny l'assistance aucun lustre, qu'il ne puisse pertinemment negliger? et qui sçait comprendre, et faire comprendre en suite à tout homme sage, que cette abstinence ou negligence est bien fondée? Ceux qui apprennent ces doctrines-là s'égalent à elles: celuy qui fait ce trait de les negliger à telle condition d'auantage, s'esleue par dessus elles: et Socrates, Monarque de la sagesse et du genre humain, éleut par son partage cette espece de sapience, sçauante aux mœurs, et par tout ailleurs ignorante, et s'y borna toute sa vie. Pour le regard de quelques-vns, qui veulent estendre les effets de cette pretenduë ignorance de l'esprit dont nous parlons, iusques au changement de quelques termes vsitez en l'art vulgairement, libertinage de sa methode, suite décousuë de ses discours, et manque de relation des Chapitres auec leurs tiltres mesmes par fois: s'ils sont capables de croire qu'vne teste de ce calibre ait manqué par incapacité à faire en cela, ce que tout escolier de quinze ans peut et fait, ie trouue qu'ils sont si plaisans à parler, que ce seroit dommage de les faire taire. Ces messieurs auec leurs belles animaduersions ont volontiers cueilly l'vne des branches de cette ignorance doctorale, laquelle mon pere vous aduertit en quelque lieu, que la science fait et engendre, comme elle défait la populaire. Ie dis qu'ils ont cueilly l'vne des branches de cette ignorance-là: car enfin il est vne autre ignorance haute et philosophique, qu'ils ne connoissent point, et qui nous est d'vne autre sorte, apportée et enseignée par la science, s'il est besoin de le dire apres ce que i'ay representé: science à laquelle apres elle montre le chemin qu'elle doit tenir, luy taille sa part, et luy fait voir, qu'elle n'est ny sage ny clair-voyante, si elle ne reconnoist releuer d'elle.

Il se voit vne espece d'impertinens iuges des essais, entre ceux-mesmes qui les ayment; ce sont ceux qui les loüent sans admiration, signamment en vn siecle si esloigné de ceux où tels fruicts germoient aultrefois. La vraye touche des esprits, c'est l'examen d'vn nouuel autheur: et celuy qui le lit, se met à l'espreuue plus qu'il ne l'y met. Cettuy-cy sans doute, feroit parler en homme rauy, le lecteur qui le sçauroit connoistre. Quiconque dit de Scipion, que c'est vn gentil Capitaine et desirable citoyen, et de Socrates, vn galand homme, leur fait plus de tort, que tel qui totalement ne parle point d'eux: à cause que si l'on ne leur donne tout, quand il est question de leur attribuer des aduantages, on leur oste tout. Vous ne sçauriez loüer telles gens, en les mesurant mediocrement, ny peut estre amplement: ils passent toute mesure, i'entens mesure qui dit et retient à dire: et peut-estre qu'ils passent encores celle qui ne retient rien. C'est à moy de cotter combien i'ay veu peu de cerueaux capables de mettre cét ouurage à iuste prix: moy certes qui ne l'y mets aussi qu'imbecilement. Nos gens pensent bien sauuer l'honneur de leur iugement, quand ils luy donnent ce gentil eloge: c'est vn gentil liure: ou, c'est vn bel ouurage: vn enfant de huict années en diroit bien autant. Apres tout ie leur demande, par où et iusques où beau? quels raisonnemens, quelle force, quels argumens des anciens luy font honte; et veux finalement qu'ils me notent, que c'est que vous y pouuez surprendre, que Plutarque et gens de sa marque, n'eussent pris plaisir d'escrire s'ils s'y fussent rencontrez? quel iugement s'est oncques osé si pleinement esprouuer? s'est offert si nud? nous a laissé si peu que douter de sa profondeur, et que desirer de luy? ie laisse à part sa grace et son elegance. Au surplus ie ne daignerois pas loüer les essais, d'estre du tout à leur autheur; si plusieurs mesmes des liures anciens et fameux, n'estoient pour la pluspart dérobez. I'auoue qu'il a fait des emprunts: mais ils ne sont pas si frequens qu'ils puissent vsurper la proprieté de son oeuure, comme il nous aduertit. Et ceux qui pensent auoir appris de la bouche de son liure mesme, qu'il est basty des despoüilles de Plutarque et de Seneque; trouueroient s'ils auoient tourné feüillet, qu'il entend que ces deux autheurs l'assistent, non pas qu'ils le couurent. A quoy nous deuons adjoûter, que les emprunts sont si dextrement adaptez, que le benefice de l'application, ou maintefois quelque enrichissement dont il les rehausse de son cru, contrepesant ordinairement le benefice de l'inuention. Et qui plus est, ce qui necessairement se fait reconnoistre pour sien, ne doit rien au meilleur du reste: sur tout où la solide vigueur des conceptions et le iugement font leur ieu. Ceux qui ne connoistroient pas d'ailleurs cette vertu de nostre liure, d'estre entierement fils de son pere, sentent au genie, enfonçant sa lecture, qu'il est tout d'vne main. Mais quiconque veut sçauoir ce que c'est, de sentir au genie d'vn liure qu'il est tout d'vne main, l'apprenne par contrelustre aux escrits de Charron, perpetuel copiste de cettuy-cy, reserué les litences où il s'emporte par fois: si bon on mauuais copiste pourtant encore, hors de là mesme, ie croy l'auoir assez exprimé.

Adjoûtons, que cette égale et plaisante beauté de ce liure, son nouuel air, son intention et sa forme inconnuës iusques à nos iours, expriment assez, que quiconque l'ait escrit, l'a conceu. Nouuel air, dis-je; car vous le voyez d'vn particulier et special dessein, scrutateur vniuersel de l'homme interieur, et de plus, correcteur et fleau continu des erreurs communes. Ses compagnons enseignent la sagesse, il desenseigne la sottise; et a bien eu raison, de vouloir vuider l'ordure hors du vase, auant que d'y verser l'eau de naffe. Les autres discourent sur les choses; cettuy-cy sur le discours mesme, autant que sur elles. Ceux-là sont l'estude du Physicien, du Metaphysicien, du Dialecticien, du Mathematicien, ainsi du reste; cettuy-cy, l'estude de l'homme. Il esuente cent mines nouuelles, mais combien difficilement esuentables? Dauantage, il a cela de propre à luy, que vous diriez qu'il ait espuisé les sources du iugement, et qu'il ait tant iugé, qu'il ne reste plus que iuger apres. Et me semble qu'il ait encores quelque chose de nouueau et de peculier, en delices et floriditez perpetuelles. Comme aussi l'a-t'il en excellence et delicatesse dont il applique non seulement ses emprunts, desquels ie viens de parler, mais encore ses allegations et ses exemples; en sorte qu'autant d'applications ce sont presque autant de belles inuentions; loüange au demeurant qu'on peut estendre à la pluspart des coustures, de la tissure, et du bastiment de ses discours et de son langage.

Combien nous diront heureux les grandes ames qui naistront apres nous, de ce que la fortune nous ait produits en vne saison, ou nous ayons pû pratiquer la communication et la bien-veillance de celuy qui nous a porté ce beau fruict? et combien regretteront-elles, qu'elle leur ait dénié ce bien? Les grands esprits sont desireux outre mesure, de rencontrer leurs semblables; la conference et la societé leur estant plus necessaires et desirables qu'à tous autres, et ne se pouuans edifier ou rencontrer bien à poinct que de pareil à pareil. Or nous auons escrit vn mot de ce sujet en autre lieu; tant pour la merite de la chose, que pour le respect d'vn autheur qui a parlé si noblement et si precieusement, s'il se peut dire, de ces dons celestes, *sous le tiltre* de l'amitié.

Au surplus, l'opinion qu'ont euë les imprimeurs, que la table des matieres pourroit enrichir la vente des Essais, est cause qu'ils l'y ont *plantée*: contre mon aduis neantmoins; parce qu'vn Ouurage si plain et si pressé n'en peut souffrir. Autant suis-ie contraire à cette vie de l'autheur, qu'ils ont logée en teste, estant complette dans le volume. Quant aux noms des autheurs citez, qui se voyent icy, ou pourront voir encores, en quelques impressions; i'ay reueu et confronté sur leur texte, tous ceux qu'vn inconnu y auoit appliquez; retenu les vrais, rejetté les faux, augmentant ces veritables d'vne moitié. Si bien qu'il ne reste pour ce regard, qu'enuiron cinquante vuides, ou noms à remplir, en ce plantureux nombre de prés de douze cens passages. C'estoit pourtant vne assez espineuse difficulté, que de trouuer la source d'vne bonne partie des *authoritez* de ce liure; l'autheur en *ayant* par fois mesle deux ou trois ensemble, par fois donné tour de main de sa façon à quelqu'autre, qui les rend de plus obscure recherche. Quoy que ce soit, ie ne me fusse iamais demeslée de leur queste, si des personnes d'honneur et doctes que i'ay nommées autre part, ne m'eussent presté la main. Apres tout, ie reconnois que cette *recherche* et ces cottes d'autheurs, eussent esté *negligées* par mon pere; et moy-mesme ne me fusse pas mise en peine de couure apres: mais trois raisons m'ont forcée de les entreprendre: en premier lieu, cét aduancement de prés de moitié: secondement, la bestise d'vne part du monde, qui croit beaucoup mieux la verité sous la barbe chenuë des vieux siecles, et sous vne nom d'antique et pompeuse vogue: tiercement, l'interest et priere des imprimeurs. Leur mesme priere expresse m'a contrainte, non pas de changer, oüy bien de rendre seulement moins frequens en ce liure, trois ou quatre mots à trauers champ, et de ranger la *syntaxe* d'autant de clauses: ces mots sans nulle consequence, comme aduerbes ou particules, qui leur sembloient vn peu reuesches au goust de quelques doüillets du siecle: et ces clauses sans aucune mutation de sens, mais seulement peut leur oster certaine dureté ou obscurité, qui sembloient naistre à l'aduenture de quelque ancienne erreur d'impression, ou au pis aller de ce genereux mépris de telles niaiseries, que leur ouurier affectoit. Ie ne suis pas si inconsideré ou si sacrilege, que de toucher en plus forts termes que ceux-là, ny à mot ny à phrase d'vn si precieux ouurage: edifié d'ailleurs *de telle* sorte, que les mots et la matiere sont consubstantiels. Si quelqu'vn prend la peine d'en faire vne confrontation sur le vieil et bon exemplaire *in folio*, il pourra dire quelle a esté ma religion en cela. Cependant il n'appartiendroit iamais à nul apres moy, d'y mettre la main à mesme intention, d'autant que nul n'y apporteroit, ny mesme reuerence ou reteuë, ny mesme gdueu de l'autheur, ny mesme zele, ny peut-estre vne si particuliere cognoissance du liure. En ce seul poinct ay-ie esté hardie, de retrancher quelque chose d'vn passage qui me regarde: à l'exemple de celuy qui mit sa belle maison par terre, afin d'y mettre auec elle l'enuie qu'on luy en portoit. Ioint que ie veux démentir maintenant et pour l'aduenir, par cette voye, ceux qui croyent, que si ce liure me touoit moins, ie le cherirois et seruirois moins aussi.

Les imprimeurs m'ont encore pressée de tourner les passages latins des essais, sur le desir qu'ils pretendent, que plusieurs ignorans de ce langage, ont de les entendre. Ce desir est assez crud: veu qu'vn lecteur qui connoist ces passages-là, n'est pas plus prest de démesler bien à poinct l'ouurage auquel ils sont enchassez, que celuy qui ne les connoist pas, s'il n'est d'autre part ferré à glace. Neantmoins afin de seruir à l'vtilité des mesmes imprimeurs ou libraires, ie me suis portée à les traduire. Si i'ay rendu la poësie comme l'oraison, sous le seul genre de la prose, pour estre plus fidelle traductrice, à l'exemple d'autres versions authorisées de nostre siecle; on peut dire, que i'ay esté soûlagée de temps, non de solicitude aigue: la moins espineuse et scabreuse circonstance d'vne telle version estant de la representer en vers. Ie le dis, parce que cette masse, ou plûtost nuée et moisson d'autheurs latins, est la cresme et la fleur choisie à dessein, comme on void, de l'ouurage des plus excellens escriuains, et plus elegans et riches de langage comme d'inuention: adjoûtons, figurez et succincts. Or d'exprimer la conception d'vn grand ouurier, estoffée de telles qualitez d'elocution, et l'exprimer en vne langue inferieure auec quelque grace, vigueur et brifueté, qui d'vn pertinent traducteur, ce n'est pas leger effort. Mais combien plus est-ce, d'exprimer pres de douze cens passages de ce qualibre, amples, mediocres ou petits? Or nonobstant ma prose generale, ie n'ay pas laissé de rendre en vn ou deux vers, les brefues sentences, ou autres traicts

d'eslite, i'entends ceux des poëtes: tant pour n'estre astrainte par aucune religion, à renoncer ce priuilege de passer de la prose aux vers, que parce qu'ils sont plus faciles à retenir qu'elle. Et si la rithme de telles sentences est par fois diuerse, n'importe à l'oreille, puis qu'elle ne passe point le nombre de deux. I'ay tourné d'autre part en vers, quelques passages d'estenduë, vn autre à l'entrée du liure, d'autres au chap. Sur des vers de Virgile: tant par esbat, que pour piquer si ie puis quelqu'vn par exemple à faire le mesme du reste. I'ay traduit les Grecs aussi, sauf deux ou trois que l'autheur a traduits luy-mesme, les inserent en son texte. Ny ne presente point d'excuse d'auoir laissé dormir iés libertins, sous le voile de leur langue estrangere, ou d'auoir tors le nez à quelque mot fripon de l'vn d'entr'eux: si ce mot a esté le seul qui me pust empescher d'en faire present au lecteur. Aussi peu m'excuseray-ie, d'auoir au besoin vsé de locutions vn peu hardies pour la prose: y estant forcée par la nature de vers qu'elle exposoit. Au surplus, en deux ou trois lieux seulement; ie me suis donné liberté d'vn mot de paraphrase: iugeant la lumiere necessaire en cét endroit, pour leuer au foible lecteur l'occasion de supposer vne pathologie. Comme aux lieux, (qui sont courts de nombre pourtant) où ie l'ay iugé plus en train d'ignorer et de chercher, que de supposer; ie me suis restrainte dans les loix d'vne austere traductrice. I'adjoûteray sur le latin des Essais; que si par fois on trouue quelque dissonance entre le texte originaire et luy, comme de temps, personnes, et autres legeres circonstances; on le doit attribuer non à l'inaduertance, mais au dessein et ménagement de l'autheur, qui par ce tour de souplesse se l'est approprié: comme il s'est approprié certains passages, à sens tout diuers, et par fois opposite de leur intention natale, par vne excellente application. C'a esté certes vne de mes peines, me trouuant sur quelque passage contourné ou frelaté, de l'exprimer en telle sorte, qu'il quadrast sortablement s'il estoit possible, à la composition originaire et à l'application. Enfins s'il se trouue quelque faute en mon ouurage, i'espere qu'elle sera faute, non de circonspection, mais bien de connoistre les menus suffrages du Donat, ausquels ie suis peu versé, pour auoir appris cette langue plustost, afin de gouster son genie et celuy de ses grands autheurs, que sa grammaire: ainsi i'espere qu'vn Lecteur habile homme, prendra la peine de m'aduertir plutost que de me quereller.

Excuse, Lecteur, les fautes d'impression qui nous peuuent estre eschapées; ceux qui sçauent ce que c'est d'imprimer, te diront, qu'il est si difficile de s'empescher de broncher à ce pas, que le meilleur ouurage de la presse n'est autre chose que le moins défaillant de cette part, comme est certes cettuy-cy: duquel apres tout, nous auons pris la peine de corriger la pluspart des erreurs auec la plume, et recueilly en vn Errata bien exact le reste de celles qui peuuent importer. Au contraire pourtant du dessein assez ordinaire, de ceux qui font imprimer pour autruy, lesquels fuyent d'en appliquer aux liures: doutant qu'ils ayment mieux que la reputation de la suffisance d'vn autheur demeure fort blessée, que si celle de leur vigilance l'estoit vn peu. Passe legerement les moindres fautes: comme par fois quelques ponctuations, soit au François ou au Latin, et par fois encores quelque manque d'orthographe, vn affaire, pour vn à faire, conte pour comte, cœur pour chœur, et les manquemens de pareil air ou de la façon d'orthographier du temps que le Liure fut premierement imprimé. Si ton esprit est digne de sa lecture, tu les sçauras bien r'habiller: et ie pense que tu croiras bien qu'aussi eussions-nous fait, si nous les eussions apperceues auant qu'elles eschapassent. Or de peur qu'il n'en reste quelqu'vne, apres ma recherche precedente; ie te promets de la repeter encores, et d'en mettre apres vn Exemplaire en la Bibliotheque du Roy, et l'autre en celle de Monseigneur le Garde des Sceaux, corrigez des derniers traits de ma plume: afin que la posterité y puisse auoir recours au besoin. I'ose dire que la connoissance toute particuliere que i'ay de cét ouurage, merite que la mesme posterité s'oblige de mes soins, et s'y fie. Que si quelqu'vn accusoit tant de menus soins comme poinctilieux, i'estime au contraire, qu'ils ne le peuuent estre assez, sur l'ouurage d'vn esprit de si haute sagesse, que ses fautes pourroient seruir d'exemple, si nous permettions qu'il en eschapast icy. Pour les accents du Grec, ie n'y entends rien: et cela n'importe guere à ce liure, qui n'en couche que fort peu: ny telle ignorance à moy, si i'en suis creue. Quant aux cottes des autheurs en marge, on ne s'est pas tousiours amuse à obseruer toutes les particules de la syntaxe, vn *de*, un *apud*, &c., tant pour estrecir le champ des fautes au compositeurs, que parce que chacun entend ces choses à demy mot.

Remercie au reste de cette impression les Grands de la France, desquels ma gratitude a tellement fait sonner le nom par tout, qu'il n'est pas besoin de le repetir icy: car sans leurs dons, mon zele de te rendre ce digne seruice en mourant, restoit inutile. Les libraires et imprimeurs, que ie sollicite il y a sept ou huict ans par tout de l'entreprendre eux-mesmes, comme on sçait, estoient sourds quand ie leur proposois mes precautions, quoy qu'elles ne consistassent seulement qu'à les obliger d'apporter à leur ouurage vne iuste correction. Deux raisons causoient ce refus: la premiere, c'est, qu'ils veulent communement tout prendre, et ne rien mettre: la seconde que ce liure est en verité d'vne correction tres-particulierement difficile; dont la brefueté du langage, et son bastiment aussi nouueau, qu'admirable, sont causes; en sorte qu'vn compositeur et vn correcteur ordinaire, y perdent leur ourse. Outre qu'il arriue souuent, que ces libraires et imprimeurs n'y mettent point de correcteur du tout, s'ils n'y employent par forme les premiers ignorans, qu'ils trouuent à bon marché. En effet la seule correction de cette impression m'a autant cousté, qu'vne de leurs impressions entiere leur couste, sans compter ma propre peine et mon soin; et si ie tiens en cela ma dépense pour bien employée: Sçache donc, Lecteur amoreux de ce diuin ouurage, que les seules impressions de l'Angelier, depuis la mort de l'autheur, t'en peuuent mettre en possession; notamment celle *in folio*, dont ie vis toutes les espreuues; et celle-cy sa sœur germaine. Si tu prends soin de confronter toutes les autres, en quelques lieux et volumes qu'elles se soient faites, ou se fassent à l'aduenir, par la seule entreprise des mesmes imprimeurs ou libraires, contre ces deux; tu pourras connoistre si ie dis vray; et en conceuras autant d'horreur que moy, si la fortune ne fait vn miracle pour les suiuantes, qu'elles n'a iamais fait pour les precedentes. I'acheuois cecy à Paris en Iuin mil six cens trente cinq.

PREFACE TO THE EDITION OF THE ESSAYS, 1635.

II.

PASQUIER.

Vous desirez sçavoir de moi quel jugement je fays des Essais du feu Seigneur de Montaigne, amy commun de nous deux quand il vivoit. Je le vous diray en un mot. Rien ne me desplaist en iceux, encore que tout ne m'y plaisé. Il étoit personnage hardy, qui se croyoit et comme tel se laissoit aysement emporter à la beauté de son esprit. Tellement que par ses escrits il prenoit plaisir de desplaire plaisamment. De là vient que vous trouverez en luy plusieurs chapitres, dont le chef ne se rapporté aucunement à tout le demeurant du corps, fors aux pieds; je veux dire au dix ou douze lignes dernieres du chapitre, ou en peu de paroles, vers un autre endroit; et neantmoins le chapitre sera quelquefois de douze feuillets et plus. Tels trouverez-vous ceux dont les titres sont: l'histoire de Spurina; des Coches; de la Vanité; de la Physiognomie; de la Resemblance des enfans à leurs Peres; des Boyteux; et surtout, celui *des Vers de Virgile*, qu'il pouvoit à meilleur compte intituler, *Coeq à l'asne;* pour s'etre donné pleine liberté de santer d'un propos à autre, ainsi que le vent de son esprit donnoit le vol à son plume. Tout de ceste mesme façon s'est il dispensé plusieurs fois d'user de mots inaccoustumez, ausquels, si je ne m'abuse, malaisément vaillera-il vogue; *gendarmer* pour *braver; abrier* pour *mettre à l'abry; silence parlier;* reduit *en enfantillage*, pour ce que nous disons, *au rang d'enfance; asture*, pour *à cette heure;* et autres de mesme trempe: pour le moins, ne voy-je point que jusques à huy ils soient tombez en commun usage; et surtout, je n'ay sceu jamais entendre ce qu'il vouloit dire par ce mot *diversion*, sur le modelle duquel toutefois il nous a servy d'un bien long chapitre. Mais quoy? je vous respondray à tout ce que dessus pour luy (car je veux, estre son advocat; et m'asseure que s'il vivoit, je ne serois par luy desadvoué). Prenez de luy ce qui est bon, sans vous attacher à aucune courtizance; ne jettez point l'œil sur le titre, ains sur son discours; il vous apporte assez de matière pour vous contenter. C'est en quoy il s'est voulu de propos deliberé moquer de nous, et paraventure de luy mesme par une liberté particuliere que estoit née avec luy. Il n'y a chapitre plus long que celuy qu'il intitule, *l'Apologie de Raimond Sebond*, n'y auquel il se doit donné si ample carriere; car il contient 80 feuillets. Sebond estoit à nous auparavant incogneu; et neantmoins la moindre partie est de cest Espaignol, tout le demeurant est de nostre Montaigne; car mesmes, comme il ne s'oublie jamais, il nous a fait expresse mention de l'Ordre de St. Michel, dont il avoit esté honoré. Il n'y avoit homme moins chiquaneur et practicien que luy; car aussi sa profession estoit toute autre: toutes fois en son chapitre des noms, il a par une forme de guet-apens, pris plaisir de faire commencer trois ou quatre clauses, par ce mot de, *Item*, reservé specialement à la practique. Et je ne trouve rien en tout cecy de mauvais, sinon que luy, qui sur sa prime-vere avoit fait gloire de nous braver par ces contre pointes et piaffes; toutefois en quelque endroit de son troisiesme livre, par luy composé long temps après les deux premiers, il s'en voulut aucunement excuser: chose que j'imputé à la foiblesse de son âge, qui emportoit lors à la balance, la force de son naturel.

Tout ce que j'ay ci-dessus touché fût par luy fait à dessein, ce que je diray maintenant sera autre. Nous étions luy et moy familiers et amis, par une mutuelle rencontre des Lettres, fusmes ensemblement en la ville de Blois, lors de cette fameuse Assemblée des trois Estats, de l'an 1588, dont la fin produisit tant de malheurs à la France. Et comme nous nous promenions dedans la cour du chasteau, il m'advint de luy dire, qu'il s'étoit aucunement oublié de n'avoir communiqué son œuvre à quelques siens amis, avant que de publier; d'autant que l'on y recognoissoit en plusieurs lieux, je ne scay quoy du ramage Gascon, plus aysément que Pollion n'avoit autrefois faict le Padonan de Tite-Live; chose dont il eust peu recevoir advis par un sien amy. Et comme il ne m'en voulust croire, je le menay en ma chambre où j'avois son livre, et là je luy montray plusieurs manières de parler familieres non aux Francois, ains seulement aux Gascons, *un Patenostre, un debte, un couple, un rencontre, les bestes nous flatent, nous requierent, et non nous à elles; ces ouvrages sentent à l'huile et à la lampe.* Et sur tout je luy montray, que je le voyois par aller le mot de *jouir*, du tout à l'usage de Gascoigne, et non de nostre langue Francoise; "*n'y la santé que je jouy jusques à present; la lune est celle mesmes que vos ayeuls ont jouyé; l'amitie est jouyé, —à mesme qu'elle est desirée; c'est la vraye solitude, qui se peut jouyr au milieu des villes, et des cours des sois, mais elle se peut jouyr plus commodement à part; je reçois ma santé les bras ouverts, et aiguise mon goust à la jouyr.* Plusieurs autres locutions luy representay-je, non seulement sur ce mot, ains sur plusieurs autres, dont je me suis proposé de vous faire icy l'inventoire, et estimoy qu'à la premiere et prochaine impression, que l'on ferait de son livre, il donneroit ordre de les corriger. Toutesfois non seulement il ne le fit; mais comme ainsi soit qu'il fust prevenu de mort, sa fille par alliance, l'a fait l'imprimer, tout de la mesme façon qu'il estoit, et nous advertit par son Epistre Liminaire, que la Dame de Montaigne le luy avoit envoyé tout tel que son mary projettoit de le remettre au jour. J'adjouteray à tout cecy, que pendant qu'il faict contenance de se desdaigner, je ne leu jamais auteur qui s'estimast tant que luy; car qui auroit rayé tous les passages qu'il a employé à parler de soy, et de sa famille, son œuvre seroit l'accourci d'un quart à bonne mesme, spécialement en son troisiesme Livre, qui semble estre une histoire de ses mœurs et actions; chose que j'attribue aucunement à la liberté de sa vieillesse, quand il le composa. Vous jugerez, par tout ce que je vous ay ci dessus deduit, que le Sieur Montaigne, après sa mort a un ennemy profez en moy, qui m'estimay pendant sa vie, bien heureux d'estre honoré de son amitié. J'a à Dieu ne plaise, j'aime, respecte, et honore sa mémoire, autant et plus que nul autre. Et quant à ses Essais (que j'appelle chefs d'œuvre) je n'ay livre entre les moins que j'aye tant caressé que celuy-la. J'y trouve tousjours quelque chose à me contenter. C'est un autre Seneque en nostre langue. A toutes ces manières de parler de Gascoigne et autres mots inusitez, que je ne puis faire passer à la monstre j'oppose une infinité de beaux traits François et hardis, une infinité de belles pointes, qui ne sont propres qu'à luy, selon l'abondance de son sens; et ne me puis encore offenser, quand il se desbonde à parler de luy, cela est dit d'un tel air, que j'y prens autant de plaisir, comme s'il parloit d'un autre. Mais surtout son livre est un vrai seminaire de belles et notables sentences, dont les unes sont de son estre;

et les autres transplantées si heureusement, et d'une telle naifveté dans son fonds, qu'il est malaisé de les juger pour autres que siennes. - - - Tout son livre n'est pas proprement un parterre, ordonné de divers carreaux et bordures; ains comme une prairie diversifiée pesle-mesle et sans art de plusieurs fleurs. Vous n'y rencontrerez que sentences, les unes courtes, les autres plus longues; mais toutes en general pleines et moëlle.—LETTRE I. LIB. XVIII. A MONSIEUR PELGE, MAISTRE DES COMPTES.

III.

JUSTUS-LIPSIUS.

MICHAELI MONTANO. BURDIGALI.

- - - NON blandiamur inter nos. Ego te talem censeo, qualem publicè descripsi uno verbo (*he had called him the French Thales*). Inter septem illos te referam, aut, si quid sapientius illis septem. Nam externa et polita ista doctrinarum, sermonis et linguarum ad fastum et fastidium (audi intimum meum sensum) sperno ego valde, nisi cum prudentiâ quadam et recti judicii normâ conjuncta dirigantur ad usum vitæ. Ea duo postrema in te esse vidi, et illa non deesse - - - —*Epist. Cent.* II. 41. (*May*, 1588).

MICHAELI MONTANO.

- - - cum gaudio me litteras tuas accepisse, et legisse cum voluptate. Diu est cum te novi, nec novi, à monte et scriptis, non a corpore; et admiratus sum (nihil hic vanum) rectitudinem judicii tui, eo magis fortasse quòd in plerisque simillimum id meo. Nam fateor: in Europâ non inveni, qui in his talibus sensu mecum magis consentiret. Utinam plura tibi scribere mens, aut otium! Quamquam istud fortasse, non illa; quia aversum te ab omni gloriâ video, etiam verâ. Non debebas, et habere in oculis *si non* æternitatem temporum, at miseriam hominum; qui talibus monitorum auxiliis *omnino* ducendi, fulciendi.—ID. *ib.*, *Ep.* LV.

MARIÆ GORNACENSI. CAMERACUM.

- - - Homulli sumus, id est pars optima et cœlestis in terram inclusa: felices, qui liberi ab eâ et soluti. Tuus pater jam est. Nuncio tibi, si nescis; renovo, si jam scis, periisse; quid dixi? abiisse a nobis magnum illum virum, Montanum, inquam, nostrum, ad alta et æthereos illos montes. Ita scriptum ad me Burdegalis, et quia litteras tuas veteres esse video, arbitror te quoque sensum jam habere hujus plagæ. Sed quid mali factum? rideat ille nos, si sciat dolere; quem opinor in ipsâ morte hilarem eam suscepisse, et victorem etiam ejus, cum ab ipsâ vinceretur. Ivit, ibimus: - - - —ID. *Ep. ad Belgas*, I. 15.

IV.

DE THOU.

ANTE eum, Michael Montanus Eques haud sexagenario major vitæ ultimum diem clausit XX. Kal. Oct. in Montibus Petrocoriorum, à quibus nobili familio nomen, ita dictus, âlim in Burdigalensi senatu assessor dignissimus cum Stephano Boëtiano, quem et vivum indissolubili amicitiâ prosecutus est, et mortuum summa religione coluit. Vir libertatis ingenuæ, quam CONATUS ejus, sic enim immortalia sui ingenii monumenta indigitavit, ad omnem posteritatem testabuntur: ob prudentiam cum eruditione eximia ac animi candore conjunctam, Thales Gallicus, a Justo Lipsio cognominatus est. Burdigalæ Major, quæ dignitas primaria provinciæ proceribus, atque adeo profectis defertur, dum Venetiis esset, electus; et a Jacobo Matignone Aquitaniæ præside consiliis de rerum summâ per nos motus adhibitur; mihi, dum in ea provinciâ, in aulâ, atque adeo Lutetiæ postea cum ipso versarer, studiorum et voluntatum consensione conjunctissimus; cujus amicitiæ ac virtuti hoc grati animi sui testimonium me debere existimavi. — *Historiarum*, *Lib.* 104. *Ad. an.* 1592, *p.* 264. *Edit. Rovianæ*, 1630, *folio*. *Tom. v.*

V.

BALZAC.

- - - - Nous demeusrames d'accord, que l'autheur qui veut imiter Seneque, commence partout, et finit partout. Son discours n'est pas un corps entier: c'est un corps en pièces; ce sont des membres couppez; et quoyque les parties soient proches les unes des autres, elles ne laissent pas d'estre separées. Non seulement il n'y a point de nerfs qui les joignent; il n'y a pas mesme de cordes, ou d'aiguillettes, qui les attachent ensemble; tant cest autheur est ennemi de toutes sortes de liaisons, soit de la nature, soit de l'art.

Ma pensée étoit donc, et je suis encore de mesme advis, que Montaigne sçait bien ce qu'il dit; mais sans violer le respect que luy est deu, je pense aussi qu'il ne sçait pas tousjours ce qu'il va dire. S'il a dessein d'aller en un lieu, le moindre objet que luy passé devant les yeux, le fait sortir de son chemin, pour courir après ce second objet. Mais l'importance est, qu'il s'egare plus heureusement qu'il n'alloit tout droit. Ses digressions sont très agreables et très instructives. Quand il quitte le bon, d'ordinaire il trouve le meilleur, et il est certain, qu'il ne change guères de matière, que le lecteur ne gaigne en ce changement. Il faut advouer qu'en certain endroit il porte bien haut la raison humaine; il l'esleve jusqu'où elle peut aller, soit dans la politique, soit dans la morale. Pour le jugement qu'il fait des livres et des autheurs, c'est une autre chose. Assez souvent il prend la fausse monnoye pour la bonne, et le bastard pour le legitime. Il hasarde les choses comme il les pense d'abord, au lieu de les examiner après les avoir pensées; au lieu de se desfier de sa propre cognoissance, et de s'en rapporter à son Turnebe, plustost que de s'en croire soi-mesme.

Aux autres lieux de son livre, je suis tout à fait pour sa liberté. Ce qu'il dit de ses inclinations, de tout le detail de sa vie privée, est très agréable. Je suis bien aise de cognoistre ceux que j'estime, et, s'il y a moyen, de les cognoistre tout entiers, et dans la pureté de leur naturel. Je veux les voir, s'il est possible, dans leurs plus particulieres et leurs plus secrètes actions. Il m'a donc fait grand plaisir de me faire son histoire domestique. — *Dissertation Critique*, 19.

- - - Celui de qui je vous parlois hier, vivoit sous le regne des Valois, et de plus il estoit Gascon. Par conséquent, il ne se peut pas que son langage

ne se sente des vices de son siècle et de son pays. Il faut advouer avec tout cela que son âme estoit éloquente; qu'elle se faisoit entendre par des expressions courageuses; que dans son stile il y a des graces et des beautez au-dessus de la portée de son siècle.—*Dissertation* 20.

VI.

PASCAL.

Les défauts de Montaigne sont grands: il est plein de mots sales et déshonnêtes. Cela ne vaut rien. Les sentimens sur l'homicide volontaire et sur la mort, sont horribles. Il inspire une nonchalance du salut, sans crainte et sans repentir. Son livre n'étant point fait pour porter à la piété, il n'y étoit pas obligé; mais on est toujours obligé de n'en pas détourner. Quoiqu'on puisse dire, pour excuser ses sentimens trop libres sur plusieurs choses, on ne sçauroit excuser, en aucune sorte, ses sentimens tous payens sur la mort; car il faut renoncer à toute piété, si on ne veut au moins mourir chrétiennement: or il ne pense qu'à mourir lâchement et mollement partout son livre.—*Pensées*, ch. 28.

Le sot projet que Montaigne a eu de le peindre, et cela non pas en passant, et contre ses maximes, comme il arrive à tout le monde de faillir; mais par ses propres maximes et par un dessein, premier et principal: car de dire des sottises par hasard et par foiblesse, c'est un mal ordinaire; mais d'en dire à dessein, c'est ce qui n'est pas supportable, et d'en dire de telles que celles-là.*—*Ib.* ch. 29.

Ce que Montaigne a de bon, ne peut être acquis que difficilement. Ce qu'il a de mauvais, j'entends hors les mœurs, eût pu être corrigé en un moment, si on l'eût averti qu'il faisait trop d'histoires, et qu'il parloit trop de soi.—*Ib.* ch. 31.

VII.

EXPILLY.

A M. de Montaigne.

Que tu es admirable en ce masle langage,
Mais plus en ces raisons qui dorent tes escrits,
Capables d'enhardir les plus laches esprits,
A défier du temps l'inconstance et l'orage.
Montaigne, qui nous peins ta vie et ton courage,
En quelle antique eschole as-tu si bien appris,
De l'effroyable mort le glorieux mespris,
Que tu soutiens sans peur l'horreur de son visage.
Magnanime Stoique, en ces braves Essais,
Tes fideles tesmoins tu montres que tu scais
Fouler dessous les pieds le soin que nous devore.
Les siècles à venir chanteront à bon droit,
Montaigne *par lui-mesme enseigna comme on doit*
Et bien dire, et bien vivre, et bien mourir encore.

VIII.

MALLEBRANCHE.

C'est la beauté, la vivacité, et l'étendue de l'imagination qui font passer pour bel esprit. Le commun des hommes estime le brillant, et non pas le solide, parceque l'on aime davantage ce qui touche les sens que ce qui intéresse la raison. Ainsi, en prenant beauté d'imagination pour beauté d'esprit, Montaigne avoit l'esprit beau, et même extraordinaire. Ses idées sont fausses, mais belles; ses expressions irrégulieres ou hardies, mais agréables; ses discours mal raisonnés, mais bien imaginez. On voit dans tout son livre un contraste d'original qui plaît infiniment: tout copiste qu'il est, il ne sent point son copiste, et son imagination forte et hardie, donne toujours le tour d'original aux choses qu'il copie. Il a enfin ce qu'il est nécessaire d'avoir pour imposer; et - - - ce n'est point en convainquant la raison qu'il se fait admirer de tant de gens, mais en leur tournant l'esprit à son avantage, par la vivacité toujours victorieuse de son imagination dominante. —*Recherche de la Verité, book* ii., *part* iii., *ch.* 5.

IX.

LA BRUYERE.

Deux écrivains ont blâmé Montaigne, que je ne crois pas, aussi bien qu'eux, exempt de toute sorte de blâme. Il paraît que tous deux ne l'ont estimé en nulle manière. Balzac ne pensoit pas assez pour gouter un auteur qui pense beaucoup; le père Mallebranche pense trop subtilement pour s'accommoder de pensées qui sont naturelles.—*Caractères*, ch. 1

X.

NICOLE.

Montaigne me représente un homme qui, après avoir promené son esprit sur toutes les choses du monde, pour juger ce qu'il y a en elles de bien et de mal, a eu assez de lumières pour en reconnoître la sottise et la vanité.

Il a très-bien découvert le néant de la grandeur et l'inutilité des sciences; mais comme il ne connoissoit guères d'autre vie que celle-ci, il a conclu qu'il n'y avoit donc guères rien à faire qu'à tâcher de passer agréablement le petit espace qui nous est donné.—*Pensées.*

XI.

VOLTAIRE.

Montaigne, avant Corneille, était le seul livre qui attirât l'attention du petit nombre d'étrangers que pouvaient savoir le français; mais le style de Montaigne n'est ni pur ni correcte, ni précis, ni noble: il est énergique et familier; il exprime naïvement de grandes choses; c'est cette naïveté qui plaît; on aime à voir le caractère de l'auteur; on se plaît

* In reply to this miserable, narrow-minded *pensee* of Pascal's, Voltaire says:—
"Le charmant projet que Montaigne a eu de se peindre naïvement, comme il a fait! Car il a peint la nature humaine; et le pauvre projet de Nicole, de Mallebranche, et de Pascal, de decrier Montaigne!"—*Lettres Philosophiques.*

a se retrouver dans ce qu'il dit de lui-même, à converser, à changer de discours et d'opinion avec lui. J'entends souvent regretter le langage de Montaigne, c'est son imagination qu'il faut regretter: elle était forte et hardie; mais sa langue était bien loin de l'être.—*Discours à l'Académie.*

- - - - - Quelle injustice, de dire que Montaigne n'a fait que commenter les anciens! Il les cite à propos, et c'est ce les commentateurs ne font pas. Il pense, et ces messieurs ne pensent point; il appuie ses pensées de celles des grands hommes de l'antiquité; il les juge; il les combat; il converse avec eux, avec son lecteur, avec lui-même: toujours plein d'imagination, toujours peintre, et, ce que j'aime, sachant toujours douter. Je voudrais bien savoir, d'ailleurs, s'il a pris chez les anciens tout ce qu'il dit sur nos modes, sur nos usages, sur le Nouveau Monde découvert presque de son tems, sur les guerres civiles dont il était le témoin, sur le fanatisme des deux sectes qui desolaient la France?—*Lettre à M. Tressan.*

Montaigne, cet auteur charmant,
Tour-à-tour profonde et frivole,
Dans son château paisiblement,
Loin de tout frondeur malévole,
Doutait de tout impunément,
On se moquait très-librement
Des bavards fourrés de l'école;
Mais quand son élève Charron,
Plus retenu, plus méthodique,
De sagesse donna leçon,
Il fut près de périr, dit-on,
Par la haine théologique.
Epitre sur l'Envie.

XII.

DIDEROT.

L'IGNORANCE et l'*incuriosité* sont deux oreillers fort doux; mais pour les trouver tels, il faut avoir la tête aussi bien faite que Montaigne.—*Pensées Philosophiques.*

Je connais les dévots, ils sont prompts à prendre l'alarme - - Si je ne suis qu'un déiste et un scélérat, j'en serai quitte à bon marché. Il y a long tems qu'ils ont damné Descartes, Montaigne, Locke, et Bayle, et j'espère qu'ils en damneront bien d'autres. Je leur déclare, cependant, que je ne me pique d'être ni plus honnête homme, ni meilleur Chrétien, que la plupart de ces philosophes.—*Ibid.*

XIII.

DELILLE.

RICHE du fonds d'autrui, mais riche par son fonds,
Montaigne les vaut tous: dans ses brillans chapitres,
Fidèle à son caprice, infidèle à ses titres,
Il laisse errer, sans art, sa plume et son esprit,
Sait peu ce qu'il va dire, et peint tout ce qu'il dit.
Sa raison, un peu libre et souvent negligée,
N'attaque point le vice en bataille rangée;
Il combat en courant, sans dissimuler rien;
Il fait notre portrait en nous faisant le sien.
Aimant et haïssant ce qu'il hait, ce qu'il aime,
Je dis ce que d'un autre il dit si bien lui-même:
C'est lui, c'est moi. Naïf, d'un vain faste ennemi,
Il sait parler au sage, et causer en ami.
Heureux on malheureux, à la ville, en campagne,
Que son livre charmant toujours vous accompagne.
De l'Imagination, chant. vi.

XIV.

DE LA HARPE.

MONTAIGNE était sans doute un esprit d'une trempe fort superieure; ses connaissances etaient plus étendues et mieux digérées que celles de Rabelais: aussi se proposa-t-il un objet bien plus relevé et plus difficile à atteindre. Ce ne fut pas la satire des vices et des abus de son tems, attaqués déjà de tous cotés, ce fut l'homme tout entier, et tel qu'il est partout, qu'il voulut examiner en s'examinant lui-même. Il avait voyagé et beaucoup lu; mais il fondit son érudition dans sa philosophie. Après avoir écouté les anciens et les modernes, il se demanda ce qu'il en pensait; l'entretien fut assez long, et il y avait en effet, de quoi parler long-tems. Avouons d'abord les défauts: c'est par là qu'il faut commencer avec les gens qu'on aime, afin des louer en suite plus à son aise. Sa diction est incorrecte, même pour le tems, quoiqu'il ait donné à la langue des expressions et des tournures qu'elle a gardées comme de vieilles richesses; il abuse de la liberté de converser, et perd de vue le point de la question établie; il cite de mémoire, et fait des applications fausses ou forcées de plus d'un passage; il resserre trop les bornes de nos conceptions sur plusieurs objets que, depuis lui, l'experience et la réflexion n'ont pas trouvés inaccessibles. Tels sont, je crois, les reproches qu'on peut lui faire; ils sont effacés par les éloges qu'on lui doit. Comme écrivain, il a imprimé à la langue une sorte d'énergie familière qu'elle n'avait pas avant lui, et qui ne s'est point usée, par ce qu'elle tient à celle des sentimens et des pensées, et qu'elle ne s'eloigne pas, comme dans Ronsard, du génie de notre idiôme. Comme philosophe, il a peint l'homme tel qu'il est, sans l'embellir avec complaisance, et sans le defigurer avec misanthropie. Ses écrits ont un caractère de bonne foi qui leur est particulier: ce n'est pas un livre qu'on lit, c'est une conversation qu'on écoute. Il persuade d'autant plus qu'il paraît moins enseigner. Il parle souvent de lui, mais de manière à vous occuper de vous; il n'est ni vain, ni ennuyeux, ni hypocrite, trois choses très-difficiles à éviter quand on se met soi-même en scène dans ses ecrits. Il n'est jamais sec; son ame ou son caractère est partout; et qu'elle foule d'idées sur tous les sujets! Quel trésor de bon sens! Que de confidences où son histoire est aussi celle du lecteur! Heureux qui retrouvera la sienne propre dans ce chapitre sur l'amitié, qui a immortalisé le nom de l'ami de Montaigne! Ses Essais sont le livre de tous ceux qui lisent, et même de tous ceux qui ne lisent pas.—*Cours de Literature.*

XV.

M. GENCE.

- - - - - L'influence de ses ecrits, de ses pensées, de son style, l'a fait juger, dans l'opinion commune la

plus raisonnable, philosophe sceptique, disposé à induire, de l'observation des vicissitudes et des variations de la raison humaine chez lui même et les autres, l'incertitude de nos connaissances; homme naturellement bon et sensible, de mœurs douces et faciles; gentilhomme vain à la fois et simple, parlant de soi humblement et avec estime; citoyen honnête, modéré, attaché par raison comme par devoir à son prince et à la religion de ses peres; ennemi des nouveautés tendant a subvertir l'ordre moral et civil; écrivain eloquemment énergique, et naïf, mais offrant parfois une liberté ou une familiarité d'expression qui montre l'homme presque à nu dans le moraliste aussi bien que dans le philosophe. Mais ses apologistes ou ses critiques, suivant leur esprit et leurs opinions particulières, l'ont jugé chacun diversement, en s'attachant à quelques traits exagérés ou isolés, pour le louer ou le blâmer, au préjudice de l'exactitude ou même de la bonne foi. Dans ce siècle ou l'on se pique de philosophie, Naigeon, editeur et annotateur de Montaigne, oublie la franchise libre de l'écrivain et en fait un pur déiste, en attribuant à des considérations politiques ce que l'auteur dit ouvertement de plus favorable au Christianisme, et en lui pretant des sentimens contraires dans des passages équivoques, détournés de leur véritable sens, et séparés de ce qui les entoure. D'un autre coté, l'auteur *du Christianisme de Montaigne*, en reunissant les passages relatifs à la religion, ou même traduits de la Theologie de Sebonde, et en exhumant, du journal du gentilhomme-voyageur, quelques actes d'une pieté non exempte de superstition, sans considérer ses écarts, la liberté de ses propos, et les traits de vanité qui accompagnaient ces memes actes, en a fait presque un chrétien religieux et dévot. Un autre écrivain, M. Biot, ne se rappelant pas les derniers momens du bon gentilhomme qui, loin de s'isoler de ses proches, s'est entouré de ses amis voisins, lui refuse la sensibilité morale, et le reconnait toutefois capable du sentiment de l'amitié. Un autre orateur, dans *Un Discours couronné par l'Institut*, lui accorde, avec raison, *la croyance en Dieu et à la vertu;* mais on peut croire qu'il entend purement ici la vertu d'Epicure, lorsqu'il met de parler de l'acte dernier de sa vie, qui rattache en définitive cette vertu à la foi chrétienne. Dans le grand siècle, Pascal applaudit à Montaigne, soumettant la raison superbe à l'autorité de la foi; mais en reconnaissant qu'il professe la religion catholique, il l'oppose à Epictète, en fait un Epicurien dans sa conduite comme dans ses écrits, et perd trop de vue, le magistrat, le citoyen, l'homme de bien. Balzac loue Montaigne que Mallebranche blâme au contraire d'avoir peint ses mœurs domestiques. Mallebranche voit surtout dans l'écrivain la hardiesse de l'esprit et de l'imagination; et Balzac, des pensées hazardées et de faux jugements. La Bruyère leur répond à tous deux, en observant que Balzac ne pensait pas assez pour goûter un auteur qui pense beaucoup, et que Mallebranche pensait trop subtilement pour s'accommoder de pensées si naturelles. Et certes, celui que Locke et J. J. Rousseau ont mis a contribution dans ce qu'ils ont écrit de plus raisonnable, sur l'*Education des Enfans*, n'est pas simplement un auteur doué d'esprit et d'imagination: l'écrivain qui observe et analyse si bien en lui l'homme dont il est l'historien, ne peut être taxé de donner carrière à son imagination, parce qu'en peignant l'homme moral, il anime, crée, et figure ses expressions, comme l'a fait, le célebre peintre de portraits, La Bruyère. De même, celui, qui a si bien connu et jugé les anciens qu'il avait tant cultivés, Lucrèce et Virgile, Salluste et Tacite, Plutarque et Sénèque, Cicéron et Pline, ne sauroit être traité de mauvais juge, pour avoir mis le 5e livre de l'Enéide ou il était si difficile d'être poète, au dessus des onze autres livres, jugement partagé jusqu'a un certain point par Madame Dacier et Jacques Delille; pour avoir aussi jugé plus sévèrement qu'il ne convenait, à un censeur gentilhomme, la philosophie de Cicéron et de Pline, qu'il qualifie d'*ostentatrice* et de *parlière;* pour avoir encore, dans son jugement sur les poètes français, cru voir (avec tout son siècle) revivre en quelque sorte Lucain et sa verse poétique, dans Ronsard, avant que Malherbe eût *dégasconné* la langue et qu'elle eût commencé à prendre une forme regulièrement polie, quoique peut-être aux dépens de son énergie. Dans le siècle de Montaigne, enfin, De Thou, et sur tout Pasquier, ses contemporains, qui ont vécu avec lui et qui ont connu l'homme, le citoyen, le philosophe, paraissaient l'avoir mieux apprécié sous ces divers rapports, et le sentiment de contemporains honnêtes et instruits, confirmé par la posterité, doit servir à fixer l'opinion sur notre philosophe, d'après les faits que nous fournit l'écrivain. — *Biographie Universelle, art.* MONTAIGNE.

XVI.

GEORGE, MARQUIS OF HALIFAX.

THE Essays of Michael de Montaigne are justly ranked amongst miscellaneous books: for they are on various subjects, without order and connection; and the very body of the discourses has still a greater variety. This sort of confusion does not, however, hinder people of all qualities to extol these Essays above all the books that ever they read, and they make them their chief study. They think that other miscellanies of ancient and modern books are nothing but an unnecessary heap of quotations, whereas we find in this authorities to the purpose, intermixed with the author's own thoughts; which, being bold and extraordinary, are very effectual to cure men of their weakness and vanity, and induce them to seek virtue and felicity by lawful means. But, because every body is not of this opinion, we must take notice here of what is said against, and in favour of, these Essays, to know what we should believe of them; and this is the more necessary, because one meets with frequent opportunities to talk of this author, his book being almost in the hands of all people.

The enemies of Montaigne tell us that his book is so far from inspiring his readers with the love of virtue, that, on the contrary, some of his discourses being stuffed with free and licentious words, they teach them some vices of which they were ignorant, or else are the occasion that they take a pleasure in speaking thereof, and at last induce them to fall into the same. That his discourses upon several effects of nature are rather fit to divert his thoughts from true religion, than to convince them of the truth of it, and are altogether unbecoming a Christian philosopher. That notwithstanding his propositions and assertions are for the most part weak and false, yet they are very dangerous for several persons who either want learning, or have too great

a bias for libertinism. That besides an indifferent knowledge of practical morals and history, which Montaigne had acquired in reading Seneca and Plutarch, having conversed with few other books, as he owns himself, he had hardly a tincture of other sciences and arts, even not of the theory of moral philosophy. That he was as ignorant in other parts of philosophy, as physic, metaphysic, and logic; which does sufficiently appear by his wrong inferences on several things. That he understood very little what we call humanity, or *belles-lettres*, as one may see by his unpolite style, and the confusion of his discourses, which show him a very ill grammarian, and a bad rhetorician; and as he talks positively and boldly, as the most learned men, Scaliger was used to style him a *bold Ignorant*. These angry gentlemen do likewise pretend that what is most admired in Montaigne is stolen from some ancient authors, and that if those quotations and the little stories he tells us about his temper and inclinations were taken out of his book, the rest would be very little or nothing at all.

This is the substance of the most material objections made against Montaigne; not to mention here several authors, who have purposely written against his opinions, as Mr. De Sillon, in his book of the Immortality of the Soul, wherein he confutes what Montaigne has alleged to prove, that brutes are capable of thinking. Chanet, in his Treatise of the Operations of the Understanding, quotes Montaigne's Essays as a work wherein judgment had no share, because, says he, every judicious man loves order, and there is nothing but confusion in that whole book.

Having thus impartially related what is urged against Montaigne, we proceed now to mention what is said in his vindication. And we might here, in the first place, make use of the long preface Mademoiselle de Gournay has prefixed to the French folio edition of his Essays, 1652, wherein she does not only give a full answer to all the objections made, or that can be made, against Montaigne, but also talks of him as of a man whose works have revived truth in his age, and which therefore she calls the quintessence of philosophy, the hellebore of man's folly, the setter at liberty of the understanding, and the judicial throne of reason. But we do not think fit to insist upon her evidence, for, notwithstanding the solid arguments her opinion is grounded upon, she may be suspected to be blindfolded with the passionate love she had for her excellent father; and, besides, we have so many great men to produce in favour of Montaigne, that we may, without any prejudice to his cause, waive the evidence of Mademoiselle de Gournay. These will tell you that, if he has handled any matters with an uncommon freedom, this is an effect of his generous temper, which was free from any base compliance; and as to his love for virtue, and his religion, they appeal to his very book itself, whereby that truth will appear, if the passages alleged to prove the contrary are examined without partiality, and not by themselves, but according to the connection they have with what precedes or follows.

I shall add, on this point, that notwithstanding several of his discourses do contain quite different things from what is promised in the titles, as Pasquier has observed, yet it does not always happen so; and when he has done it, methinks, it is rather through affectation than inadvertency, to shew that he did not intend to make a regular work. This does likewise appear by the odd, or rather fantastical, connection of his discourses, wherein from one matter he makes long digressions upon several others. No doubt but he thought that one might take the same liberty in his meditations as is assumed in common conversations, in which, though there be but two or three interlocutors, it is observed that there is such a variety in their discourses that, if they were set down in writing, it would appear that by digressions they are run away from their first subject, and that the last part of their conversation is very little answerable to the first. This I verily believe was his true intention, that he might present the world with a free and original work; for neither Chanet nor any other of his adversaries will be able to convince the world that this proceeded from want of judgment in a man of such parts as they are obliged to own in Montaigne.

He designed, also, sometimes to conceal his design in his titles; as for instance, in his third book, when having spent almost a whole chapter against physicians, it is most likely that his intention was to conceal it by entitling the same, *Of the Resemblance of Children to their Parents*. For this gives him an opportunity to tell us that he was afflicted with the gravel as his father was, and to discourse of the cure of several distempers, and at the same time of the uncertainty of physic, or rather of the ignorance of physicians; whence I conclude that, in this whole chapter and several others, there is rather a refined art than ignorance. It has also been objected against him that he talks of nobody else in his writings, as if he intended to propose himself as a necessary pattern to the rest of mankind, though what he says of himself is for the most part odd and fantastical. To this I answer, that any man may be an example to others, either for doing good or eschewing evil; and that Montaigne does not pretend that what he says of himself should be taken for any other thing than what really it is, having a sufficient knowledge of all human frailties, and of his own in particular.

It is somewhat surprising that Montaigne should be blamed for quoting ancient authors, when his quotations are made *à propos*, that is, for confirming or illustrating what he says, seeing Plutarch, and several other excellent authors, have taken the same liberty; and if it be objected that the quotations in Plutarch are taken from Greek authors, and consequently are in the same language as his, whereas Montaigne has stuffed his French book with Greek, Latin, and Italian verses; I answer that this is trifling, for if Montaigne found nothing in his own language worthy of being cited, or else if he thought that ancient or foreign writers had better treated the matter he speaks of, pray by what law is he forbidden to make use of their authority? I own that, in some places, he has translated some passages of ancient authors into French, and has so dexterously incorporated them into his work that he has in some manner made them his own; but where is the great crime in this, especially seeing he has a world of thoughts of his own, which are more sublime and excellent than what he has alleged from others?

Balzac, in his 19th *Entrétien*, reflects upon his language, though at the same time he excuses it. "He lived (says he) in the reign of the family of Valois, and was a Gascon by birth, and therefore

it is impossible but his language must have something of the vice common to his age and country. However, we must own that his soul was eloquent, and that he expressed his thoughts in bold masculine expressions, and that his style had some beauties above what we could have expected from his age. I'll say no more on this head; and I know that it would be a sort of a miracle that a person could politely speak French in the Barbary of Quercy and Perigord. Should a man, beset with bad examples, and deprived of good ones, have courage and strength to defend himself alone against a whole nation, against his own wife, relations, and friends, who are as many enemies to the purity of the French tongue? The court was likewise as corrupted as the country, so that it was then lawful to fail, there being then no settled rules for our language; and those faults, which are more ancient than the laws themselves, are doubtless innocent. I conclude," says he, in another place, "that I have a great veneration for him, and that in my opinion he is comparable to those ancients whom we call *Maximos Ingenio, Arte rudes*, &c."

What Balzac says, in relation to the court of France in the days of Montaigne, is true enough, and very much to the purpose; but observe here the vanity and malice of that hypercritic, who must reflect upon Montaigne's country; as if it were impossible that any body born in Perigord or Quercy should write French as politely as he who was born within a day's journey from Montaigne. I know Balzac has written more politely than Montaigne, and that the French tongue is much indebted to him; but he, whose excellence was chiefly in the connection of words, must not for all that pretend to set up for a judge of the thoughts of Montaigne, as he rashly ventured upon in his 18th and 19th *Entrétiens*.

'Tis true, Montaigne has some provincial expressions, but they are few in number; and it is to be observed that several words of his, which were at first excepted against, have been since adopted by the best writers, this being the privilege of great authors to introduce new words. The French word *enjoué* (merry) has not been always in use, though it is now in the mouths of all the learned and polite people, and Montaigne was the first author that I know of who made use of it; and so they are obliged to him for this word, which does not only signify a merry man, but likewise expresses the very effects of mirth in his face, and chiefly upon his cheek (*joues*).

Those who tell us that Scaliger was used to call him a bold Ignorant, do certainly a greater injury to Scaliger than to Montaigne; for the reputation of that great man will never so far bias mankind as to make them believe that the author of a book, wherein there is so much learning, should be an ignorant fellow. Scaliger was a better judge, and as this is not to be found in any one of his works, I think one may venture to say that this calumny was contrived by some of his envious enemies, who, having not strength enough to encounter him, made use of this artifice to run down his merit with that great name.

Monsieur de Plassac, a great admirer of Montaigne, corrected his chapter of the *Vanity of Words* into modern French; but, as he owns it himself, it was no more Montaigne's, whose similies and proverbial expressions have a greater strength than the nice politeness of the modern French language; and, besides, Montaigne's discourse is every where full of sentences and solid reason, which do not always admit that smooth but empty way of writing so much in vogue in France.

I do not, however, design to defend Montaigne in every thing; far from it, I blame his freedom in many places, and I cannot abide that, after having discoursed of the exemplary life of a holy man, he should immediately talk as he does of cuckoldom and privy-parts, and other things of this nature, which, though perhaps tolerable in another place, cannot be suffered in this; and I wish he had left out these things, that ladies might not be put to the blush, when his Essays are found in their libraries, and that they might improve themselves by reading this excellent book, without putting their modesty to any torment, as they must needs do when they come to these places.

As for the rest, there is hardly any human book extant so fit as this to teach men what they are, and lead them insensibly to a reasonable observation of the most secret springs of their actions; and therefore it ought to be the *manuale* of all gentlemen, his uncommon way of teaching winning people to the practice of virtue, as much as other books fright them away from it, by the dogmatical and imperious way which they assume.

Thus we have answered all the material objections made against Montaigne; for I think the other trifles which are objected against him do not deserve to be taken notice of, and I wonder that the author of the *Search after Truth* should spend his time upon them in a manner so unbecoming his character. He tells us, after Balzac and some others, that Montaigne's vanity and pride are not suitable to an author and philosopher; that it was ridiculous and useless to keep a page, having hardly six thousand livres a year, and more ridiculous still to have so often mentioned it in his writings: but I may answer that it was very common in his time for gentlemen of noble extraction to keep a page, to shew their quality, though their estate could hardly afford them to keep a footman, and that the six thousand livres a-year were then more than twenty thousand now-a-days. It was likewise very much unbecoming the gravity of our famous *Searcher after Truth* to rail at Montaigne because he kept a clerk, when he was counsellor in the Parliament of Bordeaux, for Montaigne having exercised that noble employment but for a short time, in his youth he had no occasion to mention it, and who shall believe that he has concealed it out of vanity, he who, in the opinion of Mallebranche himself, talks of his imperfections and vices with too great a freedom? It is likewise very ungenerous and ungentlemanlike to take notice that he did not very well succeed in his mayoralty of Bordeaux; the times he lived in were very troublesome, and supposing he committed some error, which they say without any proof, what is that to the merit of his book? Balzac introduces a gentleman speaking thus to an admirer of Montaigne: "You may praise your author, if you will, more than our Cicero, but I cannot fancy that a man who governed all the world was not, at least, equal to a person who did not know how to govern Bordeaux." This may very well pass for a jest; but is it a rational way of confuting an author, to have recourse to personal reflections, or some incidents relating to his private person or quality? This is so mean that I cannot fancy Balzac could be guilty of it,

and I wholly impute it to those who have published, after his death, some loose discourses on several subjects, which they have entitled his *Entrétiens*.

Notwithstanding these objections, Montaigne always had, and is like to have, admirers, as long as sense and reason have any credit in the world. Justus Lipsus calls him the French Thales, and Mezeray the Christian Seneca, and the incomparable Thuanus made an eulogy of him, whose testimony is sufficient to justify the memory of our author, for nobody will believe that a man of that integrity would have been so great a friend with so vicious a man as Mallebranche has represented Montaigne.—*Vindication of Montaigne's Essays. Prefixed to Cotton's translation.*

XVII.

DUGALD STEWART.

At the head of the French writers who contributed in the beginning of the seventeenth century, to turn the thoughts of their countrymen to subjects connected with the Philosophy of Mind, Montaigne may, I apprehend, be justly placed. Properly speaking, he belongs to a period somewhat earlier; but his tone of thinking and of writing classes him much more naturally with his successors, than with any French author who had appeared before him.

In assigning to Montaigne so distinguished a rank in the history of modern philosophy, I need scarcely say that I leave entirely out of the account what constitutes (and justly constitutes) to the generality of readers the principal charm of his Essays, the good-nature, humanity, and unaffected sensibility, which so irresistibly attach us to his character,—lending, it must be owned, but too often a fascination to his *talk*, when he cannot be recommended as the safest companion. Nor do I lay much stress upon the inviting frankness and vivacity with which he unbosoms himself about all his domestic habits and concerns; and which render his book so expressive a portrait, not only of the author, but of the Gascon country gentlemen, two hundred years ago. I have in view chiefly the minuteness and good faith of his details concerning his own personal qualities, both intellectual and moral. The only study which seems ever to have engaged his attention was that of *man;* and for this he was singularly fitted, by a rare combination of that talent for observation which belongs to men of the world, with those habits of abstracted reflection which men of the world have commonly so little disposition to cultivate. "I study myself," says he, "more than any other subject. This is my metaphysic; this my natural philosophy." He has accordingly produced a work *unique* in its kind; valuable, in an eminent degree, as an authentic record of many interesting facts relative to human nature, but more valuable by far, as *holding* up a mirror in which every individual, if he does not see his own image, will at least occasionally perceive so many traits of resemblance to it as can scarcely fail to invite his curiosity to a more careful review of himself. In this respect, Montaigne's writings may be regarded in the light of what painters call *studies;* in other words, of those slight sketches which were originally designed for the improvement of the artist, but which, on that account, are the more likely to be useful in developing the germs of similar endowments in others.

Without a union of these two powers (reflection and observation), the study of man can never be successfully prosecuted. It is only by retiring within ourselves that we can obtain a key to the characters of others; and it is only by observing and comparing the characters of others that we can thoroughly understand and appreciate our own.

After all, however, it may be fairly questioned, notwithstanding the scrupulous fidelity with which Montaigne has endeavoured to delineate his own portrait, if he has been sufficiently aware of the secret folds and reduplications of the human heart. That he was by no means exempted from the common delusions of self-love and self-deceit, has been fully evinced in a very acute, though somewhat uncharitable, section of the *Port Royal* Logic; but this consideration, so far from diminishing the value of his Essays, is one of the most instructive lessons they afford to those who, after the example of the author, may undertake the salutary, but humiliating task, of self-examination.

As Montaigne's scientific knowledge was, according to his own account, "very vague and imperfect;" and his book-learning rather sententious and gossiping than comprehensive and systematical, it would be unreasonable to expect, in his philosophical arguments, much either of depth or solidity. The sentiments he hazards are to be regarded but as the impressions of the moment; consisting chiefly of the more obvious doubts and difficulties which, on all metaphysical and moral questions, are apt to present themselves to a speculative mind, when it first attempts to dig below the surface of common opinions. In reading Montaigne, accordingly, what chiefly strikes us is not the novelty or refinement of his ideas, but the liveliness and felicity with which we see embodied in words the previous wanderings of our own imaginations. It is probably owing to this circumstance, rather than to any direct plagiarism, that his Essays appear to contain the germs of so many of the paradoxical theories which, in later times, Helvetius and others have laboured to systematize and to support with the parade of metaphysical discussion. In the mind of Montaigne the same paradoxes may be easily traced to those deceitful *appearances* which, in order to stimulate our faculties to their best exertions, nature seems purposely to have thrown in our way, as stumbling-blocks in the pursuit of truth; and it is only to be regretted on such occasions, for the sake of his own happiness, that his genius and temper qualified and disposed him more to start the problem than to investigate the solution.

When Montaigne touches on religion, he is in general less pleasing than on other subjects. His constitutional temper, it is probable, pre-disposed him to scepticism; but this original bias could not fail to be strengthened by the disputes, both religious and political, which, during his life-time, convulsed Europe, and more particularly his own country. On a mind like his it may be safely presumed that the writings of the reformers, and the instructions of Buchanan, were not altogether without effect; and hence, in all probability, the perpetual struggle, which he is at no pains to conceal, between the creed of his infancy, and the lights of his mature understanding. He speaks, indeed, of "reposing tranquilly on the pillow of doubt;" but this language is neither reconcileable with the general

complexion of his works, nor with the most authentic accounts we have received of his dying moments. It is a maxim of his own, that, "in forming a judgment of a man's life, particular regard should be paid to his behaviour at the end of it;" to which he pathetically adds, "that the chief study of his own life was, that his latter end might be decent, calm, and silent." The fact is (if we may credit the testimony of his biographers), that, in his declining years, he exchanged his boasted *pillow of doubt* for the more powerful opiates prescribed by the infallible church; and that he expired in performing what his old preceptor Buchanan would not have scrupled to describe as an act of idolatry.

The scepticism of Montaigne seems to have been of a very peculiar cast, and to have had little in common with that either of Bayle or of Hume. The great aim of the two latter writers evidently was, by exposing the uncertainty of our reasonings whenever we pass the limits of sensible objects, to inspire their readers with a complete distrust of the human faculties on all moral and metaphysical topics. Montaigne, on the other hand, never thinks of forming a sect; but, yielding passively to the current of his reflections and feelings, argues, at different times, according to the varying state of his impressions and temper, on opposite sides of the same question. On all occasions he preserves an air of the most perfect sincerity; and it was to *this*, I presume, much more than to the superiority of his reasoning powers, that Montesquieu alluded, when he said, "In the greater part of authors I see the *writer;* in Montaigne I see nothing but the *thinker.*" The radical fault of his understanding consisted in an incapacity of forming, on disputable points, those decided and fixed opinions, which can alone impart either force or consistency to intellectual character. For remedying this weakness, the religious controversies, and the civil wars recently engendered by the Reformation, were but ill calculated. The minds of the most serious men, all over Christendom, must have been then unsettled in an extraordinary degree; and where any predisposition to scepticism existed, every external circumstance must have conspired to cherish and confirm it. Of the extent to which it was carried, about the same period, in England, some judgment may be formed from the following description of a *Sceptic* by a writer not many years posterior to Montaigne.*

"A sceptic in religion is one that hangs in the balance with all sorts of opinions; whereof not one but stirs him, and none sways him. A man guiltier of credulity than he is taken to be; for it is out of his belief of every thing that he believes nothing. Each religion scares him from its contrary, none persuades him to itself. He would be wholly a Christian, but that he is something of an Atheist; and wholly an Atheist, but that he is partly a Christian; and a perfect Heretic, but that there are so many to distract him. He finds *reason* in all opinions, *truth* in none; indeed, the least reason perplexes him, and the best *will* not satisfy him. He finds doubts and scruples better than resolves them, and is *always too hard for himself.*" If this portrait had been presented to Montaigne I have little doubt that he would have the candour to acknowledge, that he recognised in it some of the most prominent and characteristical features of his own mind.

The most elaborate, and seemingly the most serious, of all Montaigne's Essays, is his long and somewhat tedious Apology for Raimond Sebond, contained in the twelfth chapter of his second book. This author appears, from Montaigne's account, to have been a Spaniard, who professed Physic at Toulouse, towards the end of the fourteenth century, and who published a treatise, entitled *Theologia Naturalis,* which was put into the hands of Montaigne's father by a friend, as a useful antidote against the innovations with which Luther was then beginning to disturb the ancient faith. That, in this particular instance, the book answered the intended purpose, may be presumed from the request of old Montaigne to his son, a few days before his death, to translate it into French from the Spanish original. His request was accordingly complied with, but the execution of this filial duty seems to have produced on Montaigne's own mind very different effects from what his father had anticipated.

The principal aim of Sebond's book, according to Montaigne, is to show that "Christians are in the wrong to make human reasoning the basis of their belief, since the object of it is only conceived by faith, and by a special inspiration of the divine grace." To this doctrine Montaigne professes to yield an implicit assent; and, under the shelter of it, contrives to give free vent to all the extravagancies of scepticism. The essential distinction between the reason of man and the instincts of the lower animals, is at great length, and with no inconsiderable ingenuity, disputed; the powers of the human understanding, in all enquiries, whether physical or moral, are held up to ridicule; an universal Pyrrhonism is recommended; and we are again and again reminded that "*the senses are the beginning and the end of all our knowledge.*" Whoever has the patience to peruse this chapter with attention, will be surprised to find in it the rudiments of a great part of the licentious philosophy of the eighteenth century; nor can he fail to remark the address with which the author avails himself of the language afterwards adopted by Bayle, Helvetius, and Hume:—"That to be a philosophical sceptic is the first step towards becoming a sound believing Christian." * * *

Charron is well known as the confidential friend of Montaigne's latter years, and as the confidential depository of his philosophical sentiments. Endowed with talents far inferior in force and originality to those of his master, he possessed, nevertheless, a much sounder and more regulated judgment; and, as his reputation, notwithstanding the liberality of some of his peculiar tenets, was high among the most respectable and conscientious divines of his own church, it is far from improbable that Montaigne committed to him the guardianship of his posthumous fame, from motives similar to those which influenced Pope in selecting Warburton as his literary executor. The discharge of this trust, however, seems to have done less good to Montaigne than harm to Charron; for while the unlimited scepticism, and the indecent levities of the former, were viewed by the zealots of those days with a smile of tenderness and indulgence, the slighter heresies of the latter were marked with a severity the most rigorous and unrelenting, that, in points of essential importance, they deviated so

* Bishop Earle, in his "Micro-cosmography, or a piece of the World discovered." London, 1628.

very little from the standard of the Catholic faith. It is not easy to guess the motives of this inconsistency; but such we find from the fact, to have been the temper of religious bigotry, or, to speak more correctly, of political religionism, in all ages of the world.

As an example of Charron's solicitude to provide an antidote against the more pernicious errors of his friend, I shall only mention his ingenious and philosophical attempt to reconcile with the moral constitution of human nature, the apparent discordancy in the judgments of different nations concerning right and wrong. His argument on this point is in substance the very same with that so well urged by Beattie, in opposition to Locke's reasonings against the existence of innate practical principles. It is difficult to say, whether, in this instance, the coincidence between Montaigne and Locke, or that between Charron and Beattie, be the more remarkable. * * * It is probably owing to the desultory and popular style of composition common to both Montaigne and Charron, that so little attention has been paid to either by those who have treated of the History of French Philosophy. To Montaigne's merits, indeed, as a lively and amusing essayist, ample justice has been done; but his influence on the subsequent habits of thinking, among his countrymen, remains still to be illustrated. He has done more, perhaps, than any other author (I am inclined to think with the most honest intentions), to introduce *into men's houses* (if I may borrow an expression of Cicero) what is now called *the new Philosophy*,—a philosophy certainly very different from that of Socrates. In the fashionable world, he has, for more than two centuries, maintained his place as the first of moralists; a circumstance easily accounted for, when we attend to the singular combination, exhibited in his writings, of a semblance of erudition, with what Mallebranche happily calls his *air du monde*, and *air ca alier*.* As for the graver and less attractive Charron, his name would probably before now have sunk into oblivion, had it not been so closely associated, by the accidental events of his life, with the more celebrated name of Montaigne.—*Enc. Brit.*, 1824.†

XVIII.

HAZLITT.

THE Essayists are, if not moral philosophers, moral historians, and that's better; or if they are both, they found the one character upon the other; their premises precede their conclusions, and we put faith in their testimony, for we know that it is true.

Montaigne was the first person who led the way to this kind of writing in the moderns. His great merit was that he may be said to have been the first who had the courage to say as an author what he felt as a man; and, as courage is generally the effect of conscious strength, he was, probably, led to do so by the richness, truth, and force of his own observations on books and men. He was, in the truest sense, a man of original mind; that is, he had the power of looking at things for himself, or as they really were, instead of blindly trusting to, and fondly repeating, what others told him that they were. In taking up his pen, he did not set up for a philosopher, wit, orator, or moralist; but he became all these by merely daring to tell us whatever passed through his mind, in its naked simplicity and force, that he thought any way worth communicating. He enquires what human life is, and has been, to shew what it ought to be; and, in treating of men and manners, he spoke of them as he found them, not according to pre-conceived notions and abstract dogmas; and began by teaching us what he himself was. In criticising books he did not compare them with rules and systems, but told us what he saw to like or dislike in them. He was, in a word, the first author who was not a book-maker, and who wrote, not to make converts of others to established creeds and prejudices, but to satisfy his own mind of the truth of things. In this respect we know not which to be most charmed with, the author or the man.

There is an inexpressible frankness and sincerity, as well as power, in what he writes. There is no attempt at imposition or concealment, no juggling tricks or solemn mouthing, no laboured attempts at proving himself always in the right, and everybody else in the wrong; he says what is uppermost, lays open what floats at the top, or lies at the bottom, of his mind, and deserves Pope's character of him, where he professes to

> "—— Pour out all as plain
> As downright Shippen, or as old *Montaigne*."

He does not converse with us like a pedagogue with his pupil, whom he wishes to make as great a blockhead as himself, but like a philosopher and friend, who has passed through life with thought and observation, and is willing to enable others to pass through it with pleasure and profit. A writer of this stamp, I confess, appears to me as much superior to a common bookworm as a library of real books is superior to a mere book-case, painted and lettered on the outside with the names of celebrated works. As he was the first to attempt this new way of writing, so the same strong natural

* "Ah, l'aimable homme! qu'il *est de bonne compagnie!* C'est mon ancien ami; mais à force d'être ancien il m'est nouveau."—*Mad. de Sevigné.*

† An Edinburgh Reviewer (Sept. 1816) upon this opinion of Mr. Stewart, remarks:—

"Has Mr. Stewart seized the characteristic feature which gives Montaigne a place in the history of philosophy? Not certainly his philosophical discoveries, for he has made none; nor the justness of his opinions, which may be often questioned; nor the dramatic egotism with which he paints himself, and pours forth those easy boldnesses of expression, which seem to belong to a more picturesque and nervous language than modern French. These are great, but not properly philosophical, merits. But he seems to have a distinct character as a philosopher. As Machiavel was the first who discussed grave questions in a vulgar tongue, and created a philosophy of history; so Montaigne was the first conspicuous writer who, in a modern language, philosophized on the common concerns of men, and the ordinary subjects of private reflection and conversation. The degree which Nature claims in the diversity of talent, the efficacy of education, the value of the learned languages, the usages of society, the passions that actuate private life, the singular customs of different nations, are the subjects chiefly handled in his Essays. In the period from Socrates to Plutarch, such questions had been well treated before. But Montaigne was evidently the founder of popular philosophy in modern times. The grossness of his anecdotes is, no doubt, to be mainly imputed to the coarseness which still belonged to the gentry. But it may in part also be ascribed to the infancy of the art of writing in a generally spoken language. Authors had not yet discovered that the same degree of indelicacy is shocking in our own tongue, which they had long indulged without notice in their barbarous Latin; where the words, being unusual, did not seem so gross, and where they were not understood by women, whose delicacy the grossest men desire in some measure to preserve."

impulse, which prompted the undertaking, carried him to the end of his career. The same force and honesty of mind which urged him to throw off the shackles of custom and prejudice, would enable him to complete his triumph over them. He has left little for his successors to achieve in the way of just and original speculation on human life. Nearly all the thinking of the last two centuries, of that kind which the French denominate *morale observatrice*, is to be found in Montaigne's Essays; there is the germ, at least, and generally much more. He sowed the seed, and cleared away the rubbish, even where others have reaped the fruit, or cultivated and decorated the soil to a greater degree of nicety and perfection. There is no one to whom the old Latin adage is more applicable than to Montaigne,—"*Pereant isti qui ante nostra dixerunt.*" There has been no new impulse given to thought since his time. Among the specimens of criticisms on authors he has given us, are those on Virgil, Ovid, and Boccacio, in the account of books which he thinks worth reading, or which he finds he can read in his old age, and which may be reckoned among the few criticisms which are worth reading at any age.—*Comic Writers.*

XIX.

RETROSPECTIVE REVIEW.

Of those books to which we have recourse for pleasure or recreation, we have a particular fancy for a gossipping book—a collection of choice *morceaux* and short dissertations, in which an author gives us the cream of a diversity of subjects, without calling upon us for any rigid attention, or nice examination of his arguments. A kind of reading which resembles the very best conversation, but which is, at the same time, more artificially dressed up, and more elegantly turned. When, for instance, we have been wading through a ponderous or tedious volume, for the purposes of analysis or for the sake of a few good extracts, we return, with a keen relish, to a literary gossip with an author of this kind, whom we can take up with the certainty of being instructed and amused—the smooth current of whose thoughts we can follow without effort or constraint, and to whose guidance we abandon ourselves with a desultory, but luxurious, indifference; and whom, when we have read so much as to our humour or idleness seemeth good, we can lay down without a sense of weariness, or a feeling of dissatisfaction. And then, if his disquisitions be short, and have no sequel or dependence upon each other, we can select from the bundle such as, in length or quality, may suit our time or fancy. Truly this may be an idle, but it is a pleasant mode of reading,—and that is sufficient to recommend it. Indeed, we do not see why it should not be carried even further than for the mere purposes of relaxation and amusement. It is, without doubt, much better to pursue an agreeable road to the temple of knowledge, than to pick out the most rugged and uninviting path. The better course, it is true, calls upon us for a greater sacrifice of ease and comfort—it requires more resolution and painstaking, and we ourselves should have no objection to it, where it is inaccessible by any other means. But to select this briery path in preference to one more easy and agreeable, voluntarily to lacerate ourselves with the thorns which stick in the way, is, we cannot help thinking, a labour of supererogation—an infliction of penance for its own sake; the effect of which can only be to discourage and disgust. And one would think there are pleasures, few enough sprinkled in this pilgrimage of threescore and *ten*, to induce us, not inquisitively, "to make that little less." Nor can such a mode of study be called vain and unproductive, for the richest fruit grows on the sunny aspect of the hill, where nature has been busiest in scattering her May flowers and ornaments of a gay season. The countenance of wisdom is not naturally harsh and crabbed, and repulsive; if it be wrinkled, it is not with care and ill temper, but with the lines of deep thought. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and her smile is as genial and refreshing as that of young beauty, and equally invites us to be joyous and glad. She teaches us

> "To live
> The easiest way; nor, with perplexing thoughts,
> To interrupt the sweets of life, from which
> God hath bid dwell far off all anxious cares,
> And not molest us; unless we ourselves
> Seek them with wandering thoughts and notions vain."

We feel no sympathy with those authors who would do every thing by the square and compass, who would rudely snap the springs of feeling, and torture us into wisdom and virtue. It is the author who gives utterance to the promptings of the heart, who mingles human feelings with all his knowledge, that lays fast hold of our affection, and whom, above all, we love and venerate. And such a one is the lively old Gascon, Montaigne. He is, indeed, the author for a snug fire-side and an easy armed chair, and more particularly whilst (as at this moment) the rain is pattering against the window at intervals, as the gusts of wind come and go, and, with the sea's hoarse murmuring in the distance, makes harsh music, which shows that nature is somewhat out of tune. At such a time, Montaigne's self-enjoyment becomes doubly our own. His everlasting gaiety and good humour is more grateful from the contrast. - - - - - Montaigne wrote *sans peur*, but not *sans reproche*. He is not content with a little sprinkling of "salt in the lines, to make the matter savoury"—he is fond of high seasoning. It is probable, however, that what, according to our system of manners, is highly indelicate, was read by the modest of his age, by a wife or a daughter, without disgust; some of his Essays are even addressed to ladies, it may be, of exemplary lives. And, after all, manners are but the fashions of the time, and how variable they are we need *no ghost* from the dead to tell us. The customs of one nation or age are considered indecorous in another. Montaigne, however, acknowledges that he babbled a little more about such matters than was strictly decorous; and he informs us that, although he was so impudent on paper, he was of an extreme modesty and shame-facedness in conversation. But his object was to describe himself—what he thought, he was not ashamed to write; and he would have considered it a weakness and unmanliness to have done otherwise. - - - -

The chief subject of Montaigne's reflections and writings is the philosophy of life. How to live well and die well with him

> "Is the prime wisdom; what is more is fume,
> Or emptiness, or fond impertinence."

To achieve this, he studied deeply and accurately; he dissected and anatomized his feelings,

his fears, and his hopes, nay, the slightest motions of his soul, with the coolness and unconcern of an operating surgeon. He lets us into the innermost thoughts of his heart—he spreads out before us, as in a picture, every shade and gradation of feeling. Not a phantasma flitted across his mind that he did not put down, and, having contemplated its strangeness or absurdity, he placed it to the credit or debit side of his account. "He nothing extenuates, nor sets down aught in malice." He is the most warm and candid of friends—the most open of enemies, if, indeed, he ever admitted into his heart any feeling which amounted to personal hostility. The consequence is, that nobody can read his works without becoming his intimate and approved good friend—his most familiar acquaintance. We know almost the very minute he was born; and, if he could have so far anticipated time, he would, with equal precision, have informed us of the hour of his death. Nor do we think that any thing would have given him so much pleasure as afterwards to have been able to come back to earth again, and add another volume to his Essays, that the world might still know the state of his mind.

Montaigne has been censured for his numerous quotations from classical authors, but, we think, without sufficient reason. It is true that, were a writer to give us a whole chapter of them from his common-place-book, they would be sufficiently dull and flat, and, like dried flowers, would lose nearly all their fragrance, although they might retain, in some measure, their form and colour. But where quotations from the poets are made, as they generally are by Montaigne, for the sake of illustration, and are, at once, elegant and appropriate, they contribute both to the spirit and grace of composition. - - - -

Nothing but the Essays themselves of our old confabulator can convey an adequate idea of their unrestrained vivacity, energy, and fancy, of their boldness and attractive simplicity. He says rightly that it is the only book in the world of its kind. All the world, however, may know his book in him, and him in his book, the character of each is the same. It requires more courage to tittle-tattle of a man's foibles, vanities, and little imperfections, than to expose heinous defects or wicked inclinations; as the man, who shrinks from small inconveniences, will yet rush into "the pelting, pitiless storm," with a feeling of exultation. The former is a confession of weakness, in the latter there is an audacity and semblance of manliness. For the one he might be mocked and ridiculed; for the other he would be feared and scorned, which is the more tolerable of the two. In the latter, there is a conscious power and daring, which is some sort of compensation for the risk; for the former, he runs a chance of gaining nothing but contempt. The little vanities and oddities disclosed by Montaigne are, however, accompanied by too many amiable qualities to excite any thing of this feeling. The President Bouhier says of him: "It is true that he sometimes avows his defects; but, if we pay attention to them, we shall find they are only those which philosophers, or people of fashion, are not ashamed to assume, or imperfections which turn upon indifferent things;" and Mallebranche says nearly the same thing of him. Montaigne had a natural and invincible repugnance to falsehood; and, as he assures us that he has painted himself as he was, whole and entire, it is fair to consider that he had no great vices to confess. At the same time, there are things in his book which cannot well be justified. His singular education, and early intimacy with the writers of antiquity, tinged his mind with that bold and paradoxical spirit which is so continually displayed in his discourses. He formed a strict alliance and friendship with the ancient worthies. Rome, in the time of her free and flourishing estate (for he loved her neither in her birth nor decay), became to him a passion and a feeling! He paid more homage to the dead than the living. He entered the lists more chivalrously for the defence of Pompey, or in the cause of Brutus, than of either of the religious factions which distracted his own country. These early attachments never left him, and it was with singular satisfaction that he had the honour of Roman citizenship conferred upon him, during one of his visits to Rome. The elements were strangely compounded in him—there was an odd mixture of philosophical thought and trifling speculation—of acute reasoning and inconclusiveness—of force of mind, and erratic ungoverned fancy. He was, at the same time, idle and impatient—thoughtful and gay, and by turns reflected upon and laughed at himself and all the world. Fond of travelling, he was as difficult to be removed in the first instance, as to be stopped when once in motion. Of a frank and courteous deportment, of a hospitable disposition, and an amiable temper—a despiser of ceremony, and eminently sociable—he appears to have been, in general, as sluggish in his feelings as he was cold in the constitution of his mind; but for the memory of his father he cherished a deep and lasting veneration and regard; and for his friend La Boëtie, he felt as sacred a friendship as ever had birth in the human heart. Himself hating to be obliged to any other, or by any other, than himself; he was, nevertheless, ready enough to confer an obligation, more especially if it did not call upon him for any great care or trouble, to which he had a mortal aversion. In fact, his whole study was to be careless, easy, and contented, and he made haste to seize pleasure, lest it should take wing and fly. But he was, upon the whole, a kind-hearted and amiable man, and of a large and capacious soul, superior to most of the prejudices of his age, although he doubtless had some peculiar to himself. To him, all men were compatriots—the universal tie, superior to all national ties whatever—and the relations of friendship to those of kindred. He was nice, even to superstition, in keeping his promises. Even in actions free and indifferent, if he breathed a promise, even in whispers to himself, it assumed the shape of an obligation; but if he had once made it known to others, he considered himself positively enjoined to the performance of it. It was pleasant to him, because it was voluntary—it was of his own free will and bounty.

Of his reflections, he fancied those the best which he made on horseback; and a sprightly thought never came into his head, on such an occasion, that he did not regret there was nobody to whom he could communicate it; and yet the reins of his bridle being wrongly put on, or a strap flapping against his leg, was enough to keep him out of humour for a day together. Although of a studious turn of mind, he delighted more in contemplation than reading, to which he seldom applied himself for more than an hour together; and that, when he had nothing else to do, or it may be, for the pur-

pose of culling the flowers with which he has garnished his disquisitions; for he tells us, over and over again, that he could retain nothing in his memory for any length of time. Indeed, the treachery of this faculty is a standing subject of complaint with him; but even from this real or imaginary defect (for, considering his extraordinary familiarity with, and the use he makes of, Roman authors, it is difficult to believe it was so imperfect as he represents it), he contrives to raise up some pleasant consolations; as when he says that, from his want of memory, he less remembers the injuries he has received; and that the places he revisits, and the books he reads over again, still smile upon him with a fresh novelty. Such is the prerogative of genius—it can extract consolation from want and privation, and decks the barren wilderness with beauty.

Human nature is a wayward and variable thing, and where a man perseveres in putting down every crude and fugitive thought that occurs to him, we must expect to find that his mind has undergone changes similar to those of his body, and that what he thinks to-day he will not think to-morrow. The opinions of a mutable nature cannot be immutable. Doubts will arise, contradictions will occur, and one opinion displace another, in its turn to be deposed. Montaigne wrote without system and without classification, rambling from one subject to another, without order or connection, like the bee which now hardly settles upon one flower, and anon takes deeper draughts of another, as its taste or humour sways it. These aberrations are rather the result of design than accident; and, it is true, give a conversational ease, a reality and grace to his Essays, which engages the interest of the reader too deeply in the feelings of the author, to allow him to think any thing but that he is the most agreeable and original writer in the world. He is now a Stoic and now an Epicurean. He is carried away with every wind that blows—"accident can play what stop it pleases" upon him. He now argues on one side of the question, and now on the other, and at last leaves it without coming to a conclusion. He is too hard for himself. "He is every thing by turns, and nothing long." His book is censured in severe terms by Malleb ranche, not for what we should conceive its most objectionable passages, but for the vanity and Pyrrhonism of the author. Like most speculative men, Montaigne was fond of raising doubts against established propositions. He hinted opinions, which have since been expanded into systems. But, if he was an enemy to superstition, his scepticism did not terminate in irreligion. The strong, as well as the weak in intellect, are subject to fluctuations of opinion, especially on matters of faith. Montaigne was open to the reception of arguments, or rather, created them on all subjects; and it is not surprising that, in the religious contests which agitated his country, he should waver in the creed of his forefathers. A man may doubt the fallibility of human establishments, without being either wicked or irreligious. The force of argument depends upon a thousand accidents—the education, the experience, the associations of thought or feeling, the timidity or the fearlessness of the individual to whom they are applied. Whatever doubts, however, Montaigne might throw out, he always professed himself to be of the Roman Catholic faith, and his resolution, that as he had lived, so he would die in it; and he did die, with a full blossoming reputation, after leading a life (with the exception of the disorder with which he was in his latter years afflicted) the most joyous, felicitous, and philosophical of the sons of men.

His *talking* discourses are inexpressibly taking and agreeable. With a singular power of self-investigation, and an acute observation of the actions of men, which he discriminated with "a learned spirit of human dealing," he combined great affluence of thought and excursiveness of fancy. He was, at once, bold and trifling—philosophical and inconclusive—bold in imagination and free in enquiry—of an open and prepossessing demeanour, he was amiable and eminently attractive. His style is bold, energetic, sententious, and abrupt; and, although provincial and unrefined, it is original, vivacious, simple, and *debonair*.—*Retrospective Review*, 1820.

XX.

WESTMINSTER REVIEW.

THERE is a passage in the "Tempest," well known to contain several expressions identical with those of Florio in his translation of a part of one of the Essays. And it would, at all events, have been highly improbable that Shakspere should not have read them. On the whole, the celebrated soliloquy in "Hamlet" presents a more characteristic and expressive resemblance to much of Montaigne's writings than any other portion of the plays of the great dramatist which we at present remember; though it would doubtless be easy to trace many apparent transferences from the Frenchman into the Englishman's works, as both were keen and many-sided observers in the same age, and neighbouring countries. But "Hamlet" was in those days no popular type of character; nor were Montaigne's views and tone familiar to men till he had himself made them so. Now the Prince of Denmark is very nearly a Montaigne, lifted to a higher eminence, and agitated by more striking circumstances and a severer destiny, and altogether a somewhat more passionate structure of man. It is not, however, very wonderful that "Hamlet," who was but a part of Shakspere, should exhibit to us more than the whole of Montaigne, and the external facts appear to contradict any notion of a French ancestry for the Dane, as the play is said to have been produced in 1600, and the translation of the "Essays" not for three years later.

However this may be, it is interesting to find any points of analogy between a poetical creation, probably the most subtle and profound of Shakspere, and a living man actually co-existent with the poet, and who must doubtless often have been in Paris men whom Shakspere conversed with but a few days afterwards in London. They had the same busy and fervid world around them, listened to the same tales of Eastern travel and American adventure, and all the great public events and personages in the fore-ground of the picture seen by one, were respectively conspicuous in the back-ground gazed at by the other. Very ordinary men, nay, inanimate things derive an interest, from our certainty that they were contemporary with those

whom the world cannot, if it would, forget. The celebrated and productive minds, whose lives flowed on through the same days of storm and sunshine, seem each to reflect a light upon the other; and the group starts forward into distinctness and vividness, while the single figure might have seemed dim, cold, and stiff, as the recumbent effigy in a twilight chapel. - - - - - - -

It is probably the great canon of all biographies, and of all writings the interest of which is mainly biographical, that those are best which present the most complete picture of the lives they relate to. To some this will seem a truism; to others, a paradox. But most persons appear to judge of the value of the picture of a human life with reference to the importance of the man in the history of the world, rather than to the fullness and accuracy of the delineation. Yet it may be well maintained that the structure and growth of a man, of any man, are in themselves so grave and fruitful a reality, that, quite independently of extraordinary endowments or exploits, a true and perfect image of his inward being would be a richer and higher creation than any portrait at all less accurate of a much more remarkable mind. The object is itself so deep and immense that in contemplating any single example of it all differences of degree are lost sight of. - - - - - - -

The truly precious and instructive specimens of human nature which the past leaves us, are the men in whom we directly, and from themselves, know both what they were, and why and how they were so. And it is very remarkable that we have not this knowledge of any worthless and despicable soul. Those who have painted themselves truly, however unconsciously, are the true and ample minds. The weak and base, who have designed to do it at all, have always betaken themselves to distortion and falsehood, as persons of misshapen forms often throw themselves into unnatural and painful attitudes, to hide, as they imagine, the blemishes of their figures. On the other hand, we are minutely and abundantly informed of the mind and character of Augustine and Luther, of Dante, of Cicero, of the holy and stainless Socrates. We know Milton as he was, and with open eyes behold him luminous in his blindness. We stand behind young Goëthe, while we listen to his *poetry* and *truth*, and seem with his universal sensibility to receive the just and sharp impression from all things and men, and with his unwearied and felicitous intelligence to shape all into new and complete pictures. And far meaner and narrower as was the man, it is in this way that we grow acquainted with Montaigne when we read his "Essays;" and find that there are few of our kinsmen or friends whom we can see into so thoroughly, or with whom, though dwelling for years under one roof, we seem to live in such intimate communion.

This is a great thing. The paring of nails, the clippings of hair, the worn-out slipper of a conqueror's foot, which has kicked thousands or millions of men before it, the glove from a hand that many lips delighted to salute, though lips and fingers have long since been food for worms—these matters have for some their value. We doubt not that the peruke of Louis XIV., or the cocked-hat of Marlborough, would fetch, in any London auction-room, a price beyond Voltaire's history of the one, or Archdeacon Coxe's life of the other. Yet these memorials can suggest, even to the creative soul of a collector of curiosities, only a faint and imperfect conception of their former owners. While, in the writings of any one who, like Montaigne, has chronicled himself, we have the very man, a living human being brought before us. We are not compelled to infer the kernel from the husk, the Hercules from—not the foot, but—the sandal; to fill up for ourselves, with substantial form, the empty vestments which adumbrate their wearer. Here the inward is that which is clearest; the flame within the coloured lamp throwing its light upon and through those outward and surrounding circumstances which alone biography and history, for the most part, present to us. Hard, indeed, is the work of a biographer, who seldom gives any distinct and tenable knowledge of the hero he describes. But he always, more or less well, and more or less unconsciously, does something towards the painting himself. His mistakes and dreams as to another, are the facts of his own mind. We see him living and moving at his easel, where he may be daubing only the cloudiest caricature of some one else. That which he ostensibly writes of, is as worthless as the latter text inscribed above the faded characters of a genuine classic. While he blabs mendacious gossip about the victim of his rhetoric, he betrays the whole secret, the imperishable reality of his own character, aims, and insight. But when he writes, as did Montaigne, of himself, the dream, the delirium, the inane folly, is hardly less valuable than the earnest confession, the simple-hearted narrative of events. He may not always write truth and wisdom about his own temper, principles, and story; but the weaknesses and delusions are also his, his own, and alike contribute to embody before our eyes the one living human being.

On this topic—namely, what a man is—more books have been written than on all other matters, probably because, as far as we know, books are written by men. It lies at the root of all history, all poetry, and all that, in the highest sense of the word, is philosophy. But, indeed, more properly speaking, it is of this matter, and this alone, that all books more or less directly treat, and about this that all thoughts are occupied. For speculations, the least apparently human, are in reality based on some portion or other of man, and on this alone: those as to reptiles, which may well concern a man, himself a worm; those as to the earth we tread on, we being ourselves but dust and clay; those as to the air and stars, for what else are we but a breath, and our lives but sparks of fire in a vault of darkness? Nor can it be said that this is a fantastic abuse of metaphor. On this subject nothing properly is metaphor; for all analogies, even the wildest combinations twisted together by the fancy, have their one root in the unity of our consciousness. And in all we seek to know, our aim is only to discover what there is in the thing corresponding to somewhat in ourselves. Thus we discern it; thus we master it; make it our own; truly know it. That in an object which answers to, or dovetails with, ourselves, is what we really mean by the object. And manifestly so; for if there be aught in it which meets and assimilates with nothing in us, of that something, that algebraic *x*, never to be discovered, we cannot speak, or think, or dream. Not only do we not know it,

but we never can know it. In this largest, but also most true sense then, it is certain that all books relate to man, and only to man; yet some to that which is more essential and characteristic in us, some to that which is less. Of some the ground and element lies nearer to our affections, and will, and intelligence, to that which is least changeable in us, and is the frame-work and support of all the rest; others to that which we cannot but regard as more outward and superficial. Some treat of man in his inmost life, beliefs, feelings, purposes, and successes; others more of the material world, which is also, but more remotely, his—his colossal hut, and inexhaustible mine, and insatiable catacomb. In one way or other the strongest and most cutting thoughts of man—since the beginning of his current almanac and present calendar some five thousand years ago—have been exercised and expended in shaping out for himself a clearer and clearer image of himself, both as he finds himself immediately within, and as he recognizes his own obscure likeness in the canvass of nature, bordered with its frame of time and space, the carvings of which are also one endless intertexture of human resemblances. Much of the work of becoming what we may be, consists in knowing what we are; and we should go mad, and rot in preternatural idleness, if we had not the task of gradually finding ourselves expressed in the universe, and the universe impressed upon ourselves, and of more and more realizing this correspondence outwardly by action, whence arts and trades, and journeys, and ships, and harvests; and inwardly by thought and love, from which arise religions, poetry, sciences, all heroism and goodness.

Of the books that show us what we are, there have been in many ages better than the "Essays" of Montaigne; but it may be affirmed, without meaning to offend any one, that, even in our age, there are several worse. His book is not the widest nor the deepest; but it is a perfectly genuine record of a far livelier, and richer, and more honest mind than common. There are oracles of loftier and more fiery spirits, belonging less than this to our time and tendencies; and though immortal as death itself, which will outlive all but life, yet not more deserving of immortality than these doubts, fancies, endless egotisms, of a dead old Gascon gentleman.

Such he was. He acquaints us with man chiefly by exhibiting to us a man, the offspring of one age, and the native of a single spot; and we must consider what these circumstances made him, that we may the better understand what in himself he was. He belonged, in a word, to the most active portion of the human race, in the most eager and productive period that it has known, at least since it first contrived to shape itself into social existence. Printing, like the former and latter rain, was diffusing the knowledge long collected in the vague and dim clouds of the past. Columbus had burst the gates of the Atlantic, and shewn to men a new heaven and a new earth, and other forms of human nature than those of our elder regions. And while the new was pouring in, the old was rapidly crumbling down and passing away. More connection and interdependence was growing up in all the concerns of life. Individual strength and wild energy were settling down. The solid vault of dogma under which men lived was thinning off, and widening, and wavering; and while a new and bright vegetation of literature opened over the earth, the ancient snows and ice-rocks of tradition melted and burst along in foaming torrents. Together with these changes, a looser width of luxury and excitement was unfolded, and the sweeter wines of the new age were mingled with deadlier poisons. In Germany, misery and fanaticism, and heroic faith; in Italy, unbounded falsehood and creative genius; in England, lawless brutality and popular zeal; in France, all these elements were mixed together. During the first half of the sixteenth century the Reformation began and was secured; More and Cranmer were executed; Luther lived and died; Rabelais stood forth as a fervid genius in the mask of a buffoon; Raffaelle, Durer, and Michael Angelo painted themselves for ever on the most massive tablets of the mind of man; Ariosto embalmed chivalry in a gorgeous tomb; Fiesco conspired; Machiavelli theorized; Melancthon and Scaliger taught; Cortez and Pizarro passed, like its own earthquakes, through America; the feudal greatness of French nobility blazed almost its last; France, Germany, and Italy, wore each other out in idle wars. In the midst of these confusions, Calvin was condemned by Rome as a heretic, for establishing the power which enabled him to burn Servetus. Rome was sacked by an army of adventurers, and Trent filled with a council of Romish prelates. Faith, energizing in Luther, threw off its cowl, and his emperor, unable to compel him to wear it, placed it on his own head and sank into a convent. The world was learning that Homer, Socrates, and Plutarch were more than names, and growing to feel what they really meant. And while Montaigne was drinking deepest of their spirit, the Protestants of Mérindol and Cabières were massacred, and in Guyenne, at his own threshold, the peasantry were maddened into revolt by the Gabelle (1548), and were crushed again under the heaviest sorrows.

In fine, the state of society in Western Europe resembled at this time that of a party of mariners saving themselves on a raft constructed out of the wreck of their former stately but worn-out vessel. With woes, and panic cries, and bleeding hands, and fierce contentions, and the deaths of many, they constructed a frail support amid the stormy waves; but the ruin of the ship has laid open to them precious treasures and priceless instruments, long seated up and forgotten, within the hold; new necessities develop more complete inventions: the strong call of the hour awakens fresh life in many a heart, before weak and torpid; and on their creaking and wave-washed deck they sail before the wind in greater terrors, but with happier auspices, than before.

In the midst of this revolution, Montaigne, born in 1553, rose to consciousness. In the course of his life he saw the world around him all convulsed with the fiercest religious wars, the massacre of St. Bartholomew perpetrated, the Dutch republic created. He was contemporary with Cervantes and with Shakspere. Seldom has there been on earth a broader scene of apparent confusion; but, in the midst of the storm, far nobler and more various powers were at work than in the downfall of the Roman empire, or the conflicts of the middle ages. Much of household simplicity was perishing; popular fancy and feeling were losing much of their unconscious beauty; the rude and slow machinery of political society was breaking and crushing down;

above all, the old unquestionable beliefs of men were inwardly decaying, and were shaken and tottering under outward attacks. The fierce horrors, base frauds, and lascivious indulgences of public life, were rather multiplied and darkened than at all suppressed; yet thought and humanity were living more strongly, and generating life; and in the confused and ferocious tumult there were some who taught, and many who received the teaching, that faith in higher than visible things had a foundation of its own in the heart of man to rest on, and need not lean for ever on the hollow and spurious support of a despotic priesthood. But this last and greatest truth was preached in the midst of passions and delusions which were closely mingled with it, as the stream turned into a stagnant pool is itself stained by that which it purifies. Thus it might perhaps have been anticipated that in the awakening knowledge of a beautiful and inexhaustible pagan literature, self-satisfying speculation and easy sympathy would find abundant pretext and encouragement to shrink from the gigantic battle of austere belief and distinct principles into a world of intelligent delight. The survey of mankind, as a mere object of curious observation, both invited and bewildered the reason; and the richest and most many-coloured spectacle of human existence which the world had ever exhibited, was heightened and contrasted by a better knowledge of a remote and wonderful past.

Montaigne was the son of a Gascon country-gentleman and soldier, rather a humorist, of whom he gives the following account:

"My house has been a long time open to men of learning, and is very well known by them; for my father, who was the master of it for fifty years and more, being warmed with that zeal with which King Francis I. had newly embraced literature, and brought it into esteem, spared no pains nor expense to get an acquaintance with men of learning, treating them, at his house, as persons sacred, who had divine wisdom by some special inspiration, collecting their sentences and sayings as so many oracles, and with the more veneration and religion, as he was the less qualified to judge of them, for he had no knowledge of letters any more than his predecessors had."

In his writings the central scene of his outward life always appears to be his château, which he delights to paint as built mostly by his father, with nothing added to it by him; as the only gentleman's house in France unfortified against either party in the civil wars; and as strong and hospitable enough to shelter his poorer neighbours against the mere marauders of the time. In a tower of this building was the study and library of Montaigne, and here he describes himself as composing the book in which the description occurs, and which is almost as certain to last as the nature of man, which it so amply and minutely presents to us.

Strange that by means of a little chemical mixture, lamp-black, and so forth, on a tissue of old rags, the thoughts of a man should thus be preserved for all men. For what can seem a less suitable vehicle for a thought—consider it—a thought!—than smoke-dirt and worn filaments of flax. These then, perhaps, are in truth not that which makes the thought last; but that which lets us see that it does last, as the wire on which the insect's diamond wing is held under the glass of a microscope. Montaigne is gone to where he will have found some at least of his doubts cleared up. But for us he has left a mantle behind him, not only inscribed, as are the magic garments of romance, with many strange characters, but shewing the familiar folds and twists of the short and stout-bodied old Gascon. In that mantle we need not wrap ourselves, but we may try to peruse and measure it. Thus it remains to us as a fact that Montaigne did what no man had done before, nor has any man so well done since—in sharp, light, and with endlessly daring strokes, painted himself, as the one great certainty in a world of doubt—himself, a living being—a person—a man, bright shining, like an enchanted head—a human image of brassy flame in Rembrandt's wizard cave of blackness.

Many have shewn us man in general, and have done this better or worse, according to their several shares of manhood. But the mischief of such delineations is, that man in general is after all a fiction, for man exists only *in particular*. The essential forms and germs of our whole nature are stored indeed in every individual, and as the reason gradually awakens to the music of experience, a corresponding image becomes present to it of man as a single [illegible] being. But this image is always to some ex[illegible] imperfect, and yet has a tendency to allure an[illegible]en imprison our attention within itself, and shut [illegible]ut any entrances, or, if we may use the word, ingro[illegible]ths, of further knowledge. And he before whom the image floats, cloudy and pendulous, while, still, indefinite and unsteady, it draws up, like a water-spout column, new substance of reality into its own bulk, often does better service to himself and others than he who does homage to and worships a fixed idea, however noble and capacious, admitting of no growth or maturation. By the encyclopædic and interminable, as opposed to the defining, shaping process, we may well indeed become boundless, aimless, and incoherent. And so to a certain extent was Montaigne; but also rich, various, of inexhaustible yearnings after new mental treasures of comparisons and contrasts, and ever sending out his wealth possessed on new ventures of wealth to be acquired. He sits a golden gnome in his sparry cells and galleries piled with jewels; and he is their true discoverer and guardian; and though not the creative spirit with the one efficacious image of the Aladdin's palace into which the jewels shall be built, is yet akin to him, and at heart owns him as a brother.

Great again is the power of a Dante, of a Shakspere, even of a Machiavelli, a De Thou, in shewing us some shadows and surfaces of many men, some leaves of the great tree of man's life. But after all they can give us only lines and gleams; lines as of a withered leaf wasted to a skeleton lace-leaf; gleams vague as those of forests seen through mist. To know what really is or has been, there is required an insight into the thing, such as these writers possessed, but cannot give. For it cannot be given, any more than a living eye of retina and nerve can be given to a head, in the first construction of which it has been omitted. The insight must be found or won within. Beaming, seeing from the heart, into the heart it looks. Now this it is which in Montaigne we find, and the reality and meaning of which he has exemplified better than almost any one. His book, he tells us, is one about himself, and only about himself. All else, anecdote, speculation, narrative, is there only for this purpose. We have him before us in all his

relations to others, in all his occupations, all his moods, and all his outward actions.

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He was unquestionably a large-minded, clear, and healthy man. For almost every kind of human existence he had sympathy and love, and understood much of its scheme and tendencies, keeping himself unshaken and distinct in the midst of it. That was a rare intelligence and kindliness of heart which in his age could make a man anticipate so much of the practical wisdom of latter times—reprobating torture, and all cruel modes of capital punishment; lamenting loudly the treatment of savage nations by Europeans; seeing through all the pretexts for courtly profusion, and condemning it, although himself a courtier and holding a place, as mere reckless cruelty to the people. He also utterly disbelieved the whole train of magical wonders, ghosts, material visions, witchcraft, and such other blundering modes of representing the supernatural by distorting and interrupting nature. This view of him, founded on the unquestionable evidence of his own writings, which on these points are most uniformly consistent, seems to fall in with all the other evidence which his whole works and life, and his own open-hearted statements, furnish of his remarkable and unvarying honesty. For he who admits falsehood into his inner chambers of the heart and among his household gods, can seldom fail to have some lurking fancy of a fundamental ground of disorder and confusion as the basis of the universe, and hence almost inevitably believes in the fashionable delusions of his day, whatever they may be. Vain dream of quacks and of their dupes, that a man by being a quack loses all belief in quackery! Knowing that his own pretences are false, he has the more credulity to spare for those of others. He who passes false coin is the more, not the less, likely to be taken-in by sham jewels offered cheap, or by any other temptation suitable to his greediness and his self-complacent cunning. All swindlers are in truth, by the nature of the case, members of a joint-stock company for mutual deception. Moreover, this thorough honesty of Montaigne is hardly separable from clear sagacity combined with genuine sympathy such as his. The mirror of the true mind faithfully represented the true realities presented to it, for it was neither muffled up by a veil of selfishness, nor cracked by passion, nor painted over with a tawdry coat of ostentatious conceits and follies. Wherever no one of these things happens, and the mind is vividly awake and active, there will be accurate and stedfast knowledge of all that lies nearest to the man, and most concerns his work on earth. And this attainment we find characteristically marked and certain in Montaigne, whose judgments on public affairs, on education, on diversities of character, and on literature, are always instructive or suggestive, however imperfect.

Doubtless no allegations of wisdom on some points can meet the charges against Montaigne, of frequent inconsistencies and of fundamental scepticism. The occasional self-contradiction in a man who writes so much from the fancy of the moment, is not wonderful. But even of this there is less than might be supposed. And, indeed, if the man or his book were a mere bundle of unconnected livelinesses and sparkles of thought, either would be nearly as worthless as the dullest heap of trivialities. A man without character, and a type of thought of his own, may appear to be many things, but in reality is little more than nothing. But a oneness with many sides to it, and capable of quick revolution and transformation, is a more vital and productive thing than the stagnant and staring singleness of aims and habits which the meanest minds can understand and measure.

Of the scepticism something more must be said. That Montaigne was a sceptic, in the sense of finding all the theories he knew of, which profess to systematize the whole of human life, scanty and frail, there can be no doubt. That he was wrong in this decision no man of strong and cultivated speculative powers will now maintain. But his error seems to be that he had no faith in the reasonableness of the attempt. The philosophy known in his time was ill calculated to convert him. That of antiquity was very imperfectly understood, and, above all, had been produced under obsolete circumstances and conditions, and could no longer answer the demands of later experience. It must also be said, that he had, in truth, never passed through any really methodical course of philosophical inquiry, nor had undergone any accurate scientific discipline. The current religious opinions, which he by no means opposed, might have seemed likely to bring him in contact with a large scheme of speculative theology, constructed chiefly by the schoolmen. But this system of doctrine, whether Romanist or Protestant, was little fitted to meet the wishes of a mind like his; for under the name and sacred attributes of revelation, it admitted a cumbrous element of what was purely arbitrary and capricious. And attempting to combine this with the facts of life and the principles of mere intelligence, it produced a discordant compound, obviously unstable and inadequate. The truth is, that any philosophical scheme of the world known to him, perhaps any conceivable one, must necessarily have seemed as idle and vain as would the tissue of cobwebs on the vaults and pillars of some noble building, if offered as a sufficient diagram and explanation of the principles of its construction.

The chief document on the subject of his philosophical opinions, or rather of his opinions about philosophy, is the celebrated "Apology for Raymond de Sebond" (Essays, ii., 12). This writer had taken the sum of the current opinions of the day, and had attempted to justify them by arguments of mere speculation from the premises of human experience. A perilous and fantastic attempt, in which it would have been well had he considered that nothing can be understood and maintained, except in reference to the causes and conditions by which it has arisen. That, therefore, as the religious creed of his day had been partly the product of a tradition grounded in foreign and ancient modes of thought and feeling, partly of the metaphysical science of intermediate times, partly of accident and caprice, it would have been a miracle far greater than any of those which he vindicated, had it been found, as he asserted, in strict correspondence with the principles of universal reason, and the demands of human nature through the whole series of ages. It would have been well had he known that the existence of an absolute and eternal element in the vague and shifting mass of the common beliefs—which is all that religion requires, all that philosophy can grant—is only to be defended by the admission, or rather the declaration, that there is also in it a vesture liable to

decay, and a body doomed to death. It is also unfortunate for Raymond not to have so clearly read himself, as to see that the task he had undertaken was one giving room and occasion beyond all others for the exercise of lawless ingenuity, and the mad attempt to harness and guide assumptions and sophisms in the path of truth, which admits of no such service. The work of any man, in any age, who attempts such an enterprize, must needs resemble a *mirage* landscape of Egypt, interspersed among, and partly reflecting, partly obscuring, granite temples and marble gods, but itself an airy, fleeting vision. Reason may well, as in mathematical science, give, after the lapse of centuries, a final decision in favour of its own slow results; or attain, at last, an insight into the laws and being of great facts, such as the system of the stars, or the moral and physical structure of man; but that it should conclusively, and for ever, be able to ratify a huge medley of feelings, speculations, and legends, such as was called in the middle ages the orthodox faith, and render these imperative through eternity—this can be credited only by a mind weakened and heated by the lust for wonder, or lost for the time in the labyrinth of its own subtlety, or, in distrust of reason, leaning, terror-stricken, on any most hopeless substitute for it.

The argument of Montaigne, however, is, for the most part, independent of the peculiar line of reasoning adopted by De Sebond. For the main purport of his Essay is not so much to justify the topics of his author, as to maintain that, however unsatisfactory these may be, human thought, without admitting the idea of a positive and outward revelation, can form no more enduring scheme. The whole matter, indeed, is probably handled only for the purpose of accumulating objections to the theories of all the philosophical schools which Montaigne knew of. In this, though always lively and striking, he is comparatively unsuccessful,—partly from ignorance of the doctrines he refers to, which he has caught at chiefly in fragments, and by way of anecdote, but still more from the want of genuine philosophical capacity. This may, perhaps, be generalized under the larger term of reason in its highest being—of the power which beholds and converses with supersensual and universal realities. These, apprehended by the intellect, are philosophic truths, or first principles; embraced, reverenced, and obeyed by the will, are laws of duty; relied on and worshipped by the heart, are objects of religion; and embodied in beautiful symbols, are the deified forms of the imagination, and haunt and spiritualize the highest poetry. Now this manifold but one power, which is nothing less or other than the spirit or life of man in its loftiest energy, Montaigne did not in any ample degree possess. Had it existed more fully in him, though he might have rejected as insufficient all actual philosophies, yet, supposing him to have remained the same in type of character, and to have made reflection—as he did make it—his chief business, he would inevitably have believed in, and prophesied, a future and more perfect philosophy, even if he had not been able to create it.

The proof that he was not remarkably under the guidance of this daimon, or genius, may perhaps be strengthened, for those who need such evidences, by the fact that, in the midst of much light and playful writing, of many comic stories and abundant wit, he displays no trace of humour, such as glorifies the much dulness, and almost transmutes the filth, of Rabelais. It is the characteristic office of humour to exhibit earnest feelings and deep thoughts, in grotesque, often in extravagant and monstrous, forms, such as outwardly contrast the most with that of which they are the vehicle, and by the sense of this opposition heighten and sharpen the effect of that which moves and lives within. It is not in any eminent degree a French faculty; and the greatest comic writers of France since Rabelais—to wit, Molière and Voltaire, both of whom in their shrewd and cunning sarcasm Montaigne somewhat resembles—hardly exhibit a trace of it.

But with this deficiency in Montaigne, and with the fact that in him, as in all, the negative side of the mind is the weak and ungenial one, it is unfair to say that there was either an entire denial of the possibility of speculative truth for man, or indifference to those who sought it. Of all authors his favourite is Plutarch, the zealous guardian of the trophies of the men of old, and burner of incense at the tombs of heroes and of sages, in whom the conviction of the triumphant efficacy of thought had the warmth of a passion as well as the clearness of an idea. Of all men the one whom he seems most thoroughly to have revered and loved is the saint, prophet, and martyr of pagan wisdom—Socrates. It may, indeed, be doubted how much he steadily understood of the greatness of the best Athenian. But it is very remarkable that, with such entire sincerity and fervour, he selected him for his full admiration and love. For Montaigne lived in an age when pompous dogmas and empty speculations were mingled with a strong and fiery, but indistinct, element of pure religious faith; when morals were to a great extent sunk in gross indulgence, corrected by harsh and glaring dashes of monkish severity; and when many men were practically and most memorably great, with little or no comprehension of the real value and tendency of their own lives. In this glittering and smoky tumult the Gascon did not pretend to offer any remedy for the evils of the time, or to be able to harmonize the piercing tones and thunders of its discords. He lived an off-hand life, and painted it with sudden and shifting colours. Yet that a deeper sense was hidden in him of a truth and adamantine system at the base of the world's confusions, and of his own levities, seems proved, not only by the impression of his works, as a whole, but by his reverential admiration of the great master of Grecian thought. Socrates, too, lived in a time when many minds were sick, struggling, and half-delirous; when the simple dignity of earlier days was no longer possible; when men had begun to think of themselves and their own nature, and sophists were teaching the comfortable lesson that all things are mere concrete falsehood, and that to live by lies, and think for gain and glory, was the noblest work of man. In an earlier time Socrates would probably have been contented to be the Solon or the Aristides of his country—a character in which some of his noblest endowments could not have been developed, and his intuition into the deepest heart of things would have slumbered: a character also of homely, unspeculative superiority, which could not have made him what he was, the greatest Fact in an age of refinements and dialectics. But the diseases of thought could

only by purer and mightier thought be cured. And it was the task of Socrates to do this, not merely for his own, but for all time; and in setting forth by word and deed the reality of truth and heroic goodness, against the mere greedy appetite for pleasure, to which the sophists made their cleverness subservient, he also exhibited the freshest, liveliest, least affected image of a reasonable, generous man, that ever brightened the pagan world. Steadfast and complete was he as this round earth; abundant and living as the summer. The perennial glow and upward strivings of innumerable hearts on to this hour—the faith in the certainty of reason, the knowledge that we do not live in a heap of disorders, but in a world of intelligence and good—these we owe in a higher degree to him than to any native of this western continent. It would be hard to estimate how much of the best wisdom, and the warmest hopes that inspire the souls of all men, are owing to the poor murdered Athenian, whose life was a long assertion of conscience against quackery, and his death its triumph over the folly of the men whom he so faithfully served and loved. The silent tear in the secret chamber—the calm resolution of meditative sympathy to go and do likewise—the purpose in other hearts to live like him for duty, and not for profit or praise—these are his right and imperishable honours. But honour be there also in his smaller measure to the slight, capricious Frenchman, who among fierce sects and the breaking forth of the great deeps of opinion and of denial, who in the midst of his own follies and inconsistencies, and with no distinct or firm view of that scheme of the supersensual, in the centre of which he fretted and indulged himself, yet had honesty and warmth of soul to see in Socrates a victorious witness for the grandeur and lastingness of truth.*

Socrates was put to death on a charge of irreligion; and many words have been expended, perhaps a few wasted, on the question, whether his French eulogist is or is not liable to the same accusation. Did Montaigne believe Christianity? A compendious question, which would be clear enough to admit of an answer, if we only knew what is meant by belief, and what by Christianity. Sad is the condition of a talker in drawing-rooms, very sad that of a writer of dissertations, who attempts to answer a question before he knows the meaning of it. Man in such a case, though the highest of earthly beings, is a sight painful to mortal eyes, and which almost draw the softest tears from behind the hardest of spectacles. In the answers that have been given to the categorical demand touching the faith of Montaigne, something of this darkness is perhaps discernible. But it may safely be affirmed, that if by unbelief be meant the opinion that Christianity is, like the art of Cagliostro, or the narrative of Psalmanazar, a pure fiction, a conscious work of some one's fancy, and that it no more concerns us than judicial astrology or the oracles of augurs, which seems to have been the pithy doctrine of Hume and Voltaire, then doubtless in this way, and to this extent, Montaigne was not an unbeliever. If, on the other hand, belief is the acknowledgment that a certain set of propositions have been committed by irresistible power to the keeping of a certain caste of men, on the acquiescence in which statements, and the submission to which men, our eternal weal or woe is made dependent—with the proviso that the doctrines themselves, and the commission of the teachers, are not to be scrutinized at all, or to be in any way connected with the results of our experience or the principles of our reason—then in this sense Montaigne believed. Nay, in the bewilderment of his misunderstanding at the immensity and seeming contradictions of the universe, perhaps he even hoped that, one day or other, the puzzle of existence would find its solution in the accompanying puzzle of revelation. But if Christianity be regarded not as an arbitrary puzzle, but as a necessary mystery, that is, a truth dark to the careless and unprepared eye, but luminous, and the light of all things, to the spirit purified by love of God, and by entire self-sacrifice; as a truth founded in the nature of man, claimed by his noblest wants, manifested by the full harmony of all his powers, and by their triumph over inward and outward disturbances and desolations completely realized in the Saviour, and attainable for all by the heartfelt recognition of it in him—this is a Christianity of which Montaigne had not only no belief, but no conception. Again, if faith be not a blind and desperate clutching to an unknown somewhat, like the drowning man's grasp at any object near him, though it be the shark's jaw or the dagger of the sword-fish; if it be anything more and better than a voluntarily relinquishing of all voluntary action, under the name of obedience; if it be the affectionate and loyal adherence of the heart to the truths of reason, which the passions and selfishness tempt us to deny; then it is a power of which Montaigne had experienced but little, and which he did not at all understand. All that we find in him of Christianity would be suitable to apes and dogs rather than to rational and moral beings.

It is, however, to be desired that he should be treated with justice—if not for his sake, yet for ours. He was not, in any high, pure sense, a religious man, but he was honest, clear-sighted, and affectionate. Nothing human was for him without a meaning and a value; and he cherished, in the midst of his vanities and inconsistencies, a cheerful conviction that goodness and wisdom do, somehow or other, preside over this black and cloudy web of things. He walked, indeed, in a circle of darkness, within which his little world of life and light burnt like a lantern. But as he moved along, the darkness kindled round him, and shewed itself to be but a dormant light. For human existence was to him itself a lucid thing, often broken, indeed, and wavering, but still bright and radiant. To him it was joy and hope to live our common life; and the healthy freshness and vigour of all his emotions and perceptions required no aid of creative imagination or brooding reflection to give them worth and beauty. For him the earth, which had swallowed so many generations, and suffered so many wounds, was green and prosperous. The sky, battered and pierced by so many mad wishes, fruitless prayers, and airy pinnacles of visions which had passed away, bent smoothly and securely over him, and smiled with crystalline azure. To be alive, and man—to see, to feel, to walk, to think, to read Plutarch, or hunt over the plains of Périgord, filled him with the buoyancy of childhood. The human faces of ruined or plague-struck peasants, of the citizens of Bordeaux, of the people

* See the Essays, *passim*, but especially iii., 12.

of Paris, of the nobles and dames of France, stamped as all were with stories of folly and suffering, yet had also a precious import as the countenances of men, and won from him an eager sympathy. From this fellow-feeling of brotherhood the grey old earth, with the infinity of space above, and the immeasurable grave below, had for him beauty, and sweetness, and elastic gladness. And his brain, wondering and growing weary at the spectacle of history, to him a long riddle, poised itself and rested softly in the book-tower of his chateau, with the memory of La Boëtie, the presence of the wise men of old, and the anticipated kindness of his own and of all future times. Sceptic as he was, the dark and ulcered scepticism of a later age was unknown to him. The towered landscape of Greece and Rome had been disclosed anew before him and his generation. The expanse of the future was bursting open with the clash and storm-music of battles; and he knew not *how* much, or *how* little, to expect from the change, but felt that there was dew and bloom for him upon the near and friendly soil on which he set his foot.

Weak, no doubt, and dim and hazy, must the best image appear to us that we can now recover of a man who lived three hundred years ago. The past exists, indeed, imperishable, unchangeable, but it seems to flit away from us into a gulf of shadows. And we can hardly satisfy ourselves that it ever has been the throbbing, bright-eyed thing that we call Now. But that now, even while we write it, stiffens to a mummy in the memory, melts in the fancy to a spectre, and is nowhere to be seen as what it was. Thus, not only the sunny statuary of Grecian life, the clanging stride of Rome, the high-hearted ferment of pride, and gracefulness, and faith in the middle ages, are worn away to ghostly emptiness, but we, too, and our full, uneasy existence, are slipping away from ourselves into the same vague twilight. It is not only Montaigne who pines and decays into a name and an effigy; but those who read of him, and he who writes. Obscure as he hovers before us, shall we appear at a coming age; and palpable and bold as we now are, so once was he, and that departed world of thought and feeling in which he moved and enjoyed, and at last vanished into dust and dreams.

XX.

HALLAM.

The Essays of Montaigne make in several respects an epoch in literature, less on account of their real importance, or the novel truths they contain, than of their influence upon the taste and the opinions of Europe. They are the first *provocatio ad populum*, the first appeal from the porch and the academy to the haunts of busy and of idle men, the first book that taught the unlearned reader to observe and reflect for himself on questions of moral philosophy. In an age when every topic of this nature was treated systematically and in a didactic form, he broke out, without connection of chapters, with all the digression that levity and garrulous egotism could suggest, with a very delightful, but, at that time, most unusual, rapidity of transition from seriousness to gaiety. The school of Montaigne embraces a large proportion of French and English literature, and especially of that which has borrowed his title of Essays. No prose writer of th sixteenth century has been so generally read, nor probably, given so much delight. Whatever ma be our estimate of Montaigne as a philosopher—name which he was far from arrogating—there wil be but one opinion of the felicity and brightness of his genius.

It is a striking proof of these qualities, that we cannot help believing him to have struck out all his thoughts by a spontaneous effort of his mind, and to have fallen afterwards upon his quotations and examples by happy accident. I have little doubt but that the process was different; and that, either by dint of memory, though he absolutely disclaims the possessing a good one, or by the usual method of common-placing, he had made his reading instrumental to excite his own ingenious and fearless understanding. His extent of learning was by no means great for that age, but the whole of it was brought to bear on his object; and it is a proof of Montaigne's independence of mind that, while a vast mass of erudition was the only passport to fame, he read no authors but such as were most fitted to his own habits of thinking. Hence he displays an unity, a self-existence, which we seldom find so complete in other writers. His quotations, though they perhaps make more than one-half of his Essays, seem parts of himself, and are like limbs of his own mind, which could not be separated without laceration. But over all is spread a charm of a fascinating simplicity, and an apparent abandonment of the whole man to the easy inspiration of genius, combined with a good nature—though rather too Epicurean and destitute of moral energy—which, for that very reason, made him a favorite with men of similar dispositions, for whom courts, and camps, and country mansions, were the proper soil.

Montaigne is superior to any of the ancients in liveliness, in that careless and rapid style, where one thought springs naturally, but not consecutively, from another, by analogical rather than deductive connection; so that, while the reader seems to be following a train of arguments, he is imperceptibly hurried to a distance by some contingent association. This may be observed in half his Essays, the titles of which often give us little insight into their general scope. Thus the Apology for Raimond de Sebond is soon forgotten in the long defence of moral Pyrrhonism, which occupies the 12th chapter of the second book. He sometimes makes a show of coming back from his excursions; but he has generally exhausted himself before he does so. This is what men love to practise (not advantageously for their severer studies) in their own thoughts; they love to follow the casual associations that lead them through pleasant labyrinths—as one riding along the high road is glad to deviate a little into the woods, though it may sometim happen that he will lose his way, and find himself far remote from his inn. And such is the conversational style of lively and eloquent old men. We converse with Montaigne, or rather hear him talk; it is almost impossible to read his Essays without thinking that he speaks to us; we see his cheerful brow, his sparkling eye, his negligent, but gentlemanly demeanour; we picture him in his armchair, with his few books round the room, and Plutarch on the table.

The independence of his mind produces great

part of the charm of his writing; it redeems his vanity, without which it could not have been so fully displayed, or, perhaps, so powerfully felt. In an age of literary servitude, when every province into which reflection could wander was occupied by some despot; when, to say nothing of theology, men found Aristotle, or Ulpian, or Hippocrates, at every turning to dictate their road, it was gratifying to fall in company with a simple gentleman who, with much more reading than generally belonged to his class, had the spirit to ask a reason for every rule.

Montaigne has borrowed much, besides his quotations, from the few ancient authors he loved to study. In one passage he even says that his book is wholly compiled from Plutarch and Seneca, but this is evidently intended to throw the critics off their scent. These, indeed, were his two favourite authors; and, in order to judge of the originality of Montaigne in any passage, it may often be necessary to have a considerable acquaintance with their works. He knew little Greek, but most Greek works at that time had a Latin translation; and he needed not for Plutarch to go beyond his own language. Cicero he did not much admire, except the Epistles to Atticus. He esteemed the moderns very slightly in comparison with antiquity, though praising Guicciardini and Philip de Comines. Dugald Stewart observes that Montaigne cannot be suspected of affectation, and therefore must himself have believed what he says of the badness of his memory, forgetting, as he tells us, the names of the commonest things, and even of those he constantly saw. But his vanity led him to talk perpetually of himself; and, as often happens to vain men, he would rather talk of his own failings than of any foreign subject. He could not have had a very defective memory, so far as it had been exercised, though he might fall into the common mistake of confounding his inattention to ordinary objects with weakness of the faculty.

Montaigne seldom defines or discriminates; his mind had great quickness, but little subtlety; his carelessness and impatience of labour rendered his views practically one-sided; for though he was sufficiently free from prejudice to place the objects of consideration in different lights, he wanted the power, or did not use the diligence, to make that comparative appreciation of facts which is necessary to distinguish the truth. He appears to most advantage in matters requiring good sense and calm observation, as in the education of children. The twenty-fourth and twenty-eighth chapters of the first book, which relate to this subject, are among the best in the collection. His excellent temper made him an enemy to the harshness and tyranny so frequent at that time in the management of children, as his clear understanding did to the pedantic methods of overloading and misdirecting their faculties. It required some courage to argue against the grammarians, who had almost monopolised the admiration of the world. In all the remarks of Montaigne on human character and manners, we find liveliness, simplicity, and truth. They are such as his ordinary opportunities of observation, or his reading, suggested; and though several writers have given proofs of deeper reflection, or more watchful discernment, few are so well calculated to fall in with the apprehension of the general reader.

The scepticism of Montaigne, concerning which so much has been said, is not displayed in religion, for he was a steady Catholic, though his faith seems to have been rather that of acquiescence than conviction; nor in such subtleties of metaphysical Pyrrhonism as we find in Sanhez, which had no attraction for his careless nature. But he had read much of Sextus Empiricus, and might perhaps have derived something from his favourite Plutarch. He had also been forcibly struck by the narratives of travellers, which he sometimes received with a credulity, as to evidence, not rarely combined with theoretical scepticism, and which is too much the fault of his age to bring censure on an individual. It was then assumed that all travellers were trustworthy, and still more, that none of the Greek and Roman authors have recorded falsehoods. Hence he was at a loss to discover a general rule of moral law, as an implanted instinct, a necessary deduction of common reason, in the varying usages and opinions of mankind. But his scepticism was less extravagant and unreasonable at that time than it would be now. Things then really doubtful have been proved, and positions, entrenched by authority which he dared not to scruple, have been overthrown;* truth, in retiring from her outposts, has become more unassailable in her citadel.

It may be deemed a symptom of wanting a thorough love of truth, when a man over-rates, as much as when he overlooks, the difficulties he deals with. Montaigne is perhaps not exempt from this failing. Though sincere and candid in his general temper, he is sometimes more ambitious of setting forth his own ingenuity than desirous to come to the bottom of his subject. Hence he is apt to run into the fallacy common to this class of writers, and which La Mothe le Vayer employed much more—that of confounding the variations of the customs of mankind in things morally indifferent with those which affect the principles of duty; and hence the serious writers on philosophy in the next age, Pascal, Arnauld, Malebranche, animadvert with much severity on Montaigne. They considered him, not perhaps unjustly, as an enemy to the candid and honest investigation of truth, both by his bias towards Pyrrhonism, and by the great indifference of his temperament, scarcely acknowledging so much as was due to the service he had done by chasing the servile pedantry of the schools, and preparing the way for closer reasoners than himself. But the very tone of their censures is sufficient to prove the vast influence he had exerted over the world.

Montaigne is the earliest classical writer in the French language—the first whom a gentleman is ashamed not to have read. So long as an unaffected style, and an appearance of the utmost simplicity and good nature, shall charm,—so long as the lovers of desultory and cheerful conversation shall be more numerous than those who prefer a lecture or a sermon,—so long as reading is sought by the many as an amusement in idleness, or a resource in pain—so long will Montaigne be among the most favourite authors of mankind.—*Introduction to the Literature of Europe.* London. 1839. Vol. ii., p. 169 *et seq.*

* Montaigne's scepticism was rightly exercised on witchcraft and other supernatural stories; and he had probably some weight in discrediting those superstitions.—Book iii., chap. 11.

ELOGE DE MONTAIGNE.

DISCOURS QUI A OBTENU L'ACCESSIT AU JUGEMENT DE LA CLASSE DE LA LANGUE ET DE LA LITTÉRATURE FRANÇAISES DE L'INSTITUT, DANS SA SÉANCE DU 9 AVRIL, 1812.*

PAR M. JAY.

"Dans la plupart des auteurs je vois l'homme qui écrit; dans Montaigne, l'homme qui pense."—MONTESQUIEU.

DANS ces temps malheureux où de funestes révolutions agitent et tourmentent les peuples, on voit presque toujours sortir du sein de l'anarchie quelques uns de ces hommes grands par eux-mêmes, guides et modèles de leurs contemporains. Ainsi sous les règnes orageux des derniers Valois, d'illustres personnages déployèrent un caractère fier, de rares talens, et des vertus dignes des beaux jours de l'antiquité. Alors parut l'éloquent moraliste dont vous demandez l'éloge: alors commença cette glorieuse succession d'écrivains français qui depuis cette époque n'ont cessé d'éclairer l'Europe et d'exercer le pouvoir du génie. Grâce à leurs nobles travaux, les sciences, la morale, la langue, le goût se sont perfectionnés, au milieu de ces progrès rapides; tandisque des renommées imposantes, soutenues quelque temps par un aveugle enthousiasme tombaient l'une après l'autre et disparaissaient sans retour;† tandis que de nouvelles renommées s'élevaient sur des fondemens plus solides, la réputation de Montaigne restait inébranlable; ou plutôt elle s'étendait avec les lumières et grandissait avec l'esprit humain.

Placé dans une époque où le peuple français, instrument d'anarchie entre les mains de quelques chefs ambitieux, confondait la religion avec le fanatisme, et la liberté avec la licence, Montaigne, calme au milieu de l'agitation générale, forme avec tout son siècle un contraste frappant. Les scènes de violence, les actes de rébellion, dont il est temoin, raffermissent dans son cœur ces sentimens de justice et de loyauté, dont l'oubli funeste est la honte et le fléau des peuples. Tandis que la France, tenant d'une part à la barbarie par des habitudes séculaires, de l'autre à la civilization par des idées nouvelles, hésite entre ces deux forces opposées il devance son siècle, observe tout sans prevention, juge tout sans partialité, et doué d'une raison supérieure affranchit sa pensée de la vieille tyrannie de l'école; et de la fureur aveugle des innovations. Cependant l'intolérance des sectes, l'orgueil du faux savoir se réunissent pour protéger les anciennes erreurs; l'esprit humain se consume en efforts stériles; plus on s'écarte du vrai, plus on croit avancer vers la vérité. Montaigne *seul se sépare de la foule*, et pénètre dans les routes abandonnées de la sagesse; il y pénètre à l'aide du doute, non de ce pyrrhonisme insensé qui se detruit lui-même en voulant tout détruire, mais du doute de la raison qui naît de la lumière, et la produit à son tour. Montaigne consulte les livres; il y trouve quelques verités mortes ensevelies sous un amas d'erreurs; il interroge ses contemporains; la voix du préjugé lui repond: alors se repliant sur lui-même, il observe la marche des passions, en étudie les mouvemens dans son propre cœur, cherche à demêler en lui, et autour de lui, ce qui est l'ouvrage de l'art, et ce qui appartient à la nature. Il soumet tout à l'examen, les temps, les hommes, et les choses. Enfin, éclairé par l'experience et la méditation, désabusé des chimères qui nous font oublier la vie, il commence avec lui-même cét entretien sublime où le génie est simple et sans art comme la vérité; ou le cœur de l'homme est mis pour la première fois à découvert; ou se trouvent les germes des grandes conceptions dont le dévelopement doit honorer plusieurs siècles.

Voilà comment était formé ce génie sage et hardi, qui, dans un siècle esclave de l'erreur, pensa d'après lui-même, et le premier nous apprit à penser. Voilà d'où lui venait cette force de raison qui va droit à la vérité, l'environne de lumière et la rend visible à tous les yeux. A ces traits seuls vous reconnaissez cette philosophie mâle et utile qui s'applique à tous les détails de la vie, et n'éclaire les hommes que pour les rendre meilleurs. Aussi lorsque, cherchant a considerer Montaigne sous divers aspects, je veux séparer l'écrivain du moraliste, et le moraliste de l'homme, j'aperçois un trait dominant qui les reunit; partout l'esprit philosophique anime son langage, fortifie son talent, et règle ses mœurs comme ses opinions. Toutefois, sans me soumettre rigoreusement à la methode des divisions, j'essaierai de le caractériser sous ces différens rapports. Pour apprécier le merite de Montaigne comme écrivain, il faut d'abord jeter un coup d'œil sur l'état de la langue et de la littérature françaises à l'époque où il parut. L'imprimerie destinée à changer le sort du monde, élevait par degrés un tribunal suprême en faveur de l'humanité, et faisait cesser l'action dévorante du temps et de la barbarie sur les nobles monumens du génie antique. L'Italie, au milieu des discordes civiles, avait recueilli cette grande succession, et reconquis la gloire des arts. Attirés par l'amour des conquêtes sur cette terre deux fois classique, les Français y reçurent des idées nouvelles; et, après un demi-siècle d'efforts glorieux, ils ne recueillirent d'autre fruit de leurs victoires que le goût des lettres et le besoin naissant des lumières. François 1er., eprouvé par la fortune et sensible à la vrai gloire, se déclara le protecteur des sciences et des arts. La toile fut

* Paris. Chez Delaunay, 1812.

† Tel fut en effet le sort de Ronsard, de Chapelain, et de quelques autres écrivains loués outre mesure pendant quelques années, et peut-être, trop méprisés après leur mort.

animée par la génie de la peinture, et le marble respira sous le ciseau créateur; mais les progrès de l'esprit humain furent d'abord peu sensibles. Cependant Rabelais, qui connaissait son siècle, introduisit la raison dans le monde sous les enseignes de la folie. La langue acquit dans les vers de Marot de la finesse et de la grâce: c'était beaucoup sans doute; mais que de soins, que de travaux étaient encore nécessaires pour la rendre digne de servir d'instrument à l'eloquence et d'interprète à la philosophie! Elle n'avait pas même la vigueur sauvage d'une langue naissante; et sa vieille enfance offrait tous les signes de la faiblesse et de la corruption. Les érudits de cette époque, adorateurs intolerans de l'antiquité, dédaignaient l'idiome vulgaire. Plus occupés de disputer sur les mots que d'approfondir les choses, ils ressemblaient pour la plupart à ces terres arides qui reçoivent toutes sortes de semences sans jamais rien produire. Lorsqu'au milieu de ce peuple stérile et contentieux, Montaigne voulut faire entendre des vérités utiles, il sentit que la langue impuissante fléchissait sous le poids de sa pensée. Il avait besoin d'un langage ferme, il osa le créer. Il s'empare de cette langue inanimée, l'enflamme, et lui donne la vie. Il lui imprime un caractère antique de hardiesse et d'indépendance; *lui apprend des mouvemens inaccoutumés;* découvre de nouveaux rapports d'expressions à mesure qu'il aperçoit de nouveaux rapports d'idées; et trouve dans la nature entière les images sensibles et les couleurs de ses pensées. Alors toutes les difficultés s'évanouissent. Il s'est fait une langue, courageuse comme son génie, brilliante comme son imagination. Il exerce sur ce nouvel idiome une autorité absolue, en varie les formes à son gré, change de ton avec une souplesse admirable, et prend naturellement celui qui convient le mieux au sujet qu'il traite. Tour à tour enjoué, véhément, ingénieux, sublime, il ouvra à la raison toutes les issues de l'esprit humain. Souvent au milieu de ses réflexions il jette une pensée feconde et s'en éloigne, laissant à d'autres le soin de l'examiner et de découvrir tout ce qu'elle renferme. Jamais il ne tourne auteur de son sujet, il aime mieux l'abandonner; mais, lorsque vous croyez qu'il l'a perdu de vue, il y revient inopinément, l'embrasse de nouveau, le creuse, le pénètre et en fait jaillir de grandes pensées et d'importantes vérités. A quelque hauteur qu'il s'élève, il voit encore au-delà. Il a toujours, pour me servir de ses propres termes, "une idée dans l'âme qui lui présenté une meilleure forme que celle qu'il a mise en besoigne; mais il ne peut ni la saisir, ni l'exploicter." Ainsi tandis que le vulgaire des écrivains trouve partout des limites et les prend pour celles du génie, celui-ci soutenu par la méditation s'elance, franchit toutes les bornes communes; et lorsqu'enfin il est forcé de s'arrêter, il s'indigne, s'accuse de faiblesse, et conçoit encore confusément une plus haute idée de perfection.

Le style et les pensées de Montaigne prouvent "qu'il avait son esprit moulé au patron d'autres siècles que ceux-ci;" et l'analyse de sa phrase rapelle plus souvent l'energique fierté des langues anciennes que l'élégance et la clarté qui caractérisent aujourd'hui le français. Indépendant des régles et même de l'usage, Montaigne exprima "tout ce qu'il veut comme il veut." Il n'a pas fixé la langue; mais en travaillant sur elle, en la forçant d'obéir à son génie, en lui enlevant une partie de sa roideur primitive, il a rendu plus facile la tâche de ceux qui l'ont perfectionnée. Ils ont puisé dans ses écrits une foule d'expressions vives et pittoresque, et même quelques tournures hardies qui rompent heureusement l'uniformité de la construction directe, et s'appliquent aux mouvemens de la haute éloquence. Ils lisaient Montaigne comme ils étudiaient, les chef-d'œuvres de l'antiquité, et ils retiraient le même fruit; car ce n'est pas seulement par la franchise du langage que Montaigne est comparable aux anciens; ce qui le rapproche le plus de ces grands maîtres, ce qui lui donne une physionomie imposante parmi les modernes, c'est que son livre, comme il nous l'apprend lui-même, "est un livre de bonne foi." Je m'arrête sur cette idée, qui demande quelques développemens. Vous le savez: tout est vrai, tout est naturel dans les productions des écrivains illustres de l'antiquité; leur âme n'était envelloppée d'aucun voile, et cette noble franchise est la source principale des beautés immortelles qui brillent dans leur chef-d'œuvres, et qui surpassent autant les combinaisons de l'art, que les grands effets de la nature surpassent les tableaux produits par le pinceau le plus habile, et la poésie la plus élevée. De là cette vigueur de conception, cette touche brûlante, cette vérité de coloris qui rend, pour ainsi dire, la pensée palpable, et dans l'écrivain vous montre l'homme tout entier. Leur pensée marche librement, se développe avec aisance, et communique à la parole son énergie et sa majesté; cette *bonne foi* dominante, cette élevation d'un esprit indépendant, les à placés à une telle hauteur, que c'est déjà pour nous un grand mérite de les bien connaître et de savoir les admirer. Depuis le seizième siècle, des génies éminens ont illustré l'Europe, et dans les arts d'imagination, ils ont même, en certains genres, surpassé les modèles qu'ils imitaient; mais, soumis plus ou moins au joug de l'opinion, ils ont perdu cette empreinte originale qui donne un caractère individuel aux écrivains de Rome et d'Athènes. L'esprit d'imitation, devenu général à la renaissance des lettres, jetait une couleur *monotone* sur les travaux littéraires; tandis que l'intolérance religieuse rendait la pensée timide, et affaiblissait l'essor du talent. Comme philosophes, quelques modernes ont mérité une grand estime; encore, dans leurs plus beaux ouvrages, est-il aisé de reconnaître l'influence des sectes, aussi funeste aux littératures qu'aux religions. Faut-il donc être surpris, si cette force virile, cet accent de l'âme, ce pouvoir suprême de la raison, qui distinguent les anciens, ne se retrouvent pleinement que dans les pages de Montaigne élève et non imitateur de l'antiquité? Il y a toujours dans le cœur de l'homme une partie secrète, des sentimens cachés qui ne se produisent jamais au dehors. Montaigne ne connaît point cette réserve; il ose dire tout ce qu'il ose penser. Un tel caractère nous est devenu tellement étranger, que nous avons même quelque peine à le reconnaître, et nous en affaiblissons l'idée en nommant naïveté cette courageuse franchise de pensée et d'expression. Elle règne partout dans les écrits de Montaigne. Dès son début vous en êtes frappé. C'est moins un livre qui s'offre à vos regards que l'âme même de l'écrivain devenue en quelque sorte transparente. Au milieu des discussions les plus familières et des sallies les plus piquantes, vous le verrez se passionner pour l'heroïsme et pour la vertu. Jamais il n'affecte le ton grave et solennel de l'orateur; mais il se livre quelquefois aux mouvemens d'une éloquence vive

et toujours naturelle. L'indignation que le spectacle de l'injustice et du crime excite dans son âme est souvent exprimée par une froide ironie supérieure à tout l'artifice des développemens oratoires. Veut-il faire sentir l'influence déplorable que les discordes civiles exercent sur la morale des peuples; il dédaigne ce faste d'enumérations qu'un rhéteur eût été si heureux d'employer; mais il s'écrie: "Il fait bon naître en un siècle fort dépravé; car, par comparaison d'autrui vous êtes estimé vertueux à bon marché; qui n'est que parricide en nos jours et sacrilége, il est homme de bien et d'honneur!" Heureux celui qui ne serait point frappé de l'energie et de la profondeur de ces pensées? on pourrait supposer qu'il n'a jamais entendu la voix du crime, et la logique des factions. Si Montaigne indigné de la barbarie de son siècle, retrouve quelques fois la mordante hyperbole de Juvénal, il revient bientôt a cette enjouement philosophique dont la muse d'Horace nous a laissé les plus parfaites modèles. Cette souplesse de style, cette variété de tons répand sur la lecture des Essais un charme toujours nouveau. Tantôt Montaigne serre sa pensée, comme Sénèque, pour lui donner plus de force; tantôt il l'etend, la développe comme Plutarque, et l'environne de preuves qui commandent la conviction. Chez lui, l'alliance d'une imagination poétique avec une raison ferme et sévère donne de la grâce aux plus simples détails, et produit souvent de grandes images, des mouvemens dramatiques et des tableaux pleins de vie et d'intérêt. Malgré la rapidité de ses conceptions, il sait ménager des contrastes, et rapprocher heureusement les objets afin de les éclairer les un par les autres. Il aimait à considérer la nature humaine sous un point de vue général, et dans ses principes les plus essentiels. S'il s'occupe des individus, deux ou trois coups de pinceau lui suffisent pour détacher une figure de la foule, et la placer sous vos yeux. Ainsi lorsqu'il veut prouver que dans le monde, "la gravité, la robe et les richesses donnent souvent crédit à des propos vains et ineptes," il met en scène un personnage considérable par son rang et par ses emplois; d'une grande fortune, et d'un mérite très-mince. "Il n'est pas à présumer, dit-il, qu'un Monsieur si suivi, si redouté, n'aie au dedans qu' une suffisance autre que populaire, et qu'un homme à qui on donne tant de commissions et de charges, si dédaigneux et si morgant, ne soit plus habile que cet autre qui le salue di si loin, et que personne n'emploie." Voilà si je ne me trompe, le genre de la Bruyère. N'y reconnaissez-vous pas le talent de voiler le trait satirique d'une apparence de naïveté pour la rendre plus vif et plus piquant? ce ne sont point des travers passagers que Montaigne livre au ridicule; ils tiennent à l'essence même des sociétés, et méritent par là le regarde du moraliste. Il s'est écoulé plus de deux siècles depuis l'apparition des Essais; et cependant qui de nous dans le cours de sa vie n'a pas rencontré ce Monsieur dédaigneux, morguant et inepte?

Peu d'écrivains ont manié l'arme du ridicule avec plus de succès que Montaigne. "En général, ce ne sont pas nos folies qui le font rire, ce sont nos sapiences." Cependent il honorait le vrai savoir comme une des plus nobles conquêtes de l'esprit humain; mais il aurait voulu qu'il servit à rendre les hommes "non plus doctes, mais plus habiles;" il ne s'enquérait pas qui était le plus savant mais le mieux savant; et pensait même; "que toute science est dommageable à celui qui n'a la science de bonté." Ses réflexions sur ce point se trouvent concentrées dans une maxime remarquable par sa justesse et sa précision. "En certaines mains la Science est un sceptre, en d'autres une marotte." Ces vérités générales qui forment le code de la sagesse ne peuvent être saisies que par l'esprit philosophique; mais il faut que l'imagination les anime et les mette à la portée de tous les hommes. Ces deux qualités se réunissent dans Montaigne; et l'exercice de son jugement ne ralentit jamais l'essor de son imagination. Qu'on ne croie pas cependant que le talent de peindre la pensée, et de revêtir la vérité des formes de l'eloquence, soit seulement le fruit d'un heureux instinct; il suppose un discernement exquis, un goût sûr, dont le germe, présent de la nature, ne peut être développé que par l'etude et la méditation, Montaigne avait formé son goût sur celui des anciens. Les philosophes, les orateurs, les historiens, les poëtes, passaient tour à tour sous ses yeux: nul trait frappant, nulle vérité ne lui échappait; mais il le confiait à son jugement plutôt qu'à sa mémoire; elles recevaient les couleurs de son imagination, et s'assimilaient à ses propres pensées. Ses citations mêmes, seul tribut qu'il ait payé aux habitudes scolastiques de son siècle, se combinent avec ses idées, et en font naître de nouvelles. Lorsqu'il juge les anciens, non d'après l'idolâtrie des commentateurs, mais d'après le sentiment éclairé des beautés et des défauts qui constitue le goût; lorsqu'il reproche aux poëtes dramatiques de son temps de manquer à la première des regles, à l'unité d'intérêt; et qu'il les renvoi a l'école de bon Térence, "les grâces et la mignardise du langage latin;" je ne doute plus qu'il n'eût médité sur les principes des arts d'imagination, et j'admire à la fois dans son livre les vues du philosophe et la sagacité du littérateur. Sans doute Montaigne se trompe quelquefois; mais il ne cherche jamais à tromper ses lecteurs. Nul sophisme, nulle subtilité réfléchie ne déguise ses vrais sentimens. Son livre n'est que la narration fidèle des impressions que la scène nobile du monde et l'étude du cœur humain font tour à tour sur son esprit. Il raconte ses pensées comme l'historien impartial expose une série de faits. Il se laisse aller aux sentimens qu'il éprouve, aux idées qui le frappent, et s'abandonne sans réserve à l'affection du moment. Cette disposition habituelle de l'écrivain vous révèle le secret des beautés originales que nous admirons dans ses écrits, et des imperfections qu'on peut y découvrir. De là vient non-seulement cette gâité franche et communicative, cette heureuse soudaineté de pensée et d'expression, cette verve étonnante qui toujours s'epanche sans jamais s'epuiser; mais aussi ces écarts fréquens et inattendus, ces modifications de la même idée qui ne se présente pas toujours à son esprit sous le même aspect. A mesure qu'il avançait vers le terme de la vie, sa morale devenait moins sévère; les faiblesses de l'humanité lui inspiraient plus d'indulgence; et ses principes, toujours essentiellement les mêmes, subissaient quelque changement dans la forme et dans l'application. S'il n'a point d'opinion arrêtée sur certains métaphysiques dont l'utilité est douteuse, et qui lui paraissaient placés hors du domaine de la raison; on reconnaîtra du moins qu'il ne s'est jamais écarté des veritès, eternelles de la morale, et que sa philosophie renferme tout ce qui peut assurer le repas des hommes et

contribuer à leur bonheur. Quelques sages de la Grèce, considérant l'homme d'une manière absolue, lui proposaient pour modèle un être également abstrait, dans lequel ils se plaisaient à réunir toutes les vertus au plus haut degré. Cette grande idée a produit, sur quelques individus, des effets qui tiennent du prodige; mais les prodiges ne peuvent être offerts comme modèles. La morale stoïcienne se trouvait hors de la portée du commun des hommes, et ses admirateurs mêmes n'osaient espérer d'y atteindre.

On confondait avec elle cette autre morale populaire, qui établit entre les hommes des rapports intimes, co-ordonne leur affections avec leurs devoirs, et embrasse tout le détail des mœurs. Telle était le morale que les disciples de Socrate recueillaient dans ses entretiens sublimes, et qu'enseignait cette autre philosophe trop long-temps méconnu, qui ne sépara jamais la volupté de la tempérance, et la bonheur de la sagesse. Montaigne adopta les principes de ces deux sages, parce qu'il les trouva fondés sur la nature. Le but de sa morale est de régler les passions et non de les anéantir; il veut que l'homme soit essentiellement homme; et sans s'égarer dans de vains abstractions, il attache le bonheur à l'exercice modéré de nos facultés naturelles, au témoignage d'une conscience pure, et à la pratique des vertus publiques et privées. Comme Socrate, il élève sa pensée vers la divinité, source inépuisable de vie, éternel type de perfection. Frappé d'un sentiment religieux, à l'aspect de cet ordre et de ces lois immuables qui régissent les mondes semés dans l'espace, il s'addresse aux hommes, et leur dit: "La divinité est connue par ses ouvrages visibles; Dieu a laissé en ces hauts ouvrages le caractère de sa toute-puissance. Ce monde est un temple très saint, où vous êtes introduits pour contempler des statues, non ouvrées de mortelle main, mais celles que la divine pensée a fait sensibles, le soleil, les étoiles, les eaux et la terre, qui nous répresentent les intelligibles. Cette volonté unique et suprême est le principe de toutes choses; c'est elle qui, mettant les passions dans votre cœur, vous a donné la raison pour contrepoids et pour régulateur. Que faut-il pour être heureux? se rapprocher de la nature, vivre en paix avec soi-même et avec les autres. Sachez de plus, que la vraie vertu est la mère nourrice des plaisirs humains; en les rendant justes, elles les rend sûrs et purs: elle aime la vie, elle aime la beauté, la gloire, la santé; mais son office propre et particulier, c'est de savoir user de ces bien-là modérément, et de les savoir perdre avec constance. Elle n'est pas, comme dit l'école, plantée à la tête d'un mont coupé, raboteux, inaccessible; ceux qui l'ont approchée savent, au contraire, qu'elle est logée dans une belle plaine fertile et fleurissante, d'où elle voit bien sous soi toutes choses; mais celui qui en sait l'addresse y peut arriver par des routes ombrageuses, gazonnées, semées de fleurs, et d'une pente facile et polie comme celle des roûtes célestes."

C'est à ces premiers principes de toute bonne morale que Montaigne s'efforce de rappeler les hommes. Les diverses conditions de la vie humaine se présentent successivement à son esprit; et partout il voit avec douleur que l'homme "se fuit et s'évite sans cesse. Nous ne sommes jamais chez-nous, nous sommes toujours au de là. Le glorieux chef-d'œuvre de l'homme, c'est vivre pour lui et à propos. Avez-vous su composer vos mœurs, vous avez plus fait que celui qui a composé des livres; avez-vous su prendre du répos, vous êtes plus sage que l'ambitieux accablé d'honneurs et d'ennui." Ces pensées conduisent Montaigne à une autre vérité dans laquelle il trouve la règle de nos actions et la source de nos devoirs. Il pense qu'il suffit au sage "de retirer au dedans son âme de la presse;" et qu'au dehors il est tenu de respecter les coutumes généralement adoptées, et d'obéir aux lois protectrices des sociétés. Témoin des calamités inséparables de l'anarchie, il cherche ainsi les moyens de prévenir ces crises politiques dont l'influence terrible s'étend quelquefois sur plusieurs générations; et ne s'affaiblit, comme le mouvement d'une mer irritée qu'après une longue et sourde agitation qui rappelle encore l'image des tempêtes et la souvenir des naufrages.

Montaigne ne confondait point les abus dont l'existence améne par degrés les secousses funestes aux états, avec leurs lois fondamentales auxquelles il est difficile de toucher impunément. Il savait que la réforme des abus est souvent l'unique moyen de prévenir le choc des intérêts, et soulèvement des factions. C'est un homme supérieur qui traite de toutes les matières relatives à l'ordre social. Il a combattu le premier une foule de préjugés nuisibles, de coutumes barbares dont nous sommes heureusement delivrés. Il s'élève contre l'imperfection des lois criminelles de son temps; condamne la torture; demande raison aux magistrats de cette épreuve de patience plutôt que de vérité; reproche à ses contemporains de verser le sang des hommes avec trop d'indifférence; et prépare ainsi la voie aux éloquentes réclamations des Montesquieu et des Boccaria. S'il considère les calamités produites par les disputes de mots, il prononce "que la plupart de nos troubles sont grammariens." S'il jette un regard sur l'organisation des sociétés modernes, il s'étonne "qu'il y ait doubles lois; celles de l'honneur, et celles de l'équité; que certains hommes aient la parole, d'autres l'action; les uns la raison, les autres la force; ceux-là le savoir, ceux-ci la vertu." Combien des contradictions si bizarres devaient affliger le philosophe admirateur de ces temps héroïques, où les citoyens institués pour la patrie passaient de la tribune au champ de Mars, et du Prétoire volaient aux combats; où les vertus et les talens siégeaient réunis sur le char de triomphe qui, dans le même homme, offrait à la vénération publique l'interprète de la justice, l'appui de l'innocence, le ministre de la religion, et le héros vainqueur des rois.

Si Montaigne revient souvent sur ces hautes considérations politiques trop négligées par les moralistes de profession, c'est qu'il se place par la pensée au centre même de l'ordre social, et aperçoit les rapports qu'ont entre elles les diverses parties qui viennent s'y réunir. Il a voulu non-seulement connaître l'homme de la nature, mais encore l'homme envisagé comme membre d'une grande famille, agissant sur ses semblables par ses opinions et ses mœurs, et recevant à son tour l'action de tout ce qui l'environne. Il sonde toutes les plaies de l'humanité. C'est dans l'orgueil insensé des hommes, c'est dans les prestiges de leur imagination qu'il découvre les sources principales de leurs misères. Lisez ce qu'il a écrit sur la vanité, "de cette fragile et calamiteuse créature qui ne sait rien que pleurer, sans apprentissage." Méditez surtout ses pensées sur la mort! Il emploie toutes les

ressources de la parole, toute l'autorité du génie pour affranchir nôtre imagination des terreurs qui l'assiégent "dans ce jour solennel, juge des autres jours." Il accuse nôtre faiblesse, il accuse nos institutions qui entourent la mort d'un appareil plus lugubre que la mort même. Tantôt il parle au nom de la raison, tantôt il fait parler la nature; il veut même que la mort puisse être voluptueuse, et croit que Socrate et Caton, sur le point de quitter la vie, ont dû rendre grâces aux dieux d'avoir mis leur vertu à une si belle epreuve. Ailleurs, il nous invite à détourner nos regards de ces personnages "dont les âmes sont eslancées hors de nostre sphère," pour les fixer sur l'homme rustique soutenu par le seul instinct de la nature, recevant la mort comme une condition de l'existence, sans frayeur et sans murmure, "avec plus de philosophie et de meilleure grâce qu'Aristote." C'est ainsi que Montaigne appelle les faits à l'appui de ses opinions, et qu'il nous conduit à la sagesse par les routes de l'expérience et de la vérité. Ce qui m'étonne surtout en lui, c'est cette hauteur de vue qui plane sur toutes les erreurs et les folies des hommes; c'est cette vertueuse audace d'un génie libre et sage, qui, dans un siècle agité par l'intolérance et le fanatisme, ne s'écarte jamais des vrais principes de la morale et des lois sacrées de l'humanité.

Il respire partout dans son livre, ce noble sentiment d'humanité, premier bienfait de la philosophie; mais il ne se montre nulle part plus énergique et plus éloquent que lorsque Montaigne, dans sa revue générale des hommes et des choses, porte ses regards sur le nouveau monde, et n'aperçoit de tous côtés que des bourreaux et des victimes. A l'aspect des scènes de rapine et de violence qui désolaient ces malheureuses contrées, il frémit, il s'indigne, il condamne cet esprit insatiable de cupidité qui déshonore le commerce et l'a rendu trop souvent le fléau de l'humanité. Il gémit sur le sort de ces peuples inexpérimentés dont l'avare et cruel Espagnol devorait le sang et les trésors. Il aurait voulu qu'une si importante conquête fût tombée "en des mains qui eussent doucement poli ce qu'on pouvait y trouver de sauvage, et développé les bonnes semences que la nature y avait produites." Vœux impuissans! la hache européenne n'a cessé de poursuivre l'homme des forêts; et bientôt il ne restera de ces nations proscrites que les souvenirs conservés par leurs oppresseurs.

L'humanité, la modération, la justice, voilà donc le fondement sur lequel repose toute le philosophie de Montaigne; "philosophie pratique et non ostentatrice et parlière;" car il ne veut point qu'on fasse une science de la morale, un art de la sagesse; et qu'il soit nécessaire d'apprendre en forme de syllogisme ce qui tient à l'essence même de la nature humaine. Il désire que la sagesse règne dans les mœurs; qu'elle se change en habitude, et soit plutôt en sentimens ou même en sensations qu'en paroles. Il conseille d'enseigner la sagesse aux enfans comme on leur enseigne à se servir de leurs facultés physiques; d'en teindre leur âme et non de l'en arroser; de leur apprendre à être plutôt qu'à paraître. Tout ce que la raison perfectionée peut conseiller de plus utile pour former des hommes et des citoyens; tout ce que l'expérience nous a révélé sur ce sujet important, vous le trouvez dans Montaigne. Il ne fut point écouté de ses contemporains; il les avait devancés de trop loin pour qu'ils pussent l'entendre; mais il parlait pour tous les âges; le jour devait arriver où il serait compris, et quelques unes des productions philosophiques les plus estimées du dernier siècle ne sont que le commentaire de ses pensées. C'est en effet dans ce siècle, époque de goût et de justice littéraire, que le mérite de Montaigne a été généralement reconnu. Les vérités qu'il avait deposées dans son livre furent recueillies par des écrivains du premier ordre, et reparurent avec de nouveaux développemens et une force nouvelle. Tous les genres de littérature s'enrichirent de ce précieux héritage, et, jusques dans la poësie, vous retrouvez l'influence de ce génie vigoreux et indépendant. Toutefois, j'ose le dire avec assurance, c'est à nous qu'il appartient d'apprécier Montaigne et de le mettre à son rang; une terrible expérience nous a donné des lumières qui manquaient à nos devanciers; nous avons vu l'homme aux prises avec toutes les passions; nous avons vu cet être *léger, ondoyant et divers bâtir aussi bien sur le vuide que sur le plein, et de l'inanité que de matière,* et nous pouvons assurer que nul ne l'a mieux connu et ne l'a peint avec des couleurs plus vraies que le philosophe du seizième siècle; nous avons vu comme lui *qu'il ne se peut imaginer un pire état de choses qu'où la méchanceté vient à être légitime et prendre avec le congé du magistrat le manteau de la vertu.* Voilà de ces traits dont jusqu'à nous on n'a presenti toute la vérité. Plus on fera de progrès dans la science de l'homme, plus les philosophes seront étonnes de la supériorité de Montaigne; et l'on sera forcé d'avouer que ses Essais sont le livre des sages et de ceux qui veulent le devenir.

Est-ce là, dira-t-on, ce penseur téméraire que tant de voix ont accusé de pyrrhonisme? quel fut donc le scepticisme de Montaigne? Faut-il vous la dire! Il pensait que l'autorité de la coutume n'est pas toujours celle de la raison; "et que les choses inconnues sont le vrai champ de l'imposture;" il attaquait le dieu même de la science scolastique, "cet Aristote dont la doctrine servait alors de loi magistrale, quoiqu'à l'aventure elle fût aussi fausse qu'une autre." Doué d'une imagination sage et vigoureuse, il dévoilait les erreurs de cette autre imagination qui trouble le repos des hommes, et remplit le monde de crédulités et de vaines terreurs; enfin il donnait à la morale l'autorité de la raison, à une époque où la raison était muette et la morale sans pouvoir. C'est ainsi que Montaigne était sceptique. Il employait le doute comme le seul instrument dont le philosophe pût se servir pour séparer la vérité du mensonge. Il porta dans les sciences morales le même esprit que Bacon, le plus illustre de ses contemporains, introduisit dans les sciences physiques. En soumettant les anciennes erreurs à l'examen de la raison, ils ont contribué l'un et l'autre à répandre en Europe cet amour du vrai, ce besoin de connaissances positives qui dirigent vers un but noble et utile les forces réunies de l'esprit humain. L'union de la philosophie avec les sciences et la morale, fut l'ouvrage de ces deux hommes qui, négligés de leurs contemporains, n'ont été jugés avec équité que plus d'un siècle après leur mort; et, par une étonnante conformité dans leur destinée, la gloire de Montaigne a trouvé ses premiers défenseurs dans la patrie de Bacon, et la renommée de celuici n'est arrivée à toute sa hauteur qu'après été appuyée du suffrage des philosophes français.

Depuis deux siècles des hommes d'un rare mé

rite ont écrit sur la morale avec force et avec génie. Pascal, écrivain sublime, ne s'arrête qu'en tremblant dans les régions supérieures de la pensée. Il refuse même le secours de la raison, semblable à un voyageur qui, se trouvant suspendu sur le bord d'une abîme, ferme les yeux devant les profondeurs dont la vue trouble ses sens et enchaîne son courage. Pascal n'échappe au désespoir qu'en se réfugiant dans le sein de la religion qui ne fit jamais une plus illustre conquête. Là même, il ne peut de rassurer qu'en s'attachant aux doctrines ascétiques dans leur plus rigoreuse abstraction; et revient ainsi par une route détournée à la brillante chimère du stoïcisme.* Philosophe au milieu des cours, observateur au sein des plaisirs, la Rochefoucault a voulu rapporter toutes les actions humaines à un seul principe, sans s'apercevoir ou sans avouer que ce principe toujours le même en apparence se modifie au fond par les passions mêmes qu'il met en mouvement, et devient noble ou vil suivant les effets qu'il produit. La Bruyère traduisit Théophraste; mais ce fut de Montaigne qu'il emprunta l'idée piquante de mettre en action les ridicules et les folies humaines. Il n'envisagea dans la morale que son influence sur la vie extérieure des hommes; mais il traita cette partie en maître; et il serait peut-être hors de tout parallèle s'il eût été aussi profond dans les vues générales qu'habile à manier sa langue, et supérieur dans les détails. Rousseau est celui de nos écrivains qui pour le fond des choses se rapproche le plus de Montaigne; et cependant quelle différence de l'un à l'autre! Il est vrai que leur morale est fondée sur la même base; sur la nature de l'homme, et sur les rapports qui l'unissent à ses semblables. Il est encore vrai qu'ils ont exercé tous les deux une grande autorité sur les esprits; mais l'effet dans Rousseau tient plus au sentiment, et dans Montaigne à la pensée; aussi l'un a-t-il excité plus d'enthousiasme et l'autre plus d'estime. Montaigne remonte aux principes avec plus de sagacité; l'autre excelle dans l'art de développer ces mêmes principes, et d'en faire sortir toutes les vérités qu'ils renferment. La philosophie du premier est plus ferme, plus inaccessible aux préjugés; celle du second plus séduisante, lors même qu'elle penche vers l'erreur. Leur imagination fut également forte et brillante; mais cette faculté domine dans Rousseau, tandis que dans Montaigne elle est toujours docile et soumise à la raison. Ce dernier laisse des traces lumineuses sur tous les sentiers qu'il parcourt; comme les anciens, il porte en lui même cette lumière philosophique qui se réfléchit si vivement dans ses écrits. Rousseau semble produire la lumière qu'il emprunte; cependant elle l'abandonne quelquefois; alors il s'égare et se perd dans l'exagération. On admirera toujours dans ses ouvrages la perfection du style, le talent de fortifier la raison par l'éloquence; on y cherchera ces traits passionnés, ce langage du cœur où tous ses mystères sont révélés. Mais on lira Montaigne pour s'instruire; pour exercer sa pensée au travail de la méditation; pour apprendre à supporter avec courage les revers de la fortune et les accidens de la vie. Considérés comme peintures du cœur humain, Rousseau a représenté la passion de l'amour avec une force et une chaleur inconnues aux anciens; Montaigne a peint l'amitié avec les traits simples touchant et sublimes de l'éloquence antique. La manière dont ils ont parlé d'eux-mêmes explique la différence de leur caractère et de leurs vues. En lisant les aveux de l'un, vous êtes toujours occupé de l'auteur; l'autre en se dévoilant à vos yeux vous ramène toujours a vous même. Vous écoutez Rousseau avec l'intérêt qu'inspirent le malheur et le génie; mais vous êtes le confident intime et l'ami de Montaigne. Ces deux grands moralistes ont acquis des droits incontestables à la reconnaissance des hommes; toutefois puisque l'un n'a pas été, comme l'autre, privé de modèles dans sa langue, et supérieur a son siècle, je pencherais à croire que si le premier est plus parfait comme écrivain, le second est plus estimable comme philosophe; et je concevrais plus aisément Montaigne à la place de Rousseau, que celui-ci à la place de Montaigne.†

Plus heureux que Rousseau, parce qu'il dépendait moins de l'opinion des autres, et qu'il conserva toujours plus d'empire sur lui-même, Montaigne ne fut exposé ni aux attaques de la haine ouvertement declarée, ni à ces délations ténébreuses, arme éternelle de la bassesse et de l'hypocrisie. Mais après sa mort il a eu la gloire, comme tant d'autres philosophes, d'avoir pour ennemis tous les hommes attachés à l'erreur par ignorance, par intérêt, ou par orgueil. Si dans sa retraite, lorsqu'il cherchait à éclairer son siècle, la calomnie eût élevé sa voix contre lui; sans doute il aurait répondu comme Socrate, son maître et son modèle: "qu'on examine ma vie entière, voilà mon apologie." C'est aussi la seule reponse que nous ferons à ses ennemis. Voyons donc si la conduite de l'homme à démenti les principes du moraliste. Tout ce qui peut servir à la faire connaître, se trouve renfermé dans le seul livre qui, suivant ses propres expressions, "soit consubstantiel à son auteur." S'il est difficile de la peindre, il est aisé de le montrer.

Les premiers mouvemens du cœur, les premiers essais de l'intelligence laissent dans l'âme une impression ineffaçable; et le seul moyen de former des hommes vertueux serait peut-être de ne leur préparer dès l'enfance que des souvenirs purs, en ne leur offrant que des exemples de vertu. L'éducation de Montaigne confirme cette idée. La raison naissante fut soustraite à l'influence des préjugés qui régnaient autour de lui. Son père le sépara, pour ainsi dire, de sa nation et de son siècle, et le rendit contemporain des héros et des sages de l'antiquité. Rome libre et vertueuse devint sa patrie; la langue de Virgile et de Cicéron lui fournit les signes de ses premières idées; et ce fut ainsi qu'il contracta l'habitude de penser avec justesse, de s'exprimer avec énergie, et d'agir avec rectitude. On était peut-être loin de prévoir tous les effets qu'un tel plan d'éducation devait produire. Montaigne entra dans le monde comme dans un pays étranger dont il fut obligé d'étudier la langue, les habitudes, et les mœurs. On essaya de l'y fixer; mais il reconnut bientôt que nulle place ne convenait à son caractère formé pour l'independance.

* Lisez les Pensées de Pascal, chap. I., contre l'indifférence des Athées. Lisez aussi sa vie, par Madame Périer. En voyant les efforts incroyables que fit Pascal pour arriver à cet état d'impassibilité qu'il regardait comme un état de perfection, on ne peut s'empêcher de plaindre son erreur, et de gémir sur la faiblesse humaine et sur le sort d'un si beau genie.

† On reconnaîtra dans cette dernière phrase une tournure imitée de Montaigne.

il ne se jeta point dans la solitude; mais il se fit une retraite intérieure où il pouvait en quelque sorte retirer son âme au milieu des plaisirs du monde, et même de l'agitation des cours. Des passions vives troublèrent son repos; l'amour, "ce mal qui peut-être est un * bien," lui fit souffrir, dit-il, "toutes les rages que les poëtes disent advenir à ceux qui s'y laissent aller sans ordre et sans mesure." Mais il avait une âme trop forte pour céder lâchement à la tyrannie des passions. Il ne chercha point, il est vrai, à étouffer cette flamme céleste qui donne tant d'empire à la beauté, et tant de charme aux heures les plus douces de la vie: elle échauffa son cœur sans éblouir sa raison. Ce fut toujours pour lui un commerce plein d'attraits que celui des belles et honnêtes femmes; mais il savait que c'est un commerce "où il faut se tenir un peu sur ses gardes." Au demeurant, il faisait grand compte de l'esprit, "pourvu que le corps n'en fût pas à dire; car, à répondre en conscience, si l'une ou l'autre des deux beautés devait nécessairement y faillir, il eût choisi de quitter plutôt la spirituelle." Ces pensées plus vraies que sentimentales offenseront peut-être la délicatesse de notre siècle; mais, dans la vie comme dans les écrits de Montaigne, on trouve l'histoire et non le roman du cœur humain. Si les discours familiers de Socrate nous étaient parvenus tels que ses disciples ont dû les entendre, lorsqu'il fécondait par la puissance de sa raison les germes intellectuels qui restent inactifs au fond des âmes; nous y trouverions sans doute une analogie frappante avec les Essais, qui sont aussi des conversations d'un ordre supérieur.

C'est d'après cet ouvrage qu'on peut juger quel charme et quel intérêt devait offrir le commerce intime de ce vrai philosophe, lorsque "se mettant au dehors et en évidence," il se livrait tout entier à l'amitié. L'orgueil, qui tend à isoler les hommes, et cette espèce de réserve dédaigneuse qui sert trop souvent de voile à la médiocrité, n'étaient point à son usage. Mais dans les conférences même les plus sérieuses qu'il nommait "l'exercice des âmes," il désirait que le plaisir se joignit à l'instruction. Son esprit vif, éclairé, "prime-sautier," se tournait sans effort vers la vérité, comme certaines plantes se tournent vers le soleil. Il n'oubliait jamais la dignité qui convient a l'homme que ses lumières et ses talens séparent du vulgaire; et il trouvait "que de servir de spectacle aux grands, et faire à l'envi parade de son esprit et de son caquet, c'est un métier très-messéant à un homme d'honneur." Le vrai moyen de connaître son caractère est d'examiner la conduite qu'il a tenue dans les circonstances difficiles où il fut placé. On le verra toujours sensible, élevé, généreux. Il avait jugé la gloire; et s'il l'a desiré, c'est pour associer à son immortalité le meilleur des pères et le plus vertueux des amis. Si, contre son inclination particulière, il obéit à la coutume, et qu'on lui choisisse une femme, il regarde l'accomplissement des devoirs domestiques comme le but principal de la vie. S'il est employé comme médiateur entre les chefs des partis contraires, il ne connaît d'autre politique que la bonne foi. "Il marche partout la tête haute, le visage et le cœur ouvert." Tandis que le crime triomphe, et que les lois se taisent, il ne cherche d'autre garantie pour sa sûreté personnelle que sa confiance même et le noble abandon de la vertu. Appelé deux fois, par les suffrages libres de ses concitoyens, à la première magistrature d'une ville illustrée, depuis long-temps, par des hommes de mérite dans tous les genres, il remplit avec courage et avec honneur des fonctions que les circonstances rendaient si pénibles. Il calma l'agitation des esprits, sut maintenir la tranquillité publique, et rentra dans la vie privée avec des souvenirs exempts de remords. Ses plus ardens ennemis n'ont osé démentir le témoignage qu'il s'est rendu à lui-même après une épreuve aussi décisive. "C'est pas un léger plaisir," s'écrie-t-il, "de se sentir préservé de la contagion d'un siècle gâté, et dire en soi: qui me verrait jusques dans l'âme, encore ne me trouverait-il coupable ni de l'affliction et ruine de personne, ni de vengeance ou d'envie, ni d'offense publique des lois, ni de faute à ma parole. Ces témoignages de la conscience plaisent, et nous est grand bénéfice que cette esjouissance naturelle, seul paiement qui jamais ne nous manque."

Je le demande avec confiance; n'est ce pas là l'effusion d'une âme pure; n'y reconnaissez-vous pas l'accent modeste de la vérité? Cette franchise n'est plus dans nos mœurs. On parle rarement de son propre mérite, et plus rarement encore du mérite des autres, à moins d'un intérêt bien positif; mais cette réserve, qui maintient la paix entre toutes les prétensions, n'est peut-être qu'un refinement de l'amour-propre, et que le voile transparent de l'orgueil. Ce ne fut donc qu'après avoir payé sa dette de citoyen que Montaigne chercha la solitude et le repos. Dans sa retraite ouverte à tous les partis, et comme il s'exprime lui-même, "vierge de sang," il s'offre à mon imagination, tel qu'on homme placé sur un tour élevée, qui contemple l'océan battu de la tempête, presente des feux salutaires aux navigateurs errans dans les ténèbres, et plaint le sort des malheureux qu'il ne peut secourir, et que les vagues soulevées brisent sur les écueils. On ne saurait trop admirer cette philanthropie naturelle qui me paraît le trait le plus frappant de son caractère et de ses écrits. Ah! sans doute, cette pieuse humanité a son origine dans le cœur; mais elle s'accroit et devient plus active par la culture des lettres et de la philosophie. Oui, l'étude bien dirigée adoucit les mœurs, modère les passions, et nous familiarise avec tous les sentimens vertueux. C'est à l'étude que Montaigne avait recours pour charmer sa solitude et consoler sa viellesse. "Ses Livres étaient la meilleure munition qu'il eut trouvée en cet humain voyage."

C'est dans ce commerce intime avec les grands hommes de l'antiquité qu'il reposait son âme, fatiguée du spectacle des malheurs publics, apprenait à soutenir le poids de la mauvaise fortune; et se donnait à lui-même "rendezvous à sa derniere heure, pour juger ses opinions et sa vie entière."

J'aime à me le représenter tel qu'il se peint lui-même "feuilletant à cette heure un livre, à cette heure un autre; sans ordre et sans dessein, à pièces décousues; tantôt revant, tantôt enrégistrant ses songes."

Je cite ses propres paroles; elles rappellent à l'esprit ces songes que les anciens respectaient comme les révélations d'une intelligence supérieure. On reproche à Montaigne de revenir trop souvent sur lui-même; et l'on oublie "qu'il s'était fait la matière de son livre." Pour moi, je voudrais qu'il eût écrit l'histoire de sa vie comme celle de ses pensées. Avec quel intérêt ne le suivrions nous pas dans une cour élégante et corrom-

* La Fontaine.

pue, dévote et licencieuse, où régnait cette Médicis qui confondit l'intrigue avec la politique, et la cruauté avec la force. Que ne puis-je retrouver les détails de ses entrevues avec ce duc de Guise, personnage d'une stature héroïque, à qui peut-être il n'a manqué qu'une volonté plus ferme pour fonder une dynastie royale; avec cet immortel Henri, auquel rien ne manqua pour faire le bonheur de son peuple! J'aimerais à savoir en quelles circonstances les vapeurs de l'ambition ont pu fermenter dans une tête aussi forte que celle de Montaigne; en quelle occasion il fut décoré de l'ordre du Prince, à une époque où il était encore honorable de le recevoir. Combien je me plairais à le suivre lorsque, sorti pur du séjour de la corruption, il parcourt différentes contrées, ôtant partout le masque des hommes et des choses. Ses voyages, qu'une ardente curiosité a tirés de l'oubli, ne sont qu'un simple itinéraire. Toutefois, je retrouve Montaigne lorsqu' arrivé dans l'ancienne patrie des maîtres du monde, il reçoit le titre de citoyen romain qui n'avait plus rien d'illustre, mais qu'il préférait à tous les autres: tant le nom seul de Rome charmait son imagination remplie des grands souvenirs de l'antiquité! A peine a-t-il touché cette terre des héros, que son génie s'enflamme et que son cœur s'émeut. On le prendrait pour un voyageur long-temps éloigné de sa patrie, qui ne retrouverait à son retour, ni les amis qu'il y avait laissés, ni les chef-d'œuvres des arts qui la décoraient; il erre parmi ces débris comme l'ombre de quelque vieux Romain, cherchant de tous côtés, et ce sénat arbitre des rois, où les talens firent une si longue alliance avec la vertu; et ce forum où la parole exerçait une autorité sans limites; et ce Capitole dominateur où tous les Dieux de l'univers étaient convoqués par le génie de Rome. Tout avait disparu, jusqu'aux ruines de ces augustes monumens. Montaigne doute s'il voit le tombeau de l'antique souveraine des nations, et craint que sa sépulture même ne soit ensevelie. Il en contemple les moindres vestiges avec un enthousiasme mêlé de régrets. Ce fut avec peine qu'il abandonna cet ancien théâtre de l'héroïsme et de la gloire; et il s'arracha de Rome comme on s'exile de sa patrie. Quelque temps après son retour en France, le fanatisme religieux, se ranimant avec une nouvelle fureur, ébranla l'état jusques dans ses fondemens. Deux cultes rivaux, aveugles dans leurs haines, cruels dans leurs vengeances, se disputaient les lambeaux ensanglantés de la monarchie; et les torches de la révolte allumées à Rome et à Madrid répandaient au loin l'incendie et la mort. Un autre fléau se joignit à celui des guerres civiles. La peste ravagea ce que le glaive avait épargné. Les champs incultes se dépeuplerent, et la famine vint mettre le comble aux malheurs publics.* Ce fut alors que la retraite du sage fut violé pour le première fois. Atteint d'une infirmité douloureuse, Montaigne erra quelque temps avec sa famille, n'ayant d'autre appui que la philosophie qui ne l'abandonna jamais, et ne sachant où trouver un asile contre tant de calamités réunies. Enfin la France respira de nouveau sous l'administration paternelle du meilleur des rois. Montaigne revit ses foyers, et ne songea plus qu'à jouir du repos; et de cette paix de l'âme, douce récompense de la vertu. Tout se réparait autour de lui; mais il avait fait une de ces pertes qui ne peuvent se réparer, et dont le souvenir, adouci par le temps, est encore un des charmes de l'existence. Il avait survécu à son ami; mais si la Boëtie ne vivait plus pour lui, il vivait pour la Boëtie; et le soin de sauver de l'oubli la memoire d'un ami si vivement regretté, était la plus douce occupation de ses loisirs. C'est à ce soin religieux que nous devons le beau chapitre de l'amitié où Montaigne s'élève au-dessus de toute comparison. Aussi méthodique que l'orateur romain, Montaigne l'emporte sur lui par la chaleur et la verité des sentimens. Ses pensées, ses paroles même, ont quelque chose de sacré. Ces mouvemens passionés; ces retours fréquens sur lui-même et sur son ami; cet abandon d'une âme fortement émue; tout s'imprime dans le cœur, tout saisit l'imagination. Jamais l'eloquence du sentiment n'a produit tant d'effet; jamais le langage de l'amitié ne fut plus sublime. Heureux qui peut le comprendre, plus heureux qui peut l'inspirer! L'amitié, telle que Montaigne et la Boëtie l'ont éprouvée, cette union intime de deux esprits éclairés, de deux âmes vertueuses étonne aujourd'hui notre faiblesse et notre stérile égoisme. Ce fut au fond de leur cœur qu'ils retrouvèrent cette passion héroïque que nous avons perdue, et dont l'antiquité nous a transmis quelques touchans souvenirs. Montaigne était digne de renouveler cette noble alliance du génie et de la vertu. Nul n'a rendu des services plus éminens à la raison humaine: envisagé comme moraliste, il a fondé la vraie philosophie en France; consideré comme écrivain, il a contribué aux progrés de la langue; ami de l'ordre et des lois, il fut sage sans affecter la sagesse, et passe au travers d'une génération barbare et fanatique, sans participer à ses excès et à sa corruption. Enfin, après avoir élevé un monument utile aux hommes et glorieux pour sa mémoire, il vit arriver la mort avec la tranquillite d'un philosophe qui, pendant toute sa vie, avait appris à mourir. Fidèle à ses principes, il finit comme Socrate, "en se conformant *aux façons et formes reçues autour de lui*," et sa dernière pensée fut un dernier hommage à la religion de ses pères.

Après avoir ressemblé les traits principaux qui m'ont paru caractériser Montaigne, j'oserai dire comme lui: "C'est ici un ouvrage de bonne foi." Tel il s'est montré à mes regards; tel je l'ai representé aux vôtres sans chercher à exagérer, par le faste des paroles, le merite d'un homme ennemi de toute espèce d'exagération. Comment aurais-je pu outrager, par la flatterie, les mânes de ce philosophe qui, dans son livre, a condamné d'avance les flatteurs par ces expressions remarquables: "Je reviendrais volontiers de l'autre monde pour démentir celui qui me présenterait sous une autre forme que la mienne, fût-ce pour m'honorer." Pourquoi ce vœu d'une âme élevée ne peut-il s'accomplir? Que n'est-il en mon pouvoir de ranimer sa cendre? Vous le verriez paraître rayonnant de gloire au milieu de vous; et, s'il m'était permis de lui addresser quelques mots, je lui dirais au nom de tous les amis de la verité: "Jouis de la reconnoissance des hommes de bien. Entends la voix des siècles qui te place au premier rang des écrivains philosophes! Comme ces anciens génies dont tu fus l'admirateur et le rival, tu as survécu à ta langue, et tes pensées sont venues la

* Montaigne fait une peinture effrayente de ces temps malheureux. Il ne fut alors respecté par aucun parti: "Je fus," dit-il, "pelaudi à toutes mains. J'etais Gibelin aux Guelfes, et Guelf aux Gibelins."

propriété commune des nations. La lumière que tu répandais autour de toi est arrivée jusqu'à nous; elle a éclairé plusieurs générations, et brille encore d'un nouvel éclat. Sans doute, le faible hommage que nous te rendons aujourd'hui ne peut rien ajouter à ta renommée; mais nous l'avons appris par ton exemple: il est toujours utile de rappeler la memoire des hommes illustres parl eurs talens et lèurs vertus. L'art de la parole s'épure et s'ennoblit en célébrant les bien-faiteurs de l'humanité, et l'éloge d'un sage est un triomphe pour la raison."

ÉLOGE DE MONTAIGNE.

Discours qui a remporte le Prix d'Éloquence, discerné par la Classe de la Langue et de la Littérature Françaises de l'Institut, dans sa Séance du 23 Mars, 1812.

PAR M. VILLEMAIN,
AGREGÉ PROFESSEUR DE RHETORIQUE AU LYECE-CHARLEMAGNE.

Quidquid agunt homines, nostri est farrago libelli.
JUVENAL.

DANS tous les siècles ou l'esprit humain se perfectionne par la culture des arts, on voit nâitre des hommes supérieurs, qui reçoivent la lumiére et la répandent, et vont plus loin que leurs contemporains, en suivant les mêmes traces. Quelque chose de plus rare, c'est un génie qui ne doive rien à son siècle, ou plutôt qui, malgré son siècle, par la seule force de sa pensée, se place, de lui-meme, à côté des écrivains les plus parfaits, nés dans les temps les plus polis: tel est Montaigne. Penseur profond, sous le règne du pédantisme, auteur brillant et ingénieux dans une langue informe et grossière, il écrit avec le secours de sa raison et des anciens: son ouvrage reste, et fait seul toute la gloire littéraire d'une nation; et lorsque, aprés de longues années, sous les auspices de quelques génies sublimes, qui s'élancent à la fois, arrive enfin l'âge du bon goût et du talent, cet ouvrage, long temps unique, demeure toujours original; et la France, enrichie tout à coup de tant de brillantes merveilles, ne sait refroidir son admiration pour ces antiques et naïves beautés. Un siècle nouveau succéde, aussi fameux que le précédent, plus éclairé peut-être, plus exercé à juger, plus difficile à satisfaire, parce qu'il peut comparer davantage: cette second épreuve n'est pas moins favorable à la gloire de Montaigne. On l'entend mieux, on l'imite plus hardiment; il sert à rajeunir la littérature, qui commençait a s'épuiser; il inspire nos plus illustres écrivains; et ce philosophe du siècle de Charles IX. semble fait pour instruire le dix-huitieme siècle. Quel est ce prodigieux mérite qui survit aux variations du langage, aux changemens des Mœurs. C'est le naturel et la vérité; voilà le charme qui ne peut vieillir. La grandeur des idées, l'artifice du style ne suffisent pas pour qu'un écrivain plaise toujours: et ce n'est pas seulement de siècle en siècle, et à de longs intervalles, que le goût change, et que les ouvrages éprouvent des fortunes diverses: dans la vie même de l'homme, il est un période où, détrompés de le monde idéal que les passions fourmaient autour de nous, ne sachant plus excuser des illusions qui ne se retrouvent plus dans nos cœurs, perdant l'enthousiasme avec la jeunesse, et réduits à ne plus aimer que la raison, nous devenons moins sensibles aux plus éclantes beautés de l'eloquence et de la poésie. Mais qui pourrait se lasser d'un livre *de bonne foy* † écrit par un homme de génie? Ces épanchemens familiers de l'auteur, ces révélations inattendues sur de grands objets et sur des bagatelles, en donnant à ses écrits la formé d'une longue confidence, font disparaître la peine l'égère que l'on éprouve à lire un ouvrage de moral. On croit converser; et comme la conversation est piquante et variée, que souvent nous y venons à notre tour, que celui qui nous instruit a soin de nous répéter, *Ce n'est pas icy ma doctrine, c'est mon étude*, nous avoue ses faiblesses, pour nous convaincre des nôtres, et nous corrige sans nous humilier, jamais on ne se laisse de l'entrétien.

† Expression de Montaigne.

PREMIERE PARTIE.

L'HOMME, dès qu'il sut réfléchir, s'étonna de lui-même, et sentit le besoin de se connâitre. Les premiers sages furent ceux qui s'occuperent de cette importante étude. Ils voulurent d'abord pénétrer trop avant; de-là tous les rêves de l'antiquité, quand elle espéra lever le voile mysterieux qui cache l'origine et les destinés de l'homme. Les efforts furent plus heureux dans des recherches moins ambiteuses. Socrate, dit-on, ramena le premier la philosophie sur la terre. Il en fit une science usuelle qui s'appliquait à nos besoins et à nos faiblesses; science d'observation et de raisonnement qui nous prenait tels que nous sommes, pour nous rendre tels que nous devons être, et nous étudiait pour nous corriger. Considerée sous ce point de vue, la morale ne peut se trouver que chez les peuples civilisées; elle suppose des esprits développés par l'exercise de la reflexion, et des caracteres mis en jeu par les rapports de la vie sociale. Aussi la voyons-nous passer de la Grèce dans Rome, lorsque Rome victorieuse fut devenue savante et polie. Mais, depuis la chûte de l'empire Romain, cette science, il faut l'avouer, resta longtemps ignorée des peuples de l'Europe. Le pédantisme et la superstition ne sont guères favorables à l'étude réfléchie que l'esprit humain fait sur lui-même; et la scholastique est bien loin de la morale.

En Italie même, où la génie des arts fut si précoce, la saine raison tarda long-temps à paraître; et pour la trouver en France, il faudrait aller jusqu'aux belles années de Louis-le-Grand, si Montaigne n'avait paru dès la seizième siècle.

Né d'un père qui chérissait la science, sans la juger ni la connaître, et voulait donner à son fils un bien dont il était privé lui-même, il eut, dès le berceau, un précepteur à côté de sa nourrice et apprit, pour ainsi dire, à bégayer dans la langue latine. Cette première facilité determina son gôut pour la lecture, et le jeta naturellement dans

l'étude de l'antiquité, qui presentait à son esprit, avide de connaître, des plaisirs toujours nouveaux, sans le fatiguer par les efforts qu' exige l'intelligence d'un idiôme etranger.

Poètes, orateurs, historiens, philosophes, il dévore tout avec un égale ardeur. Il va de Rome dans la Grèce, qu'il ne connut jamais aussi bien, parce qu'il ne la connut pas dès l'enfance ; mais il trouve dans Amyot un interprète agréable, un guide auquel il aime à se confier. Bientot il sent que pour connaître les hommes, il ne suffit pas de l'étudier dans l'historie : il voyage ; et, quoique les peuples modernes fussent encore bien peu avancés, il ne les compare point, sans utilité ni sans intérêt, avec ces Grecs et ces Romains qui leur étaient si supérieurs, et qui lui étaient si familiers. Une imagination vive et curieuse lui fait parcourir mille objets ; une disposition particulière de son esprit lui fait observer tout ce qui se rapporte à l'homme, ses lois, ses mœurs, ses coutumes, et l'intéresse non seulement à l'histoire générale, mais, pour ainsi dire, aux anecdotes de l'espèce humaine. Enfin parvenu à l'âge mur, il s'amuse à se rappeler tout ce qu'il a vu, senti, pensé, decouvert, en soi-même ou dans les autres. Il jette ses idèes dans l'ordre, ou plutôt dans le désordre où elles se présentent, tantôt s'élevant aux plus sublimes spéculations de l'ancienne philosophie, tantôt descendant aux plus simples détails de la vie commune, parlant de tout, se mêlant toujours lui-même à ses discours, et faisant de cette espèce d'egoïsme, si insupportable dans les livres ordinaires, le plus grand charme du sien.

L'ouvrage de Montaigne est un vast répertoire de souvenirs, et de réflexions nées de ces souvenirs. Son inépuisable mémoire met à sa disposition tout ce que les hommes ont pensé. Son jugement, son gôut, son instinct, son caprice même, lui fournissent aisément des pensées nouvelles. Sur chaque sujet, il commence par dire tout ce qu'il sait, et, ce qui vaut mieux, il finit par dire ce qu'il croit. Cet homme, qui, dans la discussion, cite toutes les autorités, écoute tous les partis, accueille toutes les opinions, lorsqu' enfin il vient à décider, ne consulte plus que lui seul, et donne son avis, non *comme bon, mais comme sien*. Une telle marche est longue, mais elle est agréable, elle est instructive, elle apprend à douter ; et ce commencement de la sagesse en est quelquefois le dernier terme. Peutêtre aussi, cette manière de composer convenait mieux au caractére de Montaigne, ennemi d'un long travail et d'une application soutenue. Il parle beaucoup de morale, de politique, de littérature ; il agite, à la fois, mille questions ; mais il ne propose jamais un système. La réserve tient à sa paresse autant qu'à son jugement. Il lui en couterait de poser des principes, de tirer des conséquences, et d établir, à force de raisonnemens, la vérité, ou ce l'on prend pour elle. Cette enterprise lui paraitrait trop laborieuse, et la justesse de son esprit l'avertit que souvent elle ne serait pas moins inutile que téméraire. Il aime mieux se borner à ce qu'il voit au moment où il parle, et semble vouloir n'affirmer qu'une chose à la fois. Ce n'est pas le moyen de faire secte ; aussi, jamais philosophe n'en fut plus éloigné que Montaigne. Il dit trop naïvement et le pour et le contre. Au moment où vous croyez tenir sa pensée, vous êtes deconcerté par un changement soudain, qu'au reste il ne prevoyait pas lui-même plus que vous. Une pareille incertitude, qui prouve plus de franchise que de faiblesse, n'aurait pas dû, ce semble, exciter la sévère indignation de Pascal. Cet inexorable moraliste, si grand par son génie encore audessus de ses ouvrages, ne craint pas d'affirmer que Montaigne *met toutes choses dans un doute si universel et si général, que l'homme, doutant même s'il doute, son incertitude roule sur elle-même dans un cercle perpétuel et sans repos.*

Pascal n'abuse-t-il pas ici de la puissance de son imagination, pour imposer à notre faiblesse par l' energie de la parôle? Quel est ce fantôme d'incredulité qu'il prend plaisir à elever lui-même, pour l'écraser aisément sous le poids de son invincible eloquence ? où peut-il donc trouver dans les aveux d'un philosophe si ingénieux et si modeste, cet incorrigible pyrrhonien, poursuivi par le doute jusque dans son doute même, et changeant de folie, sans pouvoir en guérir ? Montaigne n'a jamais douté ni de Dieu, ni de la vértu. L'apologie de Raymond de Sébond renferme l'eloquente profession de foi sur l'existence de la divinité ; et les orateurs sacrés n'ont jamais peint avec plus de force les tourments du vice, et la joie de la bonne conscience.

Du reste, Montaigne trouve dans la nature de l'homme de terribles difficultés, et d'inconcevables mystères ; il regarde en pitié les erreurs de notre raison, la faiblesse et l'incertitude de notre entendement, il affecte un moment de nous ravaler jusqu'aux bêtes ; et Pascal l'approuve alors.

Ce sublime contempteur des misères de l'homme, triomphe de voir * *la superbe raison froissée par ses propres armes. Il aimerait*, dit-il, *de tout son cœur le ministre d'une si grande vengeance.* Pourquoi donc, O Pascal, défendiez-vous tout-a-l'heure à un sage de se défier de cette raison que vous-même reconnaissez si faible et si trompeuse ? Voulez-vous maintenant le conduire par l'impuissance de penser à la nécessité de croire, et vous semble-t-il qu'il soit besoin de lui arracher le flambeau de la raison pour le précipiter dans la foi ? La Métaphysique de Montaigne se réduit donc à un petit nombre de vérités essentielles, qui demandent peu d'efforts pour êtres saisies. Sur tout le reste il est dans l'ignorance et il ne s'en facha pas. Peut-être seulement a-t-il le tort de rapporter avec trop de complaisance les opinions de ceux qui n'ont pas craint d'expliquer tant de choses qu'ils n'entendaient pas mieux que lui. Mais son incertitude, son † *incuriosité* se fait-elle sentir dans les principes de sa morale ? a-t-il les mêmes doutés lorsqu'il s'agit de nos devoirs ? Comme il siérait mal d'employer l'art des rhéteurs avec un écrivain qui s'en est tant moqué, nous avouerons que si l'on peut disculper sa philosophie d'un pyrrhonisme absolu, sa morale tient beaucoup de l'école d'épicure. Sans doute il voulait qu'elle fut d'usage. Cette philosophie sublime, qui veut changer l'homme au lieu de le régler, en lui présentant pour modéle la perfection désesperante d'une vertu idéale, le dispense trop souvent de la réaliser : la leçon ne paraît pas faite pour nous ; l'exemple est pris dans une autre nature ; on peut d'admirer, mais chacun trouve en soi le droit de ne pas l'imiter. Si vous voulez qu'on tâche d'atteindre au but, ne le mettez pas hors de la portée commune. Le sage, pour faire monter la foule jusqu'à lui, doit se pen-

* Pensees de Pascal. ch. XI.

† Expression de Montaigne.

cher vers elle. C'est le mouvement naturel de Montaigne. Il vient à nous le premier, en nous montrant les imperfections de son esprit, ses erreurs, ses torts, ses petitesses ; mais jamais il n'a rien de bas ni de criminel à nous révéler ; et ce bonheur, ou cette discrétion, me paraît plus utile pour le lecteur, que la franchise trop peu mesurée de Rousseau. J'apprends dans les aveux du premier quelles peuvent être les fautes d'un honnête homme ; et si j'apprends à les excuser, en revanche, je m'habitue à ne pas en concevoir d'autres : mais je craindrais, en lisant Rousseau, d'arrêter trop long-temps mes regards sur de coupables faiblesses qu'il faut toujours tenir loin de soi, et dont la peinture trop fidèle est plus dangereuse pour le cœur, qu'elle n'est instructive pour la raison.

Montaigne, je l'avoue, ne connaît pas l'art d'anéantir les passions : il reclamerait volontiers, avec La Fontaine, contre cette philosophie rigide qui *fait cesser de vivre avant que l'on soit mort.* Il aime à vivre, c'est-à-dire, à goûter les plaisirs que permet la nature bien ordonnée. Pour moi, dit-il, j'aime la vie et la cultive, telle qu'il a plu à Dieu nous l'octroyer. Il croit que c'est le parti de la sagesse et qu'on serait coupable autant que malheureux de se refuser l'usage des biens que nous avons reçus en partage. *On fait tort à ce grand et tout-puissant donneur de refuser son don, l'annuller et disfigurer. Tout bon, il a fait tout bon.* Ces maximes peuvent être rejetées par quelques esprits austères, qui ne conçoivent pas de vertu sans combat, et jugent du mérite par l'effort. Elles pourraient être dangereuses pour quelques âmes ardentes et passionnées, que leurs desirs emporteraient trop loin, et qui doivent être retenues parce qu'elles ne savent pas s'arrêter. Mais Montaigne s'addresse à ceux qui, comme lui, éprouverent plutôt les faiblesses que les fureurs des passions ; et c'est le grand nombre. Il est le conseiller qui leur convient. Il ne les effraie pas sur leurs fautes qui lui paraissent une conséquence de leur nature. Il ne s'indigne pas de cette alternative de bien et de mal, qu'il regarde comme une faiblesse dont il trouve l'explication en lui-même. Il ne désespere personne, il est mécontent ni de lui, ni des autres. Ses principes ne sont jamais sévères : s'ils pouvaient l'être, ses exemples seraient là pour nous défendre et nous rassurer. Il ne cherche donc pas à nous faire peur de vice ; peut-être ne croit-il pas en avoir le droit ; mais il s'efforce de nous séduire à la vertu, qu'il appelle *qualité plaisante et gaye.* Pour dernier terme, il nous propose le plaisir, et c'est au bien qu'il nous conduit.

La Morale de Montaigne n'est pas sans doute assez parfaite pour des chrétiens ; il serait à souhaiter qu'elle servît de guide à tous ceux qui n'ont pas le bonheur de l'être. Elle formera toujours un bon citoyen et un honnête homme. Elle n'est pas fondée sur l'abnégation de soi-même, mais elle a pour premier principe la bienveillance envers les autres, sans distinction de pays, de mœurs, de croyance religieuse. Elle nous instruit à chérir le gouvernement sous lequel nous vivons à respecter les lois aux quelles nous sommes soumis, sans mépriser le gouvernment et les lois des autres nations, nous avertissent de ne pas croire que nous ayons seuls le dépôt de la justice et de la vérité. Elle n'est pas heroïque, mais elle n'a rien de faible : souvent même elle agrandit, elle transporte notre âme par la peinture des fortes vertus de l'antiquité, par le mépris des choses mortelles, et l'enthousiasme des grandes vérités. Mais bientôt elle nous ramène à la simplicité de la vie commune, nous y fixe par un nouvel attrait, et semble ne nous avoir élevés si haut dans ses théories sublimes, qui pour nous réduire avec plus d'avantage à la facile pratique des devoirs habituels et des vertus ordinaires.

Ces divers principes de conduite ne sont jamais, chez Montaigne, énoncés en leçons : il a trop de haine pour le ton doctoral ; mais c'est le résumé des confidences qu'il laisse échapper en mille endroits. Il nous dit ce qu'il fait, ce qu'il voudrait faire. Il nous peint ce qu'il appelle sa vertu, confessant que c'est bien peu de chose, et que tout l'honneur en appartient à la nature plutôt qu'à lui. On a trouvé de l'orgueil dans cette méthode d'un homme qui rappelle tout à soi, et se fait centre de tout : elle n'est que raisonnable, et porte sur une vérité : tous les hommes se ressemblent au fond. Malgré les différences que met entre eux l'inégalité des talens, des caractères et des conditions, il est, si je puis parler ainsi, un air de famille commun à tous. A mesure qu'on a plus d'esprit, on trouve, dit Pascal, qu'il y a plus d'hommes originaux. N'est il pas également vrai de dire qu'avec plus d'esprit encore, on découvrirait l'homme original, dont tous les hommes ne sont que des nuances et des variétés, qui le reproduisent avec diverses alterations, mais ne le dénaturent jamais ? Voilà ce que Montaigne a voulu trouver, et ce qu'il ne pouvait chercher qu'en lui même. C'est ainsi qu'il nous jugeait en s'appréciant, et qu'il faisant notre histoire, en nous racontant la sienne. Mais en même temps qu'il étudie dans lui même le caractère de l'homme, il étudie dans tous les hommes les modifications sans nombre dont ce caractère est susceptible. De là tant de recits sur tous le peuples du monde, sur leurs religions, leurs lois, leurs usages, leur préjugés ; de là cette immense collection d'anecdotes antiques et modernes sur tous sujets et en tous genres ; enterprises hardies, sages conseils, exemples de vices ou de vertus, fautes, erreurs, faiblesses, pensées ou paroles remarquables. De là cette foule nombre de figures différentes, qui passent tour à tour devant nos yeux, depuis les philosophes d'Athènes jusqu'aux sauvages du Canada. Placé au milieu de ce tableau mouvant, Montaigne voit et entend tous les personnages, les confrontant avec lui même, et se persuadant de plus en plus que la coutume décide presque de tout : qu'il n'y a du reste qu'un petit nombre de choses assurées qu'il faut croire, quelques choses probables qu'il faut discuter, beaucoup de choses convenues qu'il faut respecter pour le bien général. Mais si le scepticisme de Montaigne, plus modéré que celui de tant d'autres philosophes, ne touche jamais aux principes conservateurs de l'ordre social, sa raison en a d'autant plus de force pour attaquer les préjugés ridicules ou funestes, dont ses contemporains étaient infatués ; et d'abord n'oublions pas que le siècle de Montaigne était encore le temps de l'astrologie, des sorciers, des faux miracles, et de ces guerres de religion, les plus cruelles de toutes ; n'oublions pas que les hommes les plus respectables partageaient les erreurs et la crédulité du vulgaire ; et qu'enfin, écrivant plusieurs années après l'auteur des *Essais*, le judicieux de Thou rapportait, et croyait peut être, toutes les absurdités merveilleuses qui font rire de pitié dans un siècle éclairé. Combien aimerons-nous alors que Montaigne sache trouver la cause de tant d'erreurs dans notre curiosité et dans notre vanité ! S'agit-il d'un fait incroyable ? Nous disons : * *Comment est ce que cela*

* Montaigne.

fait? et nous découvrons une raison; mais *se fait-il? eût été mieux dit.* Une fois persuadés, nous croyons que * *C'est ouvrage de charité de persuader les autres, et pour ce faire, chacun ne craint pas d'ajouter de son invention autant qu'il en voit être nécessaire à son conte, pour suppléer à la résistance et au défaut qu'il pense être en la conception d'autruy.* Et c'est ainsi que les sottises s'accreditent et se perpétuent. Il est des sottises qui ne sont que ridicules, il en est d'affreuses. Montaigne se moque des unes, et combat les autres avec les armes de la raison et de l'humanité. Il plaint ces malheureuses victimes de la superstition de leurs juges et de la leur, qui s'attribuaient un pouvoir sacrilége sur toute la nature, et ne pouvaient échapper aux flammes du bûcher.

On a beaucoup parlé des paradoxes de Montaigne. Quelques uns surtout ont reçu de la plume d'un écrivain éloquent une célébrité nouvelle, qui nous oblige d'en rendre à leur veritable auteur ou la gloire ou le blâme. Personne n'ignore que, dans le fameuse question proposée par l'Académie de Dijon, le philosophe Genevois, en se déclarant avec une sorte d'animosité le détracteur des Sciences et des Arts, en affectant de les accuser en son nom, ne fait cependant que répéter les reproches que l'auteur des *Essais* avait alléguées deux siècles avant lui. J'ajouterai qu'en les répétant, il les exagère, et, que voulant faire un système de ce qui n'est chez son modele qu'une opinion légèrement hasardée, comme tant d'autres, il s'éloigne beaucoup plus de la vérité, et tombe dans une plus choquante erreur. Il est permis d'être sévère avec Rousseau, la plus rigoureuse censure n'atteindra jamais jusqu'à sa gloire; ses admirateurs même peuvent lui reprocher en général d'outrer les idées qu'il emprunte. Si Montaigne nous dit avec autant de verité que de bonhommie :—*Nous avons abandonné nature, et lui voulons apprendre sa leçon, elle qui nous menait si heureusement et si sûrement.* Rousseau ne craint pas de nous redire:—*Tout est bien sortant des mains de l'auteur des choses, tout dégénère entre les mains de l'homme.* C'est ainsi que l'Emile peut souvent paraître une exagération des idées de Montaigne, sur l'education de l'enfance, et l'art de former les hommes.

Ce n'est pas que, sur plusieurs points de cet intéressant sujet, Rousseau ne mérite notre reconnaissance, pour avoir renouvellé, avec toutes les séductions de son talent, des vérités utiles et trop négligées. La nécessité de diriger avec soin les premières années de l'enfance, de prendre ses inclinations des le berceau, et de les conduire, ou plutôt de les laisser aller au bien, sans gêne et sans effort, la grande importance de l'éducation physique, les exercises du corps tournant au profit de l'ame, l'art de former la raison, en l'accoutumant à si faire des idées plutôt que d'en recevoir, l'inutilité des études qui n'occupent que la memoire, le secret de faire trouver les choses au lieu de les montrer: tant d'autres idées qui n'en sont pas moins vraies pour être peu suivies, ont heureusement passé des écrits de Montaigne dans l'ouvrage de Rousseau. Montaigne haïssait le pédantisme, mais il aimait la science. Quoiqu'il en ait médit quelque fois, il convient que *c'est un grand ornament et un outil de merveilleux service.* Cependant ce qu'il exige avant tout dans un gouverneur, c'est le jugement. *Je veux*, dit-il, *qu'il ait plutôt la tête bien faite que bien plein.* Quand le gouverneur aura formé le jugement de son élève, il peut lui permettre l'étude de toutes les sciences. *Notre âme s'élargit, d'autant plus qu'elle se remplit.* Ce langage n'est pas celui d'un ennemi des lettres. Et comment Montaigne aurait-il pu se défendre de les aimer! Elles firent l'occupation et la charme de sa vie; elles élevèrent sa raison au-dessus de celle de ses contemporains, qui les etudiaient aussi, mais qui ne savaient pas s'en servir. Elles firent de lui un sage, et, ce qu'il estimait peut-être bien plus, un homme heureux. Telle est idée que je me forme de Montaigne, considéré comme philosophe et comme moraliste; jamais d'exagération, jamais de système orgueilleusement chimérique, quelquefois des idées incertaines, parce qu'il y a beaucoup d'incertitude dans l'esprit humain; toujours une candeur et une bonne foi qui feraient pardonner l'erreur même. Quand je me représente ces divers caractères, trop faiblement crayonés dans un éloge imparfait, et que j'essaie d'embrasser d'une seule vue un talent si varié, et de faire sentir par un dernier trait un merite si difficile à définir, je suis frappé de plusieurs resemblances sensibles que j'aperçois entre Montaigne et l'un de nos plus célèbres écrivains, le seul que l'on ne puisse comparer à personne. Je ne sais si je m'abuse: je crains qu'un parallele ne semble toujours un lieu commun, et qu'un rapprochement de Voltaire et de Montaigne ne soit au moins un paradoxe. Mais en écartant les plus brillantes productions de Voltaire, en me bornant à une seule partie de sa gloire, ses mèlanges de metaphysique et de morale, ne puis-je en effet établir plusieurs rapports remarquables entre deux hommes si différents? Des deux côtés, je vois un vaste lecture, une immense variété de souvenirs, et cette même mobilité d'imagination qui passe rapidement sur chaque objet, dans l'impatience de les parcourir tous à-la-fois. Des deux côtés, je suis étonné de tout le chemin que je fais en quelques instans, et du grand nombre d'idées que je trouve en quelques pages. Tous deux se montrent doués d'une raison supérieure. Montaigne, aussi vif, et cependant plus verbeux, plus diffus; c'est le tort de son siècle. Voltaire, quelquesfois moins profond, a toujours plus de justesse et de netteté; c'est le mérite du sien. Tous deux ont connu les faiblesses et les inconsequences du cœur humain; tous deux en rient. Le rire de Voltaire est amer, et ses railleries plus cruelles. Tous deux respirent l'amour de l'humanité. Celui de Voltaire est plus ardent, plus courageux, plus infatigable. On connaît assez la haine d'un et de l'autre pour le charlatanisme et l'hypocrisie. Montaigne a mieux su s'arrêter. Voltaire paraît quelquefois confondre les objets les plus saints de la vénération publique, avec de vaines superstitions, que l'on doit détruire par la ridicule. Tous deux ont pensé hardiment, et ont exprimé franchement leurs pensées. La franchise de Voltaire est plus maligne; et celle de Montaigné plus naïve, mais tous deux ont oublié trop souvent la décence dans les idées et même dans l'expression; et nous devenons leur en faire un reproche; car le plus grand tort du genie, c'est de faire rougir la pudeur, et d'offenser la vertu.

* Montaigne.

SECONDE PARTIE.

Si Montaigne n'avait que le mérite assez rare de dire souvent la vérité, il aurait, on peut le croire,

comme Charron son imitateur, obtenu plus d'estime que de succès, et plus d'éloges que de lecteurs. Ceux mêmes qui préfèrent la raison à tout veulent encore qu'elle soit assez ornée pour être agréable; et l'on ne cherche pas l'instruction dans un livre où l'on craint de trouver l'ennui. Montaigne plaît, amuse, intéresse par la naïveté, l'énergie, la richesse de son style et les vives images dont il colore sa pensée. Ce charme se fait sentir aux hommes qui n'ont jamais réfléchi sur les secrets de l'art d'écrire; mais il mérite d'être particulièment analysé par tous ceux qui font leur étude de cet art si difficile, même pour le génie.

Je sais que l'on pourrait attribuer une partie du plaisir que donne le style de Montaigne à l'ancienneté de son langage. L'élégant Fénélon lui-même regrettait quelquefois l'idiôme de nos pères. Il y trouvait je ne sais quoi de court, de naïf, de hardi, de vif, et de passionné. On doit avouer en effet que les privilèges, ou plutôt les licences du vieux français, le retranchement des articles, l'usage des inversions, la hardiesse habituelle des tours, le grand nombre d'expressions proverbiales que les livres empruntaient à la conversation, l'abondance des termes et la facilité de les employer tous sans blesser la bienséance, tant d'autres libertés que nous avons remplacées par des entraves, favorisaient l'écrivain, et donnaient au style un air d'aisance et d'enjouement qui charme dans les sujets badins, et pourrait offrir un piquant contraste dans les sujets sérieux. Cependant la langue française n'avait encore réussi que dans les *joyeusetés folâtres*. Ronsard égarait son talent par une imitation mal-adroite des langues anciennes, et Amyot n'avait pu rendre que par une heureuse naïveté la précision énergique et l'élégance audacieuse de Plutarque. Il nous est donc permis de dire avec Voltaire, *ce n'est pas le langage de Montaigne, c'est son imagination qu'il faut regretter*. Je ne dissimulerai pas cependant que ces expressions d'une autre siècle, ces formes antiques et pour ainsi dire, ce premier débroullement d'une langue, aujourd'hui perfectionnée peut-être jusqu'au point d'être affaiblie, présentent un intérêt de curiosité qui peut inviter à la lecture. Mais l'emploi si naturel, les alliances si hardies, les effets si pittoresques de ces termes surannés; ces coupes savantes, ces mots pleins d'idées, ces phrases où, par la force du sens, l'auteur a trouvé l'expression qui ne peut vieillir, et diviné la langue de nos jours, voilà ce que l'on admire dans Montaigne, voilà ce qu'il n'a pas reçu de son idiôme encore rude et grossier, mais ce qu'il lui a donné par sa génie.

L'imagination est la qualité dominante du style de Montaigne. Cet homme n'a point de supérieur dans l'art de peindre par la parole. Ce qu'il pense, il la voit; et par la véracité de ses expressions, il le fait briller à tous les yeux. Telle était la prompte sensibilité de ses organes et l'activité de son âme. Il rendait les impressions aussi fortement qu'il les recevait.

Le philosophe Mallebranche, tout ennemi qu'il était de l'imagination, admire celle de Montaigne, et l'admire trop peut-être; il veut qu'elle fasse seule le mérite des *Essais*, et qu'elle y domine au préjudice de la raison. Nous n'accepterons pas un pareil éloge. Montaigne se sert de l'imagination pour produire au-dehors ses sentimens tels qu'ils sont empreints dans son âme. Sa chaleur vient de sa conviction; et ses paroles animées sont nécessaiérs pour toute sa pensée, et pour exprimer tous les mouvemens de son esprit. Quand je vois *ces braves formes de s'expliquer si vives et si profondes, je ne dis pas que c'est bien dire, je dis que c'est bien penser.**

Il est vrai que lorsqu'il s'agit simplement de décrire et de montrer les objets, l'imagination n'a pas besoin du raisonnement; mais elle est toujours dans sa dépendance du gôut qui lui défend d'outrer la nature, et souvent ne lui permet pas de la peindre tout entière. Dirons-nous que, dans cette partie de l'art d'ecrire, l'auteur des *Essais* soit toujours irréprochable? non, sans doute; et l'on peut, dans quelques traits échappés à son pinceau trop libre et trop hardi, découvrir quelquesfois la marque d'un siècle grossier, dont la barbarie perce jusque dans la sagesse du grand homme qui devait le réformer. Mais que de beautés inimitables courvent et font disparaître ce petit nombre de fautes! Qu'elle abondance d'images, quelle vivacité de couleurs, quel cachet d'originalité! Combien l'expression est toujours à lui, lors même qu'il emprunte l'idée! *Les abeilles pillotent de çà et de là les fleurs, mais elles en font après le miel qui est tout leur, ce n'est plus thym ni marjolaine.* Voila tout Montaigne. C'est ainsi que les pensées et les images des auteurs anciens, fondues sans cesse dans ses écrits, sans perdre rien de leur force et de leur élévation, y prennent un caractère qui n'appartient qu'à sa plume.

Montaigne, si je puis m'exprimer ainsi, décrit la pensée comme il décrit les objets, par des détails, animés, qui la rendent sensible aux yeux. Son style est une allégerie toujours vrai, où toutes les abstractions de l'esprit revêtent une forme matérielle, prennent un corps, une visage, et se laissent, en quelque sorte, toucher et manier. S'il veut nous donner une idée de la vertu, il la placera dans *une plaine fertile et fleurissante, où, qui en sait l'addresse, peut arriver par des routes gazonnées, ombrageuses et doux fleurantes*. Il prolongera cette peinture avec la plus étonnante facilité d'expression, et quand il l'aura terminée pour en augmenter l'effet par le contraste, il nous montrera dans le lointain la chimérique vertu des philosophes *sur un rocher à l'écart, parmi des ronces, fantosme à effrayer les gens*. Je céderais au plaisir facile de citer beaucoup un écrivain qu'on aimera toujours mieux entendre que son panégyriste; mais à quels traits dois-je m'arrêter de preference, dans un ouvrage où tous les chapitres présentent des beautés diversement originales? C'est la manière de Montaigne qu'il faudrait citer. Je choisis une phrase énergique, ou spirituelle, ou gracieuse; le lis encore, et le recontre bientôt une nouvelle surprise non moins piquante que la première. Rien n'est semblable, et l'impression est la même. En effet, l'auteur des *Essais*, dans un travail libre et sans suite, n'écrivant que lorsqu'il se sent animé par sa pensée, son expression ne peut jamais faiblir; et des qu'il conçoit une idée, son style se prête à toutes les metamorphoses, pour la rendre plus heureusement. Ainsi, toujours renvoyé d'une page à l'autre, incertain où de fixer mon admiration, chaque fois que j'ouvre le livre je découvre quelque chose de plus dans l'auteur, et je désespère de pouvoir jamais saisir ni peindre un écrivain qui, non moins varié que fecond, se rénouvelle même en se répétant, et ne peut ajouter un trait à ses écrits, sans ajouter une nuance à son talent. Cependant ces différences sans nombre peuvent être ramenées à un principe, l'imitation

* Montaigne.

des grands écrivains de l'ancienne Rome, et je ne crains pas d'assurer que l'on retrouverait dans le génie commun de leur langue, et dans l'usage divers qu'ils en ont fait, tous les secrets de l'idiome de Montaigne. On sait avec quelle constance il avait étudié ces grands génies, combien il avait vécu dans leur commerce et dans leur intimité. Doit-on s'étonner que son ouvrage porte, pour ainsi dire, leur marque, et paraisse, du moins pour le style, écrit sous leur dictée? Souvent il change, modifie, corrige leurs idées. Son esprit, impatient du joug, avait besoin de penser par lui-même; mais il conserve les richesses de leur langage et les formes de leur diction. L'heureux instinct qui le guidait lui faisait sentir que pour donner à ses écrits le caractère de durée qui manquait à sa langue, trop imparfaite pour être déjà fixée, il fallait y transporter, y naturaliser en quelque sorte les beautés d'une autre langue, qui par sa perfection, fût assurée d'être immortelle; ou plutôt l'habitude d'étudier les chefs-d'œuvres de la langue latine le conduisait à les imiter. Il en prenait à son insu toutes les formes, et se faisait Romain sans le vouloir. Quelquefois, réglant sa marche irrégulière, il semble imiter Cicéron même. Sa phrase se développe lentement, et se remplit de mots choisis qui se fortifient et se soutiennent l'un l'autre dans un enchaînement harmonieux. Plus souvent, comme Tacite, il *enfonce** profondément la *signification* des mots, met une idée neuve sous un terme familier, et dans une diction fortement travaillée, laisse quelque chose d'inculte et de sauvage; il a le trait énergique, les sons heurtés, les tournures vives et hazardées de Salluste, l'expression rapide et profonde, la force et l'éclat de Pline l'ancien. Souvent aussi, donnant à sa prose toutes les richesses de la poésie, il s'épanche, il s'abandonne avec l'inépuisable facilité d'Ovide, ou respire la verve et l'âpreté de Lucrece. Voilà les diverses couleurs qu'il emprunte de toutes parts, pour tracer des tableaux qui ne sont qu'à lui. Souvent on se forme une idée générale sur la manière d'un écrivain, d'après une qualité particulière que se fait remarquer dans son style. On cite toujours le naturel et la bonhommie de Montaigne; et, sans doute, l'auteur des *Essais* se montrait bonhommie lorsqu'il parlait de lui, et qu'il nous disait quel vin il aimait le mieux. Il se servait d'un *parler simple et naïf, tel sur le papier qu'a la bouche*;† mais il ne se servait pas moins naturellement du langage le plus fort, le plus précis, et quelquefois même le plus magnifique, lorsqu'il était emporté par le souvenir d'un grand sentiment, d'une action noble et généreuse. N'est-ce pas dans Montaigne que je trouve la peinture de l'homme de cœur qui *tombe obstiné en son courage; qui, pour quelque danger de la mort voisine, ne relasche aucun point de son asseurance; qui regarde encore, en rendant l'ame, son ennemi d'une vue ferme et dédaigneuse; est battu, non pas de nous, mais, de la fortune, est tué sans être vaincu.* Et cette phrase, aurait-elle paru faible à Démosthènes? *Il y a des pertes triomphantes a l'envi* des victoires, et ces quatre victoires sœurs, de Salamine, de Platée, de Mycale, de Sicile, n'osèrent opposer toute leur gloire ensemble à la gloire de la déconfiture du roi Leonidas et des siens au pas des Thermopyles.*

Quelquefois, chez Montaigne, cette grandeur est portée trop loin, et se rapproche un peu de la grandeur souvent outrée de Sénèque et de Lucain. Il aimait ces deux auteurs. Il ne laissait pas les images hardies jusqu'à l'exagération, les expressions éblouissantes, les coups de pinceau plus énergiques que réguliers. On doit le pardonner à l'extrême vivacité de son imagination. Malgré ce penchant naturel dans ses jugemens littéraires, il donne toujours la préférence aux auteurs de l'antiquité qui ont réuni la pureté du goût à l'éclat du talent; Virgile est pour lui le premier des poètes; et si la philosophie de Cicéron lui paraît trop chargée de *longueries d'apprêts*, il trouve son éloquence incomparable. Quand il emprunte quelque idée brillante à Lucain ou à Sénèque, jamais il ne l'affaiblit, mais il sait presque toujours la rendre plus naturelle. Le bon sens tempérait en lui l'imagination, et retenait sa pensée dans de justes bornes, lors même que ses paroles trop vives et trop impétueuses s'élançaient avec une sorte d'irrégularité.

Ce bon sens qui dirige tous ses raisonnemens, qui se fait remarquer au milieu de ses saillies, et ne l'abandonne pas même dans ses caprices et dans ses écarts, devait lui présenter en foule ces pensées heureuses et précises, que l'on aime à retenir parce qu'ils trouvent sans cesse leur application, et que l'on peut appeler les proverbes des sages. Dans ce genre, j'oserai dire qu'il a donné les plus heureux modèles d'un style dont La Rochefoucault passe ordinairement pour le premier inventeur. Nulle part vous ne trouverez un plus grand nombre de sentences d'une brièveté énergique, où les mots suffisent à peine à l'idée qui se montre d'elle-même. Je n'essayerai pas de multiplier les citations. On y verrait avec étonnement cette diction si riche en termes pittoresques, si chargée de circonlocutions ingénieuses, d'expressions redoublées, d'épithètes accumulées, si féconde en développemens oratoires et poétiques, se resserrer tout-à-coup dans les bornes du plus rigoureux laconisme, et ne plus employer les paroles que pour le besoin de l'intelligence.

Cet art d'être court, sans ôter rien à la justesse et à la clarté, semble une des perfections du langage humain: c'est au moins un des avantages que les langues obtiennent avec le plus de peine et le plus tard, après avoir été long-temps travaillées en tous sens par d'habiles écrivains. Il est encore un autre mérite qui semblerait, au premier coup-d'œil, tenir à l'écrivain beaucoup plus qu'à l'idiôme, et cependant ne se montre guères que dans les langues épurées et polies, dont il devient en quelque sorte le dernier raffinement; c'est l'*esprit*. Quels sens faut-il attacher à ce mot, ou plutôt en combien de sens divers est-il permis de l'entendre? Qu'est-ce que l'esprit? Voltaire lui-même, après en avoir prodigué les exemples, désespère de le définir et d'en indiquer toutes les sources. Toutefois, il est permis d'avancer que l'esprit, quelqu'il soit, se réduisant presque toujours à une manière de parler délicate, fine, détournée, se produit avec plus d'avantage à mesure que les ressources d'une langue sont plus variées et mieux connues. Au commencement du siècle de Louis XIV., quelques hommes écrivaient avec génie; le reste ne couvrait le manque de génie par aucun agrément; et la sentence de Boileau se trouvait de la plus rigoureuse exactitude:—

"Il n'est pas de degré du médiocre au pire."

Dans le siècle suivant, la littérature se rendit plus ac-

* Expression de Montaigne.

† Expression de Montaigne.

cessible : il fut permis d'être médiocre sans être méprisable, et la faiblesse ornée avec art peut mériter quelque estime. Ceux qui ne pouvaient atteindre aux grandes beautés, composèrent ingénieusement de petites choses. Ceux qui ne trouvaient point de pensées neuves, cherchèrent des expressions heureuses. Au défaut de vastes conceptions, il fallait soigner de jolis détails. On mit de l'esprit dans le style : les écrivains du second ordre en firent leur principal ornement, et les grands écrivains n'en dédaignèrent pas l'usage. Champfort ne brille que par l'esprit qu'il montre dans son style ; Montesquieu en laisse beaucoup apercevoir dans le sien.

Mais ce merite qui, bien éloigné d'être le premier de tous, exige du moins beaucoup d'art et d'etude ; il est assez extraordinaire de le trouver au plus haut degré dans Montaigne, placé à une époque presque barbare, et maniant une langue depourvue de grace et de souplesse.

Comment cet écrivain si naturel et si négligé connait il déja tout le jeu des paroles, ces nuances fines et subtiles, ces raprochemens délicats, ces oppositions piquantes, ces artifices de l'art d'écrire et, pour ainsi dire, ces ruses de style, auxquelles on a recours lorsque le siècle de l'invention est passé ? en les employant sans cesse avec la délicatesse de Fontenelle, ou la malice de Duclos, il ne perd jamais la naïveté qui forme le trait le plus marqué de son caractère et de son talent, et par un mélange difficile à concevoir, mais très-réel, on trouve souvent en lui la simplicité de l'antique bonne-foi et la finesse de l'esprit moderne. Pour expliquer ce problème d'un auteur qui réunit dans sa manière d'écrire celle de plusieurs siècles, il suffit de se souvenir qu'il avait devant les yeux les divers âges de la littérature Latine, et les étudiait indifféremment : il a dû nous devenir plus d'une fois, en imitant Pline le jeune. Des phrases vives et coupées, des bons-mots, des traits, des épigrammes, convenaient d'ailleurs très-bien dans un style décousu, qui, comme le dit l'auteur lui-même, *ne va que par sauts et par gambades.* Le désordre est souvent pénible, il faut du moins qu'il ait quelque chose d'amusant.

Montaigne abuse beaucoup de son lecteur. Ces chapitres qui parlent de toute, excepté de ce que promettait le titre, ces digressions qui s'embarrassent l'une dans l'autre, ces longues parenthèses qui donnent le temps d'oublier l'idée principale, ces exemples qui viennent à la suite des raisonnemens, et ne s'y rapportent pas, ces idées qui n'ont d'autre liaison que le voisinage des mots, enfin cette manie continuelle de dérouter l'attention du lecteur, pourrait fatiguer ; et l'on serait quelquefois tenté de ne plus suivre un écrivain qui ne veut jamais avoir de marche assurée : un trait inattendu nous ramène, un mot plaisant nous pique, nous réveille. Le sujet nous a souvent échappé ; mais nous retrouvons toujours l'auteur, et c'est lui que nous aimons. Je n'ignore pas que c'est un grand ridicule de vouloir attribuer tous les genres de mérite à l'homme dont on fait l'éloge ; et je ne m'arrêterais pas sur l'éloquence de Montaigne dont la réputation peut se passer d'un nouveau titre, si j'avais été moins frappé de quelques morceaux des *Essais*, où ce grand talent de l'eloquence semble se trahir, à l'insu de l'auteur, par l'audace et la vivacité des mouvemens.

Et pourquoi en effet la discussion d'une vérité morale, intéressante pour l'humanité, le besoin de combattre une erreur honteuse, un préjugé funeste, ne pourrait échauffer l'ame de l'ecrivain, l'agrandir, lui communiquer cette force persuasive qui commande aux esprits, et du philosophe éclairé faire un orateur éloquent ? Le règle de la vertu ne serait-il pas aussi puissant que les passions ? C'est ainsi que Montaigne me parait s'élever au-dessus de lui-même, lorsqu'il nous exhorte á fortifier notre âme contre la crainte de la mort. Son style devient noble, grave, austère ; à l'imitation de Lucrèce, il fait paraître la nature addressant la parole à l'homme ; mais le langage qu'il met dans la bouche n'appartient qu'à lui. *Sortez*, dit-elle, *de ce monde, comme vous y êtes entré ; le même passage que vous avait fait de la mort à la vie, sans passion et sans frayeur, refaites-le de la vie à la mort. Votre mort est une des pièces de l'ordre de l'univers, une pièce de la vie du monde.* Cette élévation se soutient dans tous les discours de la nature. Il s'y mêle quelques unes de ces pensées profondes qui forcent l'ame à se replier sur elle-même. *Si vous n'aviez la mort, vous me maudiriez sans cesse de vous en avoir privé.*

Une pareille éloquence semble appartenir à cette philosophie austère qui ne ménage point l'homme, et le poursuit sans cesse avec l'image de la dure vérité. Ce ton ne peutêtre habituel chez Montaigne, il devait porter son caractère dans ses écrits, et ce caractère qu'il a pris tant de plaisir à nous dépeindre, se compose de faiblesse pour lui-même et d'indulgence pour les autres. Il nous excuse trop aisément pour nous reprocher avec amertume nos fautes et nos erreurs ; et il s'aime trop lui-même ! je n'ai pas craint de faire cet aveu : on ne peut en abuser. L'ami de la Boëtie ne sera jamais exposé à l'accusation d'egoïsme. Non ; l'egoïsme, ce sentiment stérile, cette passion avilissante, n'a jamais trouvé place là où regnait la pure amitié. Il n'est pas épuisé par l'habitude de s'aimer seul, ce cœur qui conserve une si grande force d'aimer, et s'epanche avec une intarissible abondance sur l'ami qu'il s'est choisi. O la Boëtie ! que votre nom toujours répété serve la gloire de votre ami ; que toujours on pense avec délices à cette union de deux ames vertueuses qui, s'étant une fois rencontrées, se mêlent, se confondent pour toujours ! Mais la mort vient briser des liens si forts et si doux : le plus à plaindre des deux, celui qui survit, demeure frappé d'une incurable blessure ; il ne fait plus que *traîner languissant*, il n'a plus de goût aux plaisirs. *Ils me redoublent ;* dit-il, *le regret de sa perte. Nous étions à moitié de tout, il me semble que je lui dérobe sa part.* Deuil sacré de l'amitié, sainte et inviolable fidelité, qui n'a plus pour objet qu'un souvenir ! Quelle est l'ame détachée d'elle-même qui se plaît à prolonger son affliction pour honorer la mémoire de l'ami qu'elle a perdu ? C'est celle de Montaigne ; C'est Montaigne qui si fait une religion de sa douleur, et craint d'être troublé dans ses regrèts, par un bonheur, où son ami ne peut plus être. On aimé à renconter dans l'éloge d'un homme supérieur ces marques d'un caractére sensible et tendre. Elle nous donnent le droit de chérir celui que nous admirons ; mais que dis-je ? Ces deux sentimens, l'admiration et l'amour, se confondent tellement au nom de Montaigne, que l'un disparait presque dans l'autre Son idée ne réveille pas en nos ames ce respect mêlé d'enthusiasme que nous inspirent les génies illustres qui ont fait la gloire des lettres. La distance nous paraît moins grande entre nous et lui. Nous sentons qu'il y a dans ses principes,

dans sa conduite, quelque chose qui le rapproche de nous. Nous l'aimons comme un ami plein de candeur et de simplicité que nous serions tentés de croire notre égal, si la supériorité de sa raison et la vivacité de son esprit ne se d'éclatant à chaque instant par des traits ingénieux et soudains, que toute sa bonhommie nepeut cacher à nos yeux. Sa vie nous offre peu d'événemens; elle ne fut point agitée: c'est le développement paisible d'un caractère aussi noble que droit. Sa jeunesse tout entière est consacrée au sentiment le plus respectable, la tendresse pour son père. Malgré son éloignement pour les honneurs et les emplois, élu par le suffrage volontaire de ses concitoyens, il remplit deux fois les fonctions de premier magistrat dans la ville de Bordeaux. Il croit que son administration n'était pas assez sevére: je le crois aussi. Sans doute il était plus fait pour étudier les hommes que pour les gouverner. C'était l'objet où se portait naturellement son esprit. Il s'en occupa toujours dans le calme de la solitude et dans le loisirs de la vie privèe. Les fureurs de la guerre civile troublérent quelquefois son repos; et sa modération, comme il arrive toujours, ne put lui server de sauve-garde. Cependant ces orages même ne détruisirent pas son bonheur.

C'est ainsi qu'il coula ses jours dans le sein des occupations qu'il aimait, libre et tranquille, élevé par sa raison au-dessus de tous les chagrins qui ne venaient point du cœur, attendant la mort sans la craindre, et voulant qu'elle le trouvât *occupé à bêcher son jardin, et nonchalant d'elle.* Les *Essais*, ce monument impérissable de la plus saine raison et du plus heureux génie, ne furent pour Montaigne qu'un amusement facile, un jeu de son esprit et de sa plume. Heureux l'écrivain qui, rassemblant ses idées comme au hazard, et s'entretenant avec lui-même sans songer à la posterité, se fait cependant s'écouter d'elle! on lira toujours avec plaisir ce qu'il a porduit sans effort. Toutes les inspirations de sa pensée, fixées à jamais par le style, passeront aux siècles à venir. Quel fut son secret? Il s'est mis tout entier dans ses ouvrages. Il jouira donc mieux que personne de cette immortalité que donnent les lettres, puis qu'en lui seul l'homme ne sera jamais séparé de l'écrivain, et que son caractère ne sera pas moins immortel que son talent.

Montaigne, te croyais-tu destiné à tant de gloire; et n'en serais-tu pas étonné? Tu ne parlais que de toi, tu ne voulais peindre que toi; cependant tu fus notre historien. Tu retraças, non les formes incertaines et passagères de la société, mais l'homme tel qu'il est toujours et par tout. Tes peintures ne sont pas vielles après trois siècles; et ces copies, si fidèles et si vives, toujours en présence de l'original qui n'a pas changé, conservent toute leur vérité, n'ont rien perdu de leur éclat, et paraissent même embellies par l'épreuve du temps. Ta naïve indulgence, ta franchise et ta bonhommie ont cessé depuis long-temps d'être en usage: elles ne cesseront jamais de plaire, et tout le raffinement d'un siècle civilisé ne servira qu'à les rendre plus curieuse et plus piquantes. Tes remarques sur le cœur humain pénétrent trop avant pour devenir jamais inutiles. Malgré tant de nouvelles recherches et de nouveaux écrits, elles seront toujours aussi neuves que profondes. Pardonne-moi d'avoir essayé l'analyse de ton genie, sans autre titre que d'aimer tes ouvrages. Ah! la jeunesse n'est pas faite pour apprécier dignement les leçons de l'expérience, et n'a pas le droit de parler du cœur humain qu'elle ne connaît pas. J'ai senti cet obstacle: plus d'une fois j'ai voulu briser ma plume, me défiant de mes idées, et craignant de ne pas assez entendre les choses que je pretendais louer. La supériorité de ta raison m'effrayait, ô Montaigne! Je désesperais de pouvoir atteindre si haut. Ta simplicité, ton aimable naturel, m'ont rendu la confiance et le courage: j'ai pensé que toi même, si tu pouvais supporter un panégyrique, tu ne te plaindrais pas d'y trouver plus de bonne foi que d'éloquence, plus de candeur que de talent.

FIN.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTICE

OF THE

EDITIONS OF MONTAIGNE

COMPILED FROM DOCTOR PAYEN, AND OTHER AUTHORITIES.

1580.

1. Les Essais de messire Michel, seigneur de Montaigne, chevalier de l'ordre du roy, et gentilhomme ordinaire de sa chambre. Livre premier et second. A *Bourdeaus*, par *S.-Millanges*, imprimeur ordinaire du roy. M. D. LXXX. 2 vol. 8vo.

This edition contains only the two first books, each of which occupies a volume, and has a separate title-page and table of contents. The first volume, which is printed in a larger type than the other, has 496 pages; the pagination of the second volume is exceedingly defective; the last page is numbered 650. At the commencement of the Essays is a preface, opening thus: *C'est ici un livre de bonne foi, lecteur;* and bearing date 1st of March, 1580.

This edition has no epigraph.

The first book contains fifty-seven chapters, and the second thirty-seven, being so far conformable to all the subsequent editions. In the 29th chapter of the First Book are twenty-nine sonnets by Etienne de la Boëtie.

In comparing this and the two next editions with those published after the death of the author, it is observable that they contain very few quotations, and that the chapters are much shorter. Father Niceron remarks of the four first editions: "Le texte est plus suivi que dans toutes les editions posterieures, parceque ce texte qui ne contenoit d'abord que des raisonnemens clairs et precis, a été coupé et interrompu par les differentes additions que l'auteur y a faites par-ci par-la en differens tems, et qui y ont jetté du desordre et de la confusion, sans qu'il se soit mis en peine d' y remedier."

Mons. J. B. Bastide, who paid much attention to the subject of Montaigne (see under 1822), and who proposed to publish an edition of the Essays, upon which, according to M. Beuchot, he had been engaged forty years, announced in 1807, in the Revue Philosophique (*deuxieme trimestre*), upon the authority of M. de Cayla, that there was another edition of the Essays published at Paris this same year (1580), in folio, *chez Michel Blageart*, differing from the one which this bookseller published in 1640; and Mons. Leclerq names this supposed edition, without entering into any discussion on the subject. M. Payen, however, writes: "I never believed in the existence of this edition: the most conclusive reason that induced me to reject it was derived from the name of the alleged printer; for it is clear, from the catalogue of Lottin,* that there existed no printer of the name of *Blageart* at Paris in 1580, and that Michel did not commence business until 1631. It occurred to me that this was an incomplete or altered copy of the edition of 1640, which, by some mistake, had been assigned to the earlier date; but, having received an extract from the Catalogue of the Library of Bordeaux, in which was mentioned a copy of the Essays 'à *Paris*, 1580,' I communicated my doubts on the subject to M. Jouannet, the librarian of that establishment, and this learned gentleman at once recognized the accuracy of my supposition, and informed me that the copy in his library is, in point of fact, a copy of the edition of 1640; and that the mistake, which is of old date, arose from the real date having got torn from the title-page, the compiler of the catalogue inserted that which appeared on the preface. I have entered into these details," adds M. Payen, "because it has been placed on record that such an edition exists; and because several literary men, who have a good deal occupied themselves upon the subject of Montaigne and his works, wishing to make up four editions previous to that of 1588, and relying upon the authority of M. de Cayla, M. de Bastide, and the Catalogue of the Library of Bordeaux, have shared in this error, which has now had general credit for nearly thirty years."

1582.

2. *The same.*—Par messire Michel, seigneur de Montaigne, chevalier de l'ordre du roy et gentilhomme de sa chambre, mayre et gouverneur de Bourdeaus.—*Edition seconde*, revene et augmentée. *A Bourdeaus, par S. Millanges*, imprimeur ordinaire du roy, M. D. LXXXII. 8o.

This edition, a much handsomer one than the first, is in one volume. It contains only the two first books, and has no epigraph. The pagination

* Catalogue Chronologique des Libraires et des Libraires-imprimeurs de Paris, depuis 1470, époque de l'établissement de l'imprimerie dans cette capitale jusqu'en 1788; par A. M. Lottin, l'ainé. Paris, J. R. Lottin de St. Germain, 1789. 8vo.

continues from the one book on to the other, and there is no title-page for Book II. There are 396 pages in the volume. La Boëtie's sonnets are inserted, as in the first edition.

This edition, it is seen, is announced as *revue et augmentée*; and, in fact, each of the editions which immediately followed the first, presents corrections and augmentations; and it is particularly observable in the edition of Bordeaux, 1588, that Montaigne, notwithstanding his statement, "I add, but never correct," did correct very often, even as to light turns of expression.

1587.

3. *The same.* Par MESSIRE MICHEL, SEIGNEUR DE MONTAIGNE, chevalier de l'ordre du roi et gentilhomme ordinaire de sa chambre, mayre et gouverneur de Bourdeaus, reveues et augmentées. A Paris, chez Jean Richer, rue St.-Jean-de-Latran, a l'arbre verdoyant, M. D. LXXXVII. 12mo.

The date of the preface is the same as in the preceding editions; and the Sonnets of Boëtie are inserted as before. Coste, and the edition of 1725, are therefore altogether mistaken in stating, after Niceron, that Boëtie's Sonnets were not printed with the Essays till the edition of 1588.

1588.

4. *The same.* Essais de MICHEL, SEIGNEUR DE MONTAIGNE. *Cinquiesme edition*, augmentée d'un troisiesme livre, et de six cens additions aux deux premiers. A Paris, chez *Abel L'Angelier*, au premier pilier de la grand salle du Palais. Avec privilege du roy. 1580. 4to. 1 volume.

An engraved title-page. The date is not on the title-page, but it is in the license to print, which bears date 4th June, 1588, and is signed Duduit.

The name of Montaigne, it is seen, is not followed here by the array of his titles; and it is a curious coincidence, that among the numerous additions made to this edition is the passage (Book i. chap. 39), expressing his objection to the *superscribing his letters with a long ribblerow of qualities and titles:* and the other passage which deprecates the "loading the fronts and title-pages of the books we commit to the press with such a clutter of titles."

This edition is only paged on the *recto*, the last page being numbered 396. The preface is dated 12th June, 1588, but it is in other respects the same as in the preceding editions. The Sonnets of Boëtie are also inserted as before. The third book, which now appeared for the first time, consists of thirteen chapters.

This edition, the last published during Montaigne's life, is of very inferior execution. The title-page announces it as the fifth edition, and as it came out under the superintendence of Montaigne himself, who was then in Paris, it would seem that four editions had, in point of fact, preceded it, yet we have no knowledge of any other editions, up to this time, than those just mentioned. When the supposed edition in folio, "Paris, 1580," was admitted, the number was complete, but it has been shown that no such edition exists. Niceron says that the first edition was followed by three others previous to that of 1588, but he does not give us the dates, and, indeed, would seem merely to make the statement upon the authority of the title-page of the present edition. If this be, indeed, the fifth edition, it is quite clear that one of the preceding editions has altogether escaped the research of bibliographers.

It was from a copy of this edition, corrected and augmented by Montaigne himself, that Naigeon published the edition of 1802. M. Bernadau, advocate at Bordeaux, and author of the *Antiquités Bordelaises*, made known this copy to the public in a letter addressed to the *Journal General de France* (Nov. 1789). This copy remained some time in the family of Montaigne, and then, according to M. Bernadau, "was given to the Feuillans of Bordeaux by Madame de Montaigne, by order of her husband, who was greatly attached to that society, and had selected their church as his place of sepulture. The author of the *Nouveau Dictionnaire Historique* is therefore wrong, when he says there is to be seen, in the library of that convent, a manuscript supplement to the Essays. This precious relic, at the time of the Revolution, was transferred to the public Library of Bordeaux, where it still remains.

This copy is covered with corrections and additions, marginal and interlineary, in the hand-writing of Montaigne. On the engraved title-page, he has written *sixieme edition*, in reference to the one he then contemplated, and this, indeed, puts it beyond a doubt that the edition now under notice is the fifth, and that we have altogether lost sight of one of the preceding impressions. Among other manuscript additions which Montaigne made to the copy in question, there is one, the particulars of which may perhaps be as fitly introduced here as elsewhere. It is a page of directions to the printer,* occupying the back of the title-page, and which the reader will take an interest in examining. It is as follows:

"Montre montrer remontrer, etc. escrives les sans [s] à la differance de monstre monstrueus.

"Cet home cette fame escrives le sans [s] à la differance de c'est c'estoit.

"Ainsi mettes le sans [n] quand une uoyelle (†) suit et aueq [n] si c'est une consonante ainsi marcha ainsin alla.

"Campaigne espaigne gascoigne, etc. Mettez un [i] davant le [g] come à Montaigne.

"Non pas sans [i] campagne espagne.

"Mettez mon nom tout du long sur chaque face, Essais de Michel de Montaigne, liv. I.‡

"Ne mettez en grande lettre que les noms propres, ou au moins ne diversifie pas come en cet examplere que un mesme mot soit tantost en grande lettre tantost en petite.

"La prose latine, grecque, ou autre estrangiere, il la faut mettre parmi la prose françoise en carac-

* M. Naigeon argues, from this circumstance, that Montaigne certainly intended to print his next edition from this copy, but whatever he may have intended at the time of making these corrections, it is tolerably manifest that the preference was afterwards given to the other copy, which he also largely corrected and enlarged, and whence the edition of 1595 was printed, under the care of Mademoiselle de Gournay. It seems most probable that Montaigne's widow would know which of the corrected editions her husband intended to print from, and would act upon his intentions in this particular, when she handed the volume over to Mademoiselle de Gournay.

† Montaigne here carelessly writes precisely the contrary of that which he wished to say, and what he acted upon, as is shown in the instance he proceeds to give.

‡ The pages in the preceding editions only had *Essais de M. de Monta*, as their running title.

tère differant les vers à part et les placer selon leur nature pentamettres sophiques les demi vers les comancémans au bout de la ligne la fin sur la fin en cet examplere il y a mille fautes en tout cela.

" Metter regles regler non pas reigles reigler autres lorthografe antiene.

" Outre les corrections qui sont en cet examplere il y a infinies autres à faire de quoi l'imprimur se pourra aviser, mais regarder de pres aus poincts qui sont en ce stile de grande importance.

" S'il treune une mesme chose en mesme sens deus fois qu'il en oste l'une ou il uerra qu'elle sert le moins.

" C'est un langage coupé qu'il n'y espargne les poincts et lettres maiuscules. Moi mesme ai failli souvant a les oter et a mettre des commas ou il falloit un poinct.

" Qu'il uoie en plusieurs lieus ou il y a des parantheses s'il ne suffira de distinguer le sens aueq des poincts.

" Qu'il mette tout au long les dates et sans chiffre.

" Qu'il serre les mots autrement qu'ici les uns aus autres.'"*

He also added, on the title-page, this epigraph, which has since become that of his book: *Viresque acquirit eundo.* At the top of the title-page is an escutcheon, in which he has written his name.

1593.

5. Livre des Essais de Michel, seigneur de Montaigne, divisé en deux parties. — *Derniere edition*, augmentée de deux tables tres amples des choses plus memorables conteneues en icelle: *à Lyon*, pour *Gabriel Lagrange*, libraire d'Avignon. M. D. XCIII. 8vo.

Conformably to the title, this edition is divided into two parts. The first comprises the two first books, in 830 pages, and is preceded by the above title; the second, which contains the third book, is preceded by a separate title: Livre des Essais de Michel, Seigneur de Montaigne, *deuxieme partie, à Lyon, &c.* Each part has a table of chapters, and an analytical table of contents. The running title is " *Essais de Monta.*" (sic.) This edition, which is a very fair one, is printed from that of 1588. M. Payen says he has seen two copies of it; one in the public library of Chaumont en Bassigny, the other in that of M. Lamennais; in the first, which no doubt had belonged to some convent, the whole chapter " On some Verses of Virgil" is taken out, a mutilation which is found in a great many copies of these old editions.

1595.

6. *The same.* Edition nouvelle, trouvée apres le décès de l'autheur; reveue et augmentée par lui d'un tiers plus qu'aux precedentes impressions. *Paris, Abel l'Angelier*, 1595. Folio. Some copies have: " *Paris, Michel Sonnius, Rue St. Jacques, a l'Ecu de Baste.*" The licence, at the back of the title-page, is dated 15th October, 1594.

There is no epigraph, and the preface, by Montaigne, is omitted. The chapter, " That the Relish of Good and Evil," &c., which hitherto had formed the fourteenth of the First Book, is here, as in all the subsequent editions, except the following, the fortieth of the same book.

This edition was printed, under the care of Mademoiselle de Gournay,† from a copy, revised by Montaigne, and given to Mademoiselle de Gournay by his widow. This was probably a copy of the edition of 1588, corrected and augmented in the same way with the copy already described; for Mademoiselle de Gournay says, on this subject: " Madame de Montaigne sent them to me to have published, enriched with his latest improvements." Another copy remained in the house of Montaigne, as Mademoiselle de Gournay informs us, and this was the copy afterwards given to the Feuillans of Bordeaux. Mons. de Bernadan, therefore, in the letter above quoted, is mistaken in describing the copy in the library at Bordeaux as that from which Mademoiselle de Gournay printed her edition. It is not known what became of this latter copy, which differed materially from that used by M. Naigeon; it is probable that, after the work had gone through the press, the copy was not preserved.

This, and the impression of *Anvers* (no date), are the only editions which do not contain Montaigne's preface; in the edition next mentioned, indeed, Mademoiselle de Gournay says, that the preface was mislaid when they were printing the edition now under notice. The Editor has preceded the Essays with a long and able apologetic preface, reprinted in the present edition. Mademoiselle de Gournay herself revised all the proofs of this edition, which is executed with such correctness, that she is well entitled to call it, as she did in the edition of 1635, *le vieil et bon exemplaire.* It remains to this day the principal edition, as regards authenticity of text, and one of the handsomest in a typographical point of view.

The twenty sonnets of La Boëtie are omitted in this edition, and replaced by a note, which has been reprinted verbatim by all those editors who have not inserted the sonnets; but they have omitted to put a question, which yet appears a very natural one: the note says: " These twenty-nine sonnets of Et. de la Boëtie, which used to be in this place, have since been printed with his works." But have these sonnets really been printed? If so, where are they? Montaigne, in the Bordeaux copy, has erased the verses, and merely stated: " These verses may be seen elsewhere," which may refer to the anterior editions; for Montaigne could not have printed these sonnets with the works of La Boëtie, which he had published nine years before, since he was not then acquainted with them; having only just then received them when he placed them in the first edition of the Essays, in 1580. He there says, on this subject, to Madame de Grammont: " These are twenty-nine sonnets that the Sieur Poyferre, a man of business and understanding,

* This document shows how greatly the orthography of Montaigne differs from that at present in use. It may here be remarked that he writes the words, " a cette heure," *asteure*, precisely as it is now pronounced in ordinary conversation, by one of those contractions which custom authorizes, and which the rapidity peculiar to the spoken French language, and which, indeed, forms one of its distinctive characters, in some degree necessitates. He often unites, also, *asture, dolur, valur*, &c., an orthography conformable to the manner in which these words, and all others with a similar termination, were, and are, pronounced in his part of the country.

† Marie de Jars, or Jards, and not Lejars, as Montaigne wrote it, and, after him, almost all the biographers and editors. Mademoiselle de Gournay tells us, in a sketch of her life, prefixed to her works (1641, 4to.), that her father, William de Jars (Sieur de Neufvi et de Gournay), derived his name and noble origin from Jars, in the department of Cher, near Sancerre.

who knew him long before me, found casually at his house, among some other papers, and has just sent them to me." There is no other way of explaining the note of Mademoiselle de Gournay, than by admitting that, in the interval between 1588 and 1595, some work of La Boëtie's was printed, in which these twenty-nine sonnets were inserted. In fact, Father Le Long, and after him Messrs. Weiss and Beuchot, attribute to this author a work entitled: *Historique Description du solitaire et sauvage pays de Medoc (dans le Bourdelois), par feu M. de la Boëtie*, Conseiller, &c. Bordeaux, Millanges, 1593, 12mo. Le Long, indeed, adds: "They have appended to this description some verses of the same author, which are not to be found in the edition which Michel de Montaigne published of his works." The work, however, if ever printed at all, which is very doubtful indeed, is so scarce that none of the commentators upon Montaigne have met with it, so that it has not been possible to ascertain whether these verses are the sonnets in question.

1595.

7. Les Essais de Michel, seigneur de Montagne, *(sic.)* divisez en trois livres contenants un riche et rare thrésor de plusieurs beaux et notables discours, couchez en un stile le plus pur et orné qu'il se trouve en nostre siècle, avec deux tables, l'un des chapitres, l'autre des choses plus mémorables conteneues en iceux. CIↃ. IↃ. XCV. Pour *François Le Febure* de *Lyon*. 12mo.

The preface of Montaigne is here addressed *au lecteur benevole!* and is dated the 18th March, 1590. The analytical table is in tolerable detail, and at the end of the preliminary matter, they have inserted a Sonnet upon the Essays of the Sieur de Montaigne, by Claude Expilly, President of the Parliament of Grenoble.* This edition, a very incorrect and badly-executed one, contains the three books of the Essays, but not the additions made to the folio edition of the same year, just noticed. Its text is taken from that of 1588; but it is far less complete. Whole chapters are omitted, and those which are retained are disfigured throughout with horrible mutilations. The quotations are altered, of which one instance may suffice: for the "*nec cythará carentem*" which concludes the verses of Horace at the end of the work, the editor has substituted: "*nec studiis carentem.*" The chapter "that the relish of good and evil," &c., is made the 14th of the first book, as in the editions preceding that of Mademoiselle de Gournay. Chapters 29, 35, 41, 42, 54, of Book I., are entirely omitted. Chapter 13 of the Second Book, which Montaigne heads "de juger de la mort d'autrui," is entitled, in the table of chapters: "de juger de la mort, advis;" and in the body of the work: "divers avis sur le point de la mort." Chapters 15, 19, 28, 30, 33, 35, of book ii., are omitted, as are chapters 4 and 5 of book iii. Chapter 11, which in consequence of these omissions here becomes chapter 9, is headed "Of Opinions," instead of "Of Cripples."

This edition is unquestionably the worst ever published.

1598.

8. *The same.* Edition nouvelle, prise sur l'exemplaire trouvé apres le décèds de l'autheur, reveue et augmentée d'un tiers plus qu'aux precedentes impressions; *Paris, Abel L'Angelier, au premier pilier de la Grande Salle du Palais.* M. D. XCVIII. large octâvo. An engraved title-page, bearing on it for the first time the *viresque acquirit eundo*. 1164 pages. The same *privilege* as to the edition of 1595. A very fine edition.

The preface of Montaigne is again introduced here; it is dated 1st March, 1580, and is followed by a note, stating that this preface, corrected by the last hand of the author, having been mislaid at the time of the first impression after the author's death, had since been found and inserted; and, in point of fact, it does somewhat differ from the preface to the preceding editions.

The preface by Mademoiselle de Gournay, which was printed in the edition last noticed, is here omitted, and replaced by the following: "Lecteur, si je ne suis assez forte pour escrire sur les Essais, au moins suis je bien assez genereuse pour advouer ma faiblesse, et confesse que je me retracte de cette preface que l'aveuglement de mon age, et d'une violente fievre d'ame, me laissa naguere eschapper des mains, lorsque, apres le décèds de l'autheur, Madame de Montaigne sa femme me les fait apporter, pour estre mis au jour, enrichis des traits de sa derniere main. Si je me renforce a l'advenir, je t'en drois, sinon ce qu'il faudroit, au moins ce que je pense, et ce que je scay; ou si je ne scay rien, encore prendray je la plume pour te prier de m'apprendre ce que tu scauras. Pour cette heure dis-je ne te donneray rien que mes oreilles, afin d'ouyr quel sera ton advis sur ce livre. Que t'en semble donc, lecteur?"

This edition is the first in which we find the *viresque acquirit eundo*, already spoken of, which it was obviously the intention of the author should in future serve as the epigraph to his work; and we accordingly find it printed in all the subsequent editions, with two or three exceptions, up to those of 1659 exclusive.

It is not till the edition of 1635 that we find the motto which Montaigne had adopted, the *Que sais-je*,† with the emblem of the scales; and in this edition we have both the epigraph and the motto, as is the case in several of the subsequent editions.

1600.

9. *The same.* Edition nouvelle, prise sur l'exemplaire trouvé apres le décèds de l'autheur, reveue et augmentée d'un tiers outre les precedentes impressions; *Paris, Abel L'Angelier*, M.D.C. Large 8vo.

* This sonnet is inserted elsewhere in the present edition.

† This *Que sais-je*, which Pascal has so severely analyzed in his *Pensées*, is quoted in Book ii., chap. 12; and perfectly characterizes the philosophy of Montaigne; it is the result of that maxim which he had inscribed in Greek on the rafters of his library: "There is no reasoning to which you may not oppose a contrary reasoning." The motto of Charron, "Je ne sais," expresses the same idea; not less aptly, from the very circumstance that it is in an affirmative form. That of Lamothe le Vayer, "de las cosas mas seguras, la mas segura es dudar:" "the surest of all sure things is to doubt;" which presents a striking analogy with the preceding, is very little more than a translation of the bold saying of Pliny, quoted by Montaigne in his Essays, Book ii. chap. 14, "Solum certum nihil esse certi." Varro was more orthodox in his mode of expression, though in effect the idea was the same, when he wrote: "*Hominis est hæc opinari, Dei scire;* and Fontenelle, when he said:—*Je suis effrayé de la certitude que je vois maintenant partout*, was not more *certain* than Montaigne; but he was more reserved in the expression of his doubt

Preface, notes, privilege, epigraph, engraved title-page, all the same as in the edition of 1598. 1156 pages.

Not so fine an edition as the preceding, but still a very good and handsome one.

Chapter 21, of book ii., is entitled, in the Table of Contents, "Contre la fainéantise," as in the preceding editions; in the body of the work it is misprinted "Contre la fantasie."

1602.

10. Coste, in his preface to the edition of 1739, mentions an edition at Paris, of this date, different from the one next noticed, and which he describes as a fine one. Brunet, Fournier, Cailleau, also mention this edition; and I have seen it named in the catalogue of the first sale of M. Dinocourt d'Hangard (drawn up by Née de la Rochelle, 1789), No. 332. I have not seen this edition myself, but, after the authority I have given, there can be no doubt that such an edition exists, and the following would appear to be its description:—

The same. Title as before. *Paris*, Abel L'Angelier, 1602. A fine edition, conformable to the two preceding, containing in addition, at the end, the Sonnet of Expilly, from the 12mo. edition of 1595. This last feature, indeed, proves the existence of this edition, as differing from those of 1598 and 1600, neither of which contains the sonnet.

11. *The same.* Title-page as in the edition of 1598. *Leyde, Jean Doreau*, 1602, 8vo. (a smaller 8vo. than the three preceding editions). Printed title-page. Epigraph. 1132 pages. Ornamented initial letters to each chapter. Both prefaces, and the short note to that of Montaigne, as in the preceding editions; also an analytical table, the first since that of 1595, in-12, and which is entitled: "Les pages du sieur de Montaigne, ou sont conteneues les plus rares remarques de son livre, à savoir les exemples des vertues et des vices, les plus graves sentences, similitudes et comparaisons, avec un recueil des lois anciennes des peuples et nations; plus la vie de l'autheur par remarques principales et precieuses sur son propre livre, le tout en forme de lieux communs."

Chapter 21, book ii., is here also headed "Contre la fantasie."

12. There is a counterfeit of this edition, purporting to be by the same bookseller, of the same town, and the same date. On comparing the pagination, the initial letters, and the typographical errors, it becomes matter of certainty that the present is a different edition from the preceding. The two editions, indeed, may at once be distinguished by the title-pages; for in the preceding impression, the E in the exemplar word is a capital, whereas in the present edition it is italic. The edition now under notice, which in no respect equals the preceding, has no analytical table.

1604.

13. *The same. Édition nouvelle*, prise sur l'exemplaire trouvé apres le décès de l'autheur, reveue et augmentée d'un tiers, outre les précédentes impressions, enrichie de deux tables curieusement exactes et élaborées. *virosque acquirit eundo. à Paris*, chez *Abel L'Angelier*, au premier pilier de la Grande Salle du Palais. M.D.C.IV.

Engraved title-page. The epigraph. Note of Madlle. de Gournay to the Preface by Montaigne. Ornamented initial letters to each chapter. 1032 pages. The analytical table, and at the end an additional table of the illustrations of the Life of Montaigne, as given by himself in the Essays. Here also, chap. 21, book ii., is entitled "Contre la Faineantise."

A good edition, though not so large or handsome as the preceding, published in 8vo. by the same bookseller. There are no marginal lemmas. In the British Museum there is a handsome edition in 4to., dated 1608, the title-page of which exactly corresponds, in all other respects, with that now given under the year 1604.

1608.

14. Coste mentions an edition of this date, and describes it as a good one. I have not met with it, says M. Payen, but I believe it exists, for the edition of 1611 contains an extract of the license granted, *23rd March* 1608, *to Charles Sevestre and Jean Petitpas*, which confirms Coste's statement. The edition would appear to be in 8vo., and from the details of the licence was described as "*enrichie et augmentée, outre les précédentes impressions, de petits sommaires en la marge, des choses plus remarquables, avec une table très ample, et la vie de l'autheur.*"—This is the first time we meet with two of the additional features which are found in the subsequent editions.

1609.

15. *The same.—Nouvelle edition*, &c. (as in the preceding). Leyde, Jean Doreau. 8vo. 1609.

Printed title-page. The epigraph. Preface of Montaigne, with Mad. de Gournay's note. The preface of the latter. Ornamented initial letters to each chapter. Analytical tables entitled "Les pages du Sieur de Montaigne," &c. as in 1602. Chapter 21 of book ii. is here headed, "Contre la faineantise." 1132 pages. The Index has no pagination.

1611.

16. *The same. Edition nouvelle*, enrichie d'annotations en marge, corrigée et augmentée d'un tiers outre les précédentes impressions, avec une table très ample des noms et matières remarquables et signalées, plus la vie de l'autheur, extraite de ses propres écrits. *Paris*, avec privilége du roy (1608). Chez *François Gueffier*, rue Saint-Jean-de-Latran, devant le collége de Cambray. 1611. 8vo.

Engraved title-page. The epigraph. The two prefaces. Mad. de Gournay's note is omitted. A summary notice of the Life of Montaigne. Marginal lemmas. References to the authors quoted. Extract from the royal license (see 1608). Ornamented initial letters to each chapter. 1130 pages. No pagination of the table of contents. This edition contains, for the first time, a portrait of Montaigne, engraved by Thomas de Leu, under which is the following quatrain:—

> Voici du grand Montaigne une entière figure;
> Le peintre a peint le corps, et lui son bel esprit;
> Le premier par son art égale la nature,
> Mais l'autre la surpasse en tout ce qu'il écrit.

Some copies of this edition bear the name of *Charles Sevestre, Rue St. Jacques, devant les Mathurins.* In these the date of the edition occupies the place in which, in Gueffier's copies, is the date of the licence.

Other copies have: "Chez Jean Petitpas, Rue Saint-Jean-de-Latran, au College Cambray."

1614.

17. Though I have met with no edition of 1614, I am persuaded that there is one in existence of that date, and I found this opinion upon these circumstances:—1. In the edition of 1617 the publisher's preface says: "Reader, we present thee the Essays, once more furnished with translations of the Latin;" it is therefore clear that there exists an edition anterior to 1617, in which the quotations are translated, and we find no such translations in any other edition preceding that of 1617. 2. The licence of the latter edition is dated 1614, and it is very improbable that the publishers would have waited three years before they made use of it.

This licence, which is also inserted in the edition of 1617, is granted to Mademoiselle de Gournay, and she afterwards transferred it to François Gueffier, Jean Petitpas, Charles Sevestre, Michel Nivelle, and Claude Rigaud. It was, then, by these booksellers that this edition must have been published, and the form was probably 8vo, since the editions sent forth by the same publishers, in 1617 and 1625, are in this size. This edition would contain marginal lemmas, or summaries, references to authors quoted, the life of Montaigne, and, for the first time, translations of the Latin passages.

1616.

18. *The same. Edition nouvelle*, &c. (as in the edition of 1600). A *Cologne*, par Philippe Albert, 1616, in 8vo.

The short preface by Mademoiselle de Gournay. Her note to Montaigne's preface. Analytical index, headed the same as that of 1602. Printed title-page, bearing the fleurs-de-lys. Ornamented initial letters. 1132 pages. The index not paged. Chapter 21, book ii. is headed, "Contre la Faineantise." There is a separate analytical index to the Life of Montaigne. This edition has neither the epigraph *Vires*, nor any marginal lemmas or references to authors.

In some copies of this edition the word Cologne is erased, and over it is printed the word Geneva.

1617.

19. *The same.—Edition nouvelle*, enrichie d'annotations en marge, du nom des auteurs cités et de la version du latin d'iceux, corrigée et augmentée, &c. *Paris*, Charles Sevestre, en l'isle du Palais, aux Trois Perruques, devant le Cheval de Bronze. 1617. 4to.

The title-page printed in red and black. The epigraph. The portrait as in the edition of 1611. Notice by the printers. Life of Montaigne. The long preface by Mad. de Gournay. Summaries and references to the authors, in the margin. Extract from the licence dated 28th November, 1614. Four indicia:—1. Index of chapters; 2. Analytical table, headed the same as that of the edition of Leyden of 1602; 3. Index to the proper names of men, nations, animals, towns, &c.; 4. Index to the various passages in the work which refer to the Life of Montaigne. Notice to the reader, by Mademoiselle de Gournay, relating to the translation of nearly all the Greek and Latin quotations, which are collected together at the end of the volume, in the order in which they occur in the body of the work. Lastly, a literal copy of the Latin epitaph engraved upon the tomb which had been dedicated to Montaigne in the Church of the Feuillans at Bordeaux. Coste, therefore, is wrong in stating, as he does, in his edition of 1739, that this epitaph first appeared in the edition of Paris, of 1725, in 4to.

Mademoiselle de Gournay's long preface of 1595, as it appears in the present edition, is considerably modified and corrected. The notice which this lady has prefixed to the translations here, informs us that she was assisted in this labour by Messieurs Bergeron, Martiniere, and Bignon; she assigns as a reason for the translations, which were in her own opinion superfluous, the request of the publisher, and she adds: "Je ne presente pas d'excuse d'avoir laissé dormir les passages libertins sous le voile de leur langue etrangère, ni d'avoir tors le nez à quelque mot joyeux de l'un d'entre eux."

All the editions anterior to this, except that in 12mo., of 1595, invariably have the name *Montaigne*; in the present edition it is alternately *Montaigne* and *Montaigne*.

I have met with copies of this edition, with the name: *Paris, Michel Nivelle*, Rue St. Jacques, aux Signes; and others: *Paris*, pour *Claude Rigaud*, libraire, demeurant a Lyon. Other copies have the names of the booksellers, *Gueffier* and *Petitpas*. See further, as to this edition, that of 1625.

1617.

20. *The same.* (Title as in that of 1611.) *Rouen, Manassez de Preaulx*, devant le portail des libraires. 1617. 8vo.

Portrait and frontispiece as in the edition of 1611. The epigraph *vires*, &c. The short preface of Mademoiselle de Gournay.—Summaries and references to authors in the margin.—Ornamented initial letters.—1130 pages.

Some copies have the address: *Rouen*, chez Jean Osmon, dans la Cour du Palais.

1619.

21. *The same. Rouen*, chez *la Veuve de Thomas Daré*, devant l'Esperance, 8vo.—Engraved title-page.—Portrait.—1130 pages.—Summaries, &c. in the margin.—Edition similar to those of 1602,—8,—11,—16,—17.

22. *The same.* 1619, in 8vo.—Edition differing from the preceding.—Analytical Table.—1130 pages.—Life of Montaigne.—Summaries, &c. in the margin. The copy which I possess, and which is the only one I have met with, has not the title-page, so I do not know where the book was printed or who was the publisher. At the end, however, it is stated that the printing of the work was completed "ce dernier jour d'Aout 1619, a l'imprimerie de Jean Durand;" and as the chronological list of booksellers and printers of Paris only mentions one Durand, whose Christian name was Peter, it is probable that the present edition was not published in Paris.

The printed catalogue of the Royal Library mentions, under this date, an edition of the Essays *chez J. Doreau à Leyde*, but the description corresponds with an edition brought out by Doreau, not in 1619, but in 1609; and the extreme probability, therefore, is that the catalogue is here in error. It is certain that the Royal Library now possesses no copy of the present date.

[1624.—M. Vernier mentions an edition of 1624, at London, in which, he says, many new pieces are collected. The same author also mentions editions of *Paris*, 1625, and *La Haye*, 1627. These editions do not exist, and M. Vernier has confounded them with those of 1724, 1725, and 1727. I have cor-

rected this mistake, because this author has inserted the latter editions in their proper place, which at once brings them into double play, and tends to give persons, not acquainted with the details, a belief in the existence of the supposed editions of 1624, 25, and 27.)

1625.

23. *The same. Paris, Robert Bertauld*, 1625. 4to.

Some copies have the name: *Veuve Remy Dallin*, au mont et image Saint-Hilaire; others, *Charles Hulpeau*, demeurant au bout du Pont St. Michel, a l'image Saint Jean; others: *Gilles et Robinot.*

This edition commences with the same publisher's advertisement as in that of 1617, with which it corresponds in a very great degree, though there are differences in several features: 1. The long preface of Mademoiselle de Gournay has been here subjected to still further modifications, retrenchments, and additions; 2. The references to authors, and the summaries in the margin, do not commence till page 96; 3. The present edition contains no indexes, or portrait, nor the epitaph, which are all to be found in the edition of 1617. The translations are here, as in the latter edition, collected in the order in which the passages translated occur in the Essays.

Both these editions are very incorrect, and the publishers did quite right to terminate their notice to the reader in these words: "Excuse pour ce coup les fautes d'impression, la guerre ecartant et troublant les meilleurs ouvriers, apporte toujours quelque desordre aux arts, notamment à ceux des Muses." The edition of 1625, however, is still more incorrect even than that of 1617; and neither of them has any interest attachable to it, except from the circumstance of the re-appearance of Mademoiselle de Gournay's preface, different in each of these editions, and different from what it was in 1595, and from what it was to be in 1635.

1627.

24. *The same. Rouen*, Robert Valentin, dans la Cour du Palais, 1627, 8vo. Some copies are printed: "Chez Jacques Cotioué, dans la Cour du Palais;" others: "Chez Guillaume de la Haye, dans L'Estre Notre Dame."

Engraved title-page.—The epigraph *vires*, &c.—The short preface of Mademoiselle de Gournay.—The portrait of 1611.

Summaries and references to authors in the margins.—Analytical index.—1130 pages.

Edition conformable with those of 1602,-9,-11,-16,-17,-19,-36,-49.

I have seen several copies of this edition, in which the 2 in the date has been turned into a 9; and some of these are so skilfully managed that it was very difficult to recognize the 1627 in the forged 1697.

1635.

25. *The same.—Édition nouvelle*, exactement corrigée selon le vray exemplaire; enrichie à la marge des noms des autheurs cités et de la version de leurs passages, mise à la fin de chaque chapitre, avec la vie de l'autheur; plus deux tables, l'une des chapitres et l'autre des principales matières. *Paris*, Jean Camusat, Rue St. Jacques, à la Toison d'Or; M.D.CXXXV. Folio.

Some copies have the name "Toussaint du Bray, Rue St. Jacques, aux Espics Meurs, et Pierre Rocolet, Imprimeur Ordinaire du Roi, au Palais, en la Galerie des Prisonniers, aux armes de la Ville."

Other copies merely have on the title-page "Paris, M.D.CXXXV. Avec privilege du Roy."

The first title is printed in red and black letters; after this comes an engraved title-page, in the centre of which is a portrait of Montaigne; at the top you read: "Les Essais de Michel, Seigneur de Montaigne, and right and left, on two floating streamers, on one side: *Vires acquirit eundo*, and on the other: *Unum pro cunctis;* beneath the portrait are the scales, and the *Que scais je?* which appear here for the first time. At the bottom is the name—"*Paris*, Camusat, 1635," in the copies published by this bookseller; and in those sent forth by others, there is simply, Paris, Rue St. Jacques et au Palais. The copies by Camusat, also have, on the right and left, armorial bearings, apparently purporting to be those of Montaigne, but they are incorrect; and at the back of the last page there is the King's license, printed in a complete form, while the copies bearing the names of the other booksellers only give an extract from this license, and have not got the arms. After the license comes the transfer which Mademoiselle de Gournay made of it to Jean Camusat. This edition was superintended by Mademoiselle de Gournay herself, who dedicates it to the Cardinal de Richelieu, in the following preface:—

"A Monseigneur l'eminentissime Cardinal Duc de Richelieu."

Monseigneur,

Ne vous pouvant donner les Essais, par ce qu'ils ne sont pas à moy, et connoissant neantmoins, que tout ce qu'il y a d'illustre en nostre siecle passe par vos mains, ou vous doit homage, j'ai creu que le nom de votre Eminence devoit orner le frontispiece de ce livre. Il est vray, Monseigneur, qu'il vous rend icy, par mon entremise, un hommage fort irregulier; car ne pouvant vous le donner, je vous ose donner à luy: c'est a dire, que preste de tomber dans le sepulchre, je vous consigne cet orphelin qui m'étoit commis, afin qu'il vous plaise desormais de luy tenir lieu de tuteur et de protecteur. J'espère que le seul respect de vostre authorité luy rendra cet office: et que comme les mouches ne pouvoient entrer dans le Temple d'Hercule, dont vous etes emulateur, ainsi les mains impures, qui depuis longtemps avoient diffamé ce mesme livre, par tant de malheureuses editions, n'oseront plus commettre le sacrilege d'en approcher, quand elles le verront en vostre protection par celle-cy, que vostre liberalité m'a aidée a mettre au jour. Combien seray-je fière en l'autre monde, d'avoir esté assez hardie en quittant celluy cy, pour nommer un tel executeur de mon testament que le grand Cardinal de Richelieu! et de voir de la haut qu'on se souvienne icy bas, que j'ay sceu discerner, à quelle excellence et hautesse d'ame, je devois assigner la protection du plus excellent et plus haut present que les Muses ayent fait aux hommes, depuis les siecles triomphans des Grecs et des Romains! Vous, Monseigneur, autheur de tant d'ouvrages immortels de diverse sorte, qu'il semble que vous ayez entrepris d'encherir et d'emplifier l'empire de l'immortalité; ne l'obligez vous pas à vous offrir par vos vœux, pour une espece de recompense, les plus nobles des biens qu'elle tient d'ailleurs, comme ce livre; ouy mesmes à les reputer

d'autant plus seurement immortels, qu'en les vous offrant, elle croit les appuyer aucunement sur le destin de vostre Eminence; de la quelle je demeureray, sans fin,

Monseigneur,
Tres humble et tres obeissant servant,
GOURNAY.

A Paris, le 12 Juin, 1635.

This edition contains:—the Essays; the dedication; the long preface by Mademoiselle de Gournay; Montaigne's preface, dated 1st March, 1580; a summary of the Life of Montaigne; translations of the Latin quotations, placed at the end of each chapter; analytical index. There are no summaries in the margin, but only references to the authors quoted. The *Dictionnaire Historique*, by Feller (Paris, 1818), says that, at the end of this edition, there is *le Proumenoir de M. de Montaigne* (a small work by Mademoiselle de Gournay), but this statement is altogether incorrect.

The apologetical preface here printed, is the same which Mademoiselle de Gournay at first inserted in the edition of 1595, and afterwards retracted and suppressed in that of 1598. She re-produced it in 1599, in the third edition of the *Proumenoir de M. de Montaigne*, omitting, however, two-thirds of the original quantity; subsequently, in 1617, she again printed it, before the Essays, after having made several modifications, and, more especially, a number of additions, which nearly doubled its extent. She again inserted it, with still larger additions, in the edition of the Essays published in 1625; and finally, having once more augmented and corrected it, she prefixed it to the edition now under notice, from which the reprint of it in the present volume is made. The style of the first edition of this preface was certainly somewhat diffuse and turgid, but these defects are corrected in the modification of it which now appeared. In it the authoress discusses closely and gravely the principal objections which had been advanced against the Essays, and replies to them, for the most part, in a very triumphant manner. Bayle justly remarks of this preface, that it well merits a reading; and Coste, who, in consequence of confounding it with that of the edition of 1595, had excluded it from his first edition of Montaigne, admitted it into his third and subsequent editions.

This edition of the Essays, remarks M. Payen, has been placed on an equality with that of 1595; indeed some bibliographers even give it the preference, and amongst the latter number I find the learned M. Weiss. Notwithstanding the weight which I am ever ready to concede to such an authority, I must, however, express a contrary opinion in this instance; and declare my conviction that, if the edition of 1635 is superior to its predecessor in reference to the additional pieces it contains, it is inferior to it in point of authenticity of text. Mademoiselle de Gournay herself is obliged to admit that she has made considerable alterations, and, however scrupulous she may have considered herself in venturing upon them, it is certain that they exist; and, whatever she may say as to this edition being *la sœur germaine* of that of 1595, the latter must always retain the pre-eminence for authenticity of text, and for superiority of typographical execution. M. Droz, who gives the preference to the edition of 1635 over that of 1595, founds it upon some differences which exist between the two editions, and his own particular taste in favour of the more modern version. But the reply is obvious, that the changes made in the text of the edition of 1635, even though they were improvements, which I take upon myself to deny, are not the work of Montaigne. Mademoiselle de Gournay had been in possession of no new materials since 1595, the period at which she announced that she had been entrusted to superintend the publication of the Essays of Montaigne, *enrichis des traits de sa derniere main.*

The *Privilege du Roy*, which is given verbatim in this edition, is remarkable, from the circumstance that it is drawn up in a manner differing from that in which these documents are ordinarily couched, and that it expresses the opinion of the Editor as to the preceding editions, without excepting even those of 1617 and 1625, in which she had indirectly participated.

The following is an extract from this Royal License, dated 13th September, 1633:—"Louis, &c. Notre chère et bien-aimée, la damoiselle de Gournay, nous a fait remontrer que le feu sieur de Montaigne lui ayant, de son vivant, recommandé le soin de son livre des Essais, et depuis son décède, ses plus proches lui ayant donné toute charge de l'impression d'iceux, comme il est notoire, et plusieurs fautes énormes s'étant coulées en la plupart des impressions, en sorte que tout le livre s'en trouve gâté et plein d'omissions et additions apostées, comme l'exposante a fait voir à aucuns de nos amés et féaux conseillers..... Elle a désiré rendre ce devoir au public et à la mémoire dudit défunt sieur de Montaigne, d'empêcher que ce désordre n'arrive plus en l'impression dudit livre, qui est d'importance comme étant un œuvre très excellent et qui fait honneur à la France..... A ces causes, désirant gratifier ladite exposante et favoriser la bonne intention qu'elle a de conserver ledit œuvre des ESSAIS en la façon qu'il a été composé par l'auteur," &c.

Conformably with the promise made in this preface by Mademoiselle de Gournay, "de répéter encore la recherche des fautes de cette édition, et d'en mettre après un exemplaire en la bibliothèque du roi, corrigé des derniers traits de sa plume, afin que la postérité y puisse avoir recours au besoin," she presented the Royal Library with a copy, in which she had made some corrections, not, however, more than thirty in number, beyond those marked in the *errata*, and in the title-page of which she has written: *Don de Mademoiselle de Gournay.*

Though I thus accord to the edition of 1595 the preference over that of 1635, still the latter edition is one of the best we have of the Essays; the print and paper are tolerably good, though inferior to the edition of 1595; while it possesses over the latter what some persons will consider the material advantage of containing translations of the quotations. The copies published by Camusat are the best, inasmuch as they contain the whole of the King's Licence, of which the other copies only give an extract.

1636.

26. *The same. Dernière Edition*, enrichie d'annotations en marge, corrigée suivant les premieres impressions. *Paris, Salomon de la Fosse.* MD.C.XXXVI. 8vo.

Some copies bear the name of *Pierre Lamy*; others that of *Guillaume Loyson, au Palais, en la*

Galere des Prisonniers, au Nom de Jesus; others that *of Michel Blageart.*

Title printed in red and black.—The epigraph *vères, &c.*—The preface of Montaigne, and the short one by Mademoiselle de Gournay.—Summary of the Life of Montaigne.—Ornamented initial letters to most of the chapters.—1130 pages, without the Index.

Edition corresponding with those of 1608,-9,-11, &c. See under 1649.

1640.

27. *The same. Edition nouvelle,* corrigée suivant les premieres impressions de l'Angelier, et augmentée d'Annotations en marge de toutes les matieres les plus remarquable, avec la Vie de l'Auteur. Paris, Michel Blageart, rue de la Calandre, a la Fleur de Lys, pres le Palais. 1640. *Folio.*

Title-page in red and black, in the centre of which is the portrait of Montaigne.—No epigraph. —No preface by Mademoiselle de Gournay.—Summary of the life.—Analytical Index.—Summaries in the margins.—References to authors.—No translation of the quotations.—A good edition, the copies of which, on large paper, are very fine.

It is seen that the title-page indicates that the edition is printed "suivant les premieres impressions de l'Angelier," a sufficient evidence that the alterations made by Mademoiselle de Gournay, in the edition she inscribed to Richelieu, were not generally approved of.

I find among my notes, says M. Payen, a reference to an edition in folio of this date, *Paris, Augustin Courbé, à la Palme,* which is probably the edition under notice, with a different title-page.

1641.

28. *The same. Edition nouvelle,* enrichie d'annotations en marge, corrigée et augmentée d'un tiers, outre les precedentes impressions, avec une table tres ample des noms et des matieres remarquables et signalées; plus la vie de l'auteur, extraite de ses propres ecrits. *Rouen,* chez *Jean Berthelin,* dans la Cour du Palais. 1641. 8vo.

Engraved title-page, having in the upper part a portrait of Montaigne, with allegories, signed F. Honeruogh.—The epigraph.—The short preface by Mademoiselle de Gournay. — Summaries and references to authors in the margin.—Ornamental initial letters to the chapters.—1130 pages —Edition corresponding with those of 1608, 11, &c. (See under 1649.)

Some copies of this edition have the name *à Rouen,* chez *Jacques Besongue, dans la Cour du Palais.* No date.

1649.

29. *The same. Derniere edition,* enrichie d'annotations en marge, avec une table tres ample des matieres. *Paris, Michel Blageart,* au bout du Pont Neuf, au coin de la rue Dauphine. 1649. 8vo.

A reprint of the folio edition of the same publisher.—Title printed in red and black, the epigraph misprinted *utriusque* ACQUIRIT EUNDO.—The preface of Mademoiselle de Gournay is omitted.—1130 pages.—Vignettes, with fleurs de lis, at the commencement of the life, and of the two first chapters.—There is a vignette also, but of a different design, at the head of the third chapter.—Ornamented initial letters to the chapters.

30. *The same. Edition nouvelle,* &c. (same title as 1641), *à Anvers,* chez *Abraham Maire.* No date. 8vo.

Engraved title-page, and portrait as in the editions of 1608, 11, &c.—Neither Montaigne's nor de Gournay's preface.—Summaries and author's names in the margin.—This edition is a different one from those of 1608, 11, &c., though it resembles them in many particulars.

31. I have met with a copy of an edition of Montaigne similar to those of 1608, 11, &c., yet a different edition from those; but the title-page was missing, so that I could not ascertain either the name, place, or date.—1130 pages.—Ornamental initial letters to the chapters.—The prefaces, life, marginal summaries, analytical index, are the same as in the previously described editions; but that which distinguishes the present edition from its predecessors is a vignette, with fleur-de-lys, at the head of Book II., and other vignettes before the two other chapters, the Life, the prefaces, &c.

With reference to the editions hitherto described, M. Payen remarks: "Toutes les editions qui precedent, excepté la premiere, sont en un seul volume; mais parmi elles il en est plusieurs qui semblent être une succession de reimpression les unes des autres. Le format en est petit in-8vo.; le caractère est à peu près le même pour toutes; la plupart ont le même portrait, le même titre gravé, le même nombre de pages, c'est-a-dire onze cent trente pages; elles se suivent l'une l'autre page pour page et ligne pour ligne, de telle sorte que le plus grand nombre des pages et des lignes commencent et finissent par le même mot, et le chiffre des pages suit également; il y a plus, c'est que souvent les mêmes fautes se rencontrent, soit qu'elles aient lieu dans le texte ou dans la pagination; quant à ces dernières, lorsque dans une édition elles n'ont pas été suivies pour une page, on est sûr de les retrouver plus loin, de telle sorte qu'après quelques feuilles les deux exemplaires marchent ensemble. Ainsi, aux éditions de 1611 et de 1649, on saute de la page 605 à 608. Les éditions de 1619, 1627 et 1636 ne présentent pas cette lacune, mais on la retrouve à la page 608, où l'on passe brusquement à celle numérotée 611, et ensuite toutes les éditions marchent d'accord. La ressemblance générale qui résulte des circonstances que je viens d'énumérer est telle, qu'au premier coup d'œil on serait tenté d'admettre qu'il n'y a, pour toutes ces dates diverses, que deux ou trois éditions dont les titres seulement sont différents, et il est souvent difficile de trouver quelque particularité qui puisse les différencier les unes des autres. J'ai mis tous mes soins à distinguer ces diverses éditions, et je puis affirmer que celles que j'ai décrites comme étant différentes, le sont bien en effet. Les éditions qui ont entre elles une *telle* ressemblance sont celles de 1602 (les deux *de Leyde*), 1609, 1611, 1616, 1617 (*Rouen*), 1619 (les deux), 1627, 1636, 1641, et les deux qui terminent cette série, savoir celle d'*Anvers* et celle *dont le titre manque* (numéro 31).

"Dans ces éditions, les chapitres entiers sont sans un seul *alinéa,* excepté ceux rendus obligatoires par les citations. Le chapitre 2 du livre II., qui dans la plupart des éditions autres que celles-ci, et dans toutes celles qui suivent, est intitulé *Contre la fainéantise,* est ici intitulé *Contre la fantasie.* Ces éditions, dont plusieurs sont assez bien exécutées, ne sont pas très communes; elles sont généralement peu correctes, et cependant elles sont précieuses pour les lecteurs assidus des Essais;

car le format in-8°. du temps n'étant pas plus grand que nos in-12 d'aujourd'hui, il n'est aucune des éditions de Montaigne qui offre les Essais sous un volume aussi portatif que celles-là.

„ La meilleure de ces éditions est, sans contredit, celle de 1619, chez Jean Durand (numéro 22); elle est plus correcte que les autres, et assez bien imprimée. Celle de 1627 vient ensuite; puis vient celle de 1611: les plus mal exécutées de ces éditions sont celles de 1602 (la deuxieme, numéro 12), 1636, et surtout 1616.

" Je rappelie ici une remarque que j'ai faite antérieurement à l'occasion de l'édition de 1593; c'est que, dans un grand nombre d'exemplaires de ces éditions, le chapitre des vers de Virgile est complétement enlevé. Cette mutilation se voit surtout sur les exemplaires qui ont appartenu à des couvents. Les personnes scrupuleuses auxquelles elle est due auront sans doute pensé, contrairement à l'avis de Montaigne, que son portrait n'aurait pas souffert de n'être pas aussi complet qu'il a voulu qu'il fût; elles auront oublié que l'auteur des Essais leur avait dit, dans la préface, ' que s'il eût été parmi ces nations qu'on dit vivre encore sous la douce liberté des premieres lois de la nature, il s'y fût tres volontiers peint tout entier et tout nu.' Il faut convenir que si, par révérence, pour son lecteur, Montaigne ne s'est pas peint tout nu dans ce chapitre, on peut dire au moins qu'il s'y est peint en fort simple déshabillé."

1652.

32. *The same. Nouvelle édition*, exactement purgée des défauts des précédentes, selon le vrai original, et enrichie et augmentée aux marges du nom des autheurs qui y sont citez et de la version de leurs passages, Grecs et Latins; avec des observations très importantes et nécessaires pour le soulagement du lecteur, ensemble la vie de l'autheur et deux tables, l' une des chapitres et l'autre des principales matieres de beaucoup plus amples et plus utiles que celles des dernieres edition, avec augmentation de la version françoise de passages italiens. *Paris, Augustin Courbé*, au Palais, en la galerie des Merciers, à la Palme, 1652. Folio.

The first title-page is printed in red and black characters, with a vignette representing a palm-tree, and the motto (in allusion to the bookseller's name) *Resurgo curvata*. The second title is an engraved one, with a portrait, the same as that in the edition of 1635. Instead of the name of Camusat, however, we have here the following: *Rue St. Jacques et au Palais*, 1652. There is a vignette, with fleurs-de-lys, at the head of all the three books, and of the preface by de Gournay. Some copies bear the name of *Pierre Rocolet;* others of *Veuve Sebastien Hurè, et Sebastien Hurè, rue St. Jacques, au Cœur-Bon.* In these copies the emblem of the palm-tree is replaced by that of the tree of the Stephens', with the *noli altum sapere.*

This edition contains, besides the Essays, the long preface and dedication of de Gournay,—the preface of Montaigne,—a summary of his life,—references to authors in the margin, and translations of the passages quoted, the whole preceded by a notice by the printer, Henry Stephen, in which he details the improvements he has made in this edition, more especially in placing the translations opposite the text; the first time of this arrangement being introduced.

The licence granted to Henry Stephen bears date 3rd of May; and it is followed by a note, stating that the printer has made an agreement, for this edition only, with the booksellers Courbé and Le Petit. It is therefore probable that some copies bear the name of the latter bookseller.

1657.

33. *The same.—Edition nouvelle* (rest of title same as the edition of 1652). *Paris, Jean Baptiste Loyson*, Rue St.-Jacques, pres la Poste, à la Croix Rouge. Folio, 840 pages. Some copies have the names: *Jacques Langlois et Emmanuel Langlois;* others: *Pierre Lamy*, au Grand Cesar; others: *Pierre Rocolet*, imprimeur-ordinaire du Roi et de la Maison-de-Ville, au Palais, en la galerie des Prisonniers: others: *la Veuve Marin Dupuis*, rue St.-Jacques, a la Couronne d'Or; others: *Sebastien Hurè et Frederic Leonard;* others: *Edme Coulerot*, rue St.-Jacques, au Bon Pasteur et à la Bible d'Or. The first title is printed in red and black, with the emblem and motto of the Stephens: the second title is engraved, with the portrait of 1635 and 1652. At the bottom there is merely *Rue St.-Jacques;* and *Au Palais.* There is the licence of 1651 prefixed, with a note of Henry Stephen, stating that he has transferred his rights for this edition, to Le Petit and Hué, so that it is probable there are some copies bearing the name of the former bookseller. This edition is a reprint of the preceding, and would at first sight appear to be the same; but, besides several other differences, the present volume has this distinct statement:—Achevé d'imprimer pour la deuxieme fois, 1er Octobre 1657.

1659.

34. *The same.*—Nouvelle edition, enrichie et augmentée aux marges du nom des autheurs qui y sont citez, avec la version des passages grecs latins, et italiens. *Paris*, Christophe Journel, rue Vielle Boucherie, au bout du Pont-St.-Michel, à l'image St.-Jean; 1659. 12mo. 3 vols.

Each volume has an engraved title-page, with the engraver's name, N. de Larmessin; portrait of Montaigne, and beneath it the Scales and the *Que scais-je?* Montaigne's preface. Dedication to Richelieu. De Gournay's long preface. Life of Montaigne. In the margins, summaries, references to authors, and translations of the passages quoted. Each volume comprises one book of the Essays, and has a table of chapters and a table of contents. The Sonnets of La Boëtie are not printed in this edition. This edition is the first, since that of 1580, which forms more than one volume; the appearance of its typography is neat enough, but it is by no means irreproachable as to correctness of text.

Montaigne's preface here is headed: "*Avertissement de l'autheur, inseré en toutes les precedentes editions,*" which is a mistake, for this preface does not appear, either in the edition of 1595 or in that of Antwerp.

35. *The same. — Nouvelle edition*, exactement purgée des defauts des precedentes, et augmentée aux marges du nom des autheurs qui y sont cités et de la version de leurs passages, avec des observations tres importantes et necessaires pour le soulagement du lecteur; ensemble la vie de l'autheur et deux tables, l'une des chapitres, et l'autre des principales matieres, de beaucoup plus ample et plus utile que celle des dernieres editions.—*Bruxelles*, François Foppens, libraire et imprimeur, M.D.CLIX.; or *Amsterdam, Antoine Michiels*, libraire.

The title-page is printed in red and black, and is preceded in the first volume by an engraved frontispiece, signed P. Chouwet, in the centre of which is Montaigne's portrait, with the scales and the *Que sçais-je*. Above it is: LES ESSAIS DE MICHEL, SEIGNEUR DE MONTAIGNE; and beneath, "mis (*sic.*) en 3 vol."

Besides the contents detailed in the title-page, this edition comprises the dedication to Richelieu, De Gournay's long preface, and a summary of the Life of Montaigne. At the end of the preliminary matter are two quotations from the writings of Justus Lipsius, in praise of Montaigne.

The heading to the preface by Montaigne has the same mistake which is pointed out in the preceding article. In vol. 3, there is a general analytical table, much more convenient than the three separate indexes in the preceding edition.

This edition is greatly esteemed and sought after, on account of its typographical beauty.

Some copies of this edition were printed upon different paper from the general impression. Brunet says, upon this point: "On n'en recherche plus guère maintenant que les exemplaires très grands de marges; c'est-a-dire," adds M. Payen, "ceux qui ont de 5 pouces 8 lignes a 5 pouces 11 lignes. Un exemplaire de 5 pouces 9 lignes a été vendu 90 fr. (A. Martin); 5 pouces 8 lignes, 131 fr. (Firmin Didot); 5 pouces 10 lignes, 150 fr. (Renouard); 5 pouces 11 lignes, 284 fr. Mar. (Bl. Dent. Berard) (magnifique exemplaire de la plus belle conservation, et avec témoins)."

There has been a considerable discussion as to the printer of this edition, some of the particulars of which, as a matter of interest to bibliographers, are here subjoined. M. Payen writes:—"Cette édition a été généralement attribuée aux *Elzévirs*. M. Bérard partage cette opinion, qui a été combattue par MM. Charles Nodier et Brunet, et par Bastien; M. Berard soutient qu'elle a été executée dans l'imprimerie de *Jean et de Daniel Elzévir;* il se fonde sur un passage d'une lettre que Desmarest addressait à Chapelain, et dans lequel il le félicite de s'être chargé de recueillir les éloges et les témoignages (*elogia et testimonia*) des auteurs qui ont parlé de Montaigne pour en enrichir *l'edition que les Elzévirs preparent*. M. Bérard ajoute d'ailleurs que les caractères sont ceux que les Elzévirs employaient ordinairement pour l'impression de leurs livres, et que l'on y trouve les vignettes qu'ils avaient seuls l'habitude d'employer.' M. Charles Nodier a repondu à la premiere assertion de M. Bérard: que l'absence des *elogia et testimonia* dans l'edition en question prouve qu'elle n'est pas celle que les Elzévirs avaient projetée; qu'il est probable que ces imprimeurs avaient preparé une édition de Montaigne, mais qu'ils ne l'ont pas publiée; que le format grand in-12 du Montaigne fournit même une présomption nouvelle, puisqu'ils avaient adopté presque exclusivement le format petit in-12, qui est celui du Charron, avec lequel leur Montaigne aurait dû necessairement faire collection. Enfin M. Charles Nodier est d'avis que cette édition tout imprimée qu'elle soit avec des caractères et des fleurons elzéviriens n'est pas digne des Elzévirs, et à cet égard M. Brunet entre dans quelques détails dont je donnerai seulement le substance. Ce bibliographe établit qu'aucune des éditions qui portent le nom d'un des Elzévirs ne présente identiquement les caractères du Montaigne, tandis que ces mêmes caractères se rencontrent déjà dans l'Alaric de Scudéry, bien certainement imprimé à *Bruxelles* par *Fr. Foppens* en 1656; or, ce Foppens, libraire et imprimeur, est le même dont le nom se lit sur les titres d'une partie des exemplaires du Montaigne de 1659, et on remarque que les caractères de ces trois volumes sont un peu usés, et par conséquent moins beaux que dans l'Alaric, publié trois ans auparavant. M. Brunet rappelle ensuite que le Montaigne de Foppens est annoncé comme étant de *Bruxelles* dans deux catalogues de Blaeu, imprimés à Amsterdam en 1659 et 1662. Or, comme le rédacteur de ces deux catalogues a eu soin d'y marquer avec une certaine exactitude le nom des villes où ont été imprimés les livres qu'il annonce, même lorsque ces noms ne se lisent pas sur le titre, il faut bien croire que lui, qui écrivait à Amsterdam l'année même que parut le Montaigne, devait savoir à quoi s'en tenir sur le lieu de l'impression. "Je n'ai pas la prétention," adds M. Payen, "d'appuyer de mon autorité l'opinion de MM. Charles Nodier et Brunet; mais je suis convaincu que l'édition du Montaigne de Hollande n'a pas été imprimé par les Elzévirs."

In his *Nouvelles Recherches Bibliographiques*. M. Brunet thus reverts to the question:—"Nous avons dit (iv. 558), qu'il ne parait pas que cette edition a été imprimée par les Elzévirs; mais comme à ce sujet M. Bérard nous reproche de n'avoir pas donné de raisons à l'appui de cette assertion qui ne suffit pas, ajoute-il, pour detruire une opinion accreditée depuis longtemps, nous croyons necessaire d'entrer ici dans quelques details. D'abord, disons nous, aucune edition portant le nom d'un des Elzévirs ne nous presente identiquement les caractères du Montaigne, tandis que ces mêmes caractères se rencontrent déjà dans l'*Alaric* de Scudéry, bien certainement imp. à Bruxelles, par Fr. Foppens, en 1656. Or, ce Fr. Foppens, libraire et imprimeur, est le même dont le nom se lit sur les titres d'une partie des exemplaires de Montaigne de 1659; et remarquons que les caractères de ses 3 vol. sont déjà un peu usés, et par consequent, un peu moins beaux que dans l'Alaric publié trois ans avant; c'est donc Foppens et non Elzévir qui a imprimé le livre que nous occupe. En suite, nous ajouterons, un fait qui confirmera entièrement notre opinion à cet égard; c'est que le Montaigne de Foppens est annoncé comme *de Bruxelles*, dans deux catalogues de Blaeu, imp. à Amsterdam en 1659 et en 1662. Or, comme le redacteur de ces deux catalogues a eu soin d'y marquer, avec une certaine exactitude, les noms des villes ou ont été impr. les livres qu'il annonce, et même lorsque ces noms ne ce lisent pas sur les titres, il faut croire que lui, qui ecrivait à Amsterdam, et l'année même que parut le Montaigne, devait bien savoir a quoi s'en tenir sur le point ici en question, et que s'il a ecrit *Bruxelles*, c'est à coup sur il ne fallait pas ecrire *Amsterdam*. Quant à la lettre de Rolland Desmaretz à Chapelain, que M. Berard cite comme un temoignage precieux en faveur de son opinion, elle n'a aucune rapport à l'edition de 1659, ainsi que l'a bien demontré M. Nodier dans ses melanges."

Those who wish to study the question more at length may consult the "Essai Bibliographique sur les éditions des Elzévirs, par M. Bérard," and the "Melanges tirés d'une petite Bibliothèque, par M. Ch. Nodier."

1669.

36. *The same. Edition nouvelle*, &c. (same as in title-page of the edition of Paris, 1659.) *Paris, Laurent Rondet, Christophe Journel, et Robert Chevillon.* M.D.C.LXIX. 3 vols. 12mo.

A reprint of the edition of Journel, containing the same pieces.

37. *The same. Nouvelle edition, &c.* (as in the edition of Foppens.)* *Lyon, André Olyer*, Rue Tupin, à la Providence. 1669. 3 vols. 12mo.

Some copies have: *Lyon*, Ant. Besson, Rue Tupin, proche L'Empereur. In the first volume is an engraved frontispiece, signed N. Auroux, copied from that in the editions of Foppens. The second title, which is printed in black and red in the first volume, and in black only in the two others, has, in Olyer's copies, a vignette, representing a woman holding up towards the sun a sphere, surmounted by a cross; Besson's copies have neither vignette nor date. This edition, in all other respects, is conformable to that of Holland, 1659. There is a third title-page, engraved, containing a portrait of Montaigne, with *Les Essais de Montaigne*, at top; the epigraph and the scales; and in a shield, "Mis (*sic*) en 3 vols."

1724.

38. *The same. Nouvelle edition*, faites sur les plus anciennes et les plus correctes, augmentées de quelques lettres de l'autheur, et ou les passages grecs, latins, et italiens sont traduits plus fidelement et cités plus exactement que dans aucune des editions precedentes, avec de courtes remarques et le nouveaux indices plus amples et plus utiles que ceux qui avaient paru jusqu'ici; par *Pierre Coste, Londres*, de l'imprimerie de J. Tonson et J. Watts. 1724. 4to. 3 vols.

Editor's preface. — Marginal summaries. — A variety of notes by the editor, historical, critical, and explanatory of obscure passages and obsolete phrases. At the end of the third volume are printed seven letters written by Montaigne, viz. the five which appeared in the volume of translations of La Boëtie; a sixth addressed to Mademoiselle Paulmier; and a seventh taken from Montaigne's translation of Sebond. — Analytical table of contents. — At the beginning of the work there is a portrait of Montaigne, engraved after Genest, by Chereau, beneath which are the scales, the *Que scais-je?*, and the arms of Montaigne, taken from the edition of 1635, and consequently altogether inexact.

This edition, printed from that of L'Angelier, 1595, is one of the best and finest that we possess of Montaigne. To it should be added a supplement, which was published in London, in 1740, under the title of: SUPPLEMENT AUX ESSAIS DE MICHEL, SEIGNEUR DE MONTAIGNE. *Londres*, G. Darres and J. Brindley, 1740, 4to. Some later copies of this work are entitled, MEMOIRES POUR SERVIR AUX ESSAIS DE MICHEL, SEIGNEUR DE MONTAIGNE, deuxieme edition; *Londres*, G. Darres, C. Du Bosc, et J. Brindley. 1741.

This supplement, which consists of 96 pages, comprises the various additions made by Coste to the edition which he published in 1739. These are: 1st, Notice from the publishers, taken principally from the preface of Coste to his edition of 1739; 2nd, the Life of Montaigne, by the President Bouhier; 3rd, the parallel between Epictetus and Montaigne, by Pascal; 4th, the *Servitude Volontaire*, by La Boëtie; 5th, Expilly's sonnet on Montaigne; and a note upon Arius and his Pope Leo, by Barbeyrac.

It is this supplement which is dedicated to the President Bouhier, and not the edition of 1725, as M. Beuchot incorrectly states, in his life of Bouhier, in the *Biographie Universelle*.

The following passage from M. Coste's preface may be thought worthy a place here:

"All men of good sense have long been agreed as to the merit of Montaigne's Essays. For my own part, I do not pretend to make a formal harangue in their praise, nor to enter into a discussion of the criticisms that have been passed upon them: for as to their merit, I can add nothing to what has been already said of it by others; and am persuaded that such as shall read the work with any application, will be easily convinced of the weakness of most of those criticisms. But there is one thing upon which I cannot help making some reflections, and that is the noble candour Montaigne has demonstrated throughout the whole book, and from which he has not once departed: Montaigne has been very much censured for having made himself so much the subject of his book: but this objection has been refuted a thousand times, and I have heard it very often repeated in company, where I could easily perceive that they who made it were not very well acquainted with Montaigne's manner of painting himself, in this book. He has done it with so much sincerity, that there is all the reason in the world to believe that he engaged in so difficult an undertaking, not so much out of vanity, as to communicate instruction. It is, however, certain that the picture he has here drawn of himself is in the nature of a faithful mirror, wherein all men may discover some of their own features, if they will but take the trouble to view themselves in it attentively, and with an honest design to see what they are in reality. And to good purpose will it be; for in this world a man must be very careful to inspect himself, or by living at random be incessantly exposed to the derision of other men, and be a prey to his own foibles, always in uneasiness and confusion, and always repining at evils, or which he will neither know the cause nor the proper remedy. 'If,' as Montaigne says, very well upon this occasion, 'the world complains that I speak too much of myself, I complain that they do not so much as think of themselves.' Would men but try to imitate Montaigne's freedom, and paint themselves in their genuine colours, they will soon perceive the undertaking not to be so blameable as it is difficult to execute.

"The generality of mankind are so blinded by a false complaisance to themselves, and by an unjustifiable kind of shame, that, far from being able to unmask themselves to the public with that amiable sincerity which appears in Montaigne, they have not even the courage to pry into the secret recesses of their own hearts, in order to make a private discovery to themselves of their own foibles, levities, and the true motives of their actions. That undoubtedly is the reason why, of so many writers who have appeared in print since Montaigne, and of whom most have been but faint imitators (a tribe which has ever been the most numerous in the republic of letters), there has not appeared one who attempted to walk in his steps.

"This is so remarkable, that the Duke of Buckingham, Marquis of Normanby, &c., famous for a

nice discernment, and a judgment which was never suspected of being clouded by an idle complaisance, or ill grounded prejudices, took occasion hence to pass a noble compliment upon Montaigne. For, after having mentioned Cicero and Lord Chancellor Bacon as two excellent geniuses, whose conduct was so inconsistent with the wise maxims which adorned their writings, he says that those two celebrated authors would have done much more service to the public if they had given it a candid and particular account of the true causes of that contradiction. 'But,' he adds, 'we must never expect so much sincerity in any writer, except the incomparable Montaigne, who is like to stand alone to all posterity. I know very well,' continues the Duke of Buckingham, 'that Montaigne is charged with vanity, but, in my opinion, without reason. And supposing it true that he has not been altogether exempt from it, never did any person take so right a method to disguise it; for as all his vanity was to publish his foibles and imperfections as freely as his good qualities, it was a vanity of a very particular species, and perhaps would deserve another name.'

"Montaigne speaks of his book with the same frankness as he does of himself. Besides the quotations with which he has enriched it, he confesses ingenuously that he has concealed the names of many celebrated authors, whose reasons and comparisons he has transplanted into his work, purposely to awe those rash censurers, who no sooner see a new book come out, but they set about criticising it; moreover, so far was he from a thought of appropriating the sentiments of another writer to himself, that he says, 'He should love any one that could, by a clear judgment, strip him of his borrowed feathers.'

"---- But, from the very quotations with which Montaigne has enriched his book, some have taken occasion to impeach his sincerity, which, to dispossess him of, would be entirely to deface his character. 'How comes it,' say they, 'that Montaigne, who has filled his book with such a number of quotations, complains so often and so bitterly of the weakness of his memory? From what source has he drawn so many scraps of history, and all those beautiful passages of which he has made such singular applications? Was it not his memory that furnished him with the names of so many philosophers, their instructive maxims which he quotes at every turn, those long details which he gives of their sentiments, on the nicest questions of natural and moral philosophy, on the nature of the Divine Being, and of the essence and immortality of the soul?'

"In answer to this objection, without entering into particulars, which would carry us too far, it may be observed, in the first place, that, for want of memory, Montaigne has sometimes fallen into very gross errors, as where he mistook Crates, for Socrates; one Dionysius, for Diogenes the Cynic; Heraclides Ponticus, for Pythagoras; and where he makes Thales say the very contrary to what he said, as he sometimes did Plutarch, his most intimate friend, whose works he always had in his hands, and from whom he was inseparable, even at the time he was inclined 'to be without the company and the remembrance of every other book.'

In the second place, it is not owing to memory, nor was it in the heat of composition, that Montaigne embellished his book with all the quotations that now appear in it: he inserted them for the most part at his leisure, and as he met with them in the books that came in his way. To be convinced of this, one need only run over the first editions of the Essays, wherein there are but few quotations in chapters which were afterwards full charged with them. For instance, in the 12th chapter of the second volume, for three pages together there is a great display of the sentiments of all the most celebrated philosophers of antiquity, concerning the nature of God; but there is not a single word of it in the first edition of the Essays, printed at Bordeaux, in 1580, nor in that at Paris, in 1588. And in the edition which I have now put out, it will appear to every reader that Montaigne met with all those sentiments very exactly explained in Cicero, whence it was very easy for him, without any effort of the memory, to transplant them into his book.

"Here I cannot avoid taking notice of a censure which Montaigne has very frankly passed upon himself, and as to which nobody has ever once thought fit to contradict him; and that is what he says, in his third volume, of his loose and incoherent way of writing, or, as he calls it himself, by leaps and skips.

"This defect is not absolutely owing, as has been always believed, to the particular genius of Montaigne, which unaccountably drew him from one subject to another, so that he was not capable of giving more order and connection to his own thoughts; but to the many additions which he made here and there to his book, as often as it came to be reprinted. If we only compare the first editions of the Essays with those that followed, it is obvious that those frequent additions have very much perplexed and confounded such arguments as were originally very clear and very well connected. Montaigne's style, such as it appears in the first editions, and such as it stands in the latter editions, after having been corrupted by those additions, might be compared to a pearl necklace, with whose pearls, though at first all perfectly round, and of an equal size, others should be mixed afterwards altogether as round, but much larger, which, at the same time that they enhanced the price of the necklace, would deprive it of great part of its beauty. The case is the same with most of the thoughts which Montaigne has inserted, from time to time, in his book. One would be sorry to lose them, though, by the manner of engrafting them in it, they disfigure it in many places. Because Montaigne himself could, without any difficulty, perceive the chain of his first thoughts, notwithstanding all his insertions that broke the connection, he imagined that a reader of any attention would discern them as well as he did. But in some parts of his work the traces of that connection are so faint and obscure, that it cannot be perceived without consulting the most ancient editions."

1725.

39. *The same.*—Donnés sur les plus anciennes et les plus correctes éditions; augmentés de plusieurs lettres de l'auteur; et où les passages grecs, latins, et italiens, sont traduits plus fidelement, et cités plus exactement, que dans aucune des precedentes. Avec des notes et des nouvelles tables des matières, beaucoup plus utiles que celles qui avaient paru jusqu'ici. Par P. Coste. Nouvelle edition, plus ample et plus correcte que la derniere de Londres.

Paris, par la Societe, MDCCXXV. 4to. 3 vols. Title-page printed in red and black; portrait by Chereau, different from those of 1724, with the scales, the *Que scais-je?* and the correct arms of Montaigne. In addition to the contents of the London edition, this edition comprises—1. A notice from the publishers, setting forth the improvements they have introduced; 2. Madlle. de Gournay's preface, and dedication to Richelieu, and the summary of Montaigne's Life; 3. The two epitaphs on Montaigne, one in Latin prose, and the other in Greek verse, with a translation of the latter into Latin verse; 4. The sonnets of La Boëtie, which had not been printed in any edition since that of 1588; 5. Two additional letters by Montaigne; 6. Some additional notes at the end of the 3rd volume; and 7. The opinions of a number of eminent men upon Montaigne. This edition, which Coste preferred to his own of 1724, is supposed to have been produced under the care of M. Gueullette and M. Jamet the elder. This edition, however, though as good in many respects, and more complete, than that of 1724, is not so handsome as the latter, nor by any means so much sought after. The supplement of 1740 should be added to this edition also. In reference to this edition, M. Payen observes:—"M. Bastien, qui n'est pas toujours indulgent pour ses predecesseurs, dit que l'édition de Londres, 1724, et celle de Paris, 1725, outre les defauts de celle de 1659, qui n'ont fait qu'augmenter, sont de plus imparfaites par des membres de phrases oubliés ou supprimés, comme dans les chapitres 17 et 21 du second livre. Quoi qu'en dise cet editeur, les admirateurs de Montaigne conserveront toujours une grande reconnaissance pour les travaux de Coste; ses editions generalement bonnes, ses notes trop prolixe peut-être, mais exactes, ses traductions ont popularisé les Essais, et les ont rendus accessibles à une classe nombreuse de lecteurs; et je me fais un devoir de rapporter une note de M. Brunet, qui apprecie avec justesse ce qu'on doit à cet estimable et laborieux commentateur: 'Aux yeux de bien de gens Coste a le grand tort d'avoir rajeuni l'orthographe de Montaigne, quoique par ce moyen il ait facilité la lecture de son auteur; il est certain aussi que ses éditions sont en général moins exactes que celles de 1595 et 1635; cependant il y a donné avec beaucoup plus de soin que le précédent éditeur les noms des auteurs cités, avec une traduction plus fidèle de leurs passages. Les notes *grammaticales et explicatives* qu'il a placées au bas des pages ne sont pas toutes bonnes, mais il y en a beaucoup de curieuses, et l'on a peut-être eu tort de les écarter des éditions modernes.'"

1727.

40. *The same.*—Third edition of Coste, Geneva, or La Haye, P. Gosse et J. Neaulme. 1727. 12mo. 5 vols. Edition conformable to the preceding. Title-page printed in red and black; Mademoiselle de Gournay's preface; opinions upon Montaigne by eminent writers; La Boëtie's sonnets. Coste states that this edition is in some respects superior to that of Paris.

Fournier speaks of an edition at Geneva, in five vols. 8vo, 1725, which must be a misprint for 1727, as there is no Genevese edition of 1725.

1739.

41. *The same.*—Coste's French edition, augmented by the Life of Montaigne, and some new notes, not comprised in the editions of 1724, 25, 27. *Londres* (Trevoux), J. Nourse, 1739, 12mo. 6 vols. Engraved portrait, after that of 1724. Coste's preface of 1724, with an additional preface, dated 1738. Vol. 6 contains the *Servitude Volontaire*, Mademoiselle de Gournay's preface, her dedication to Richelieu, the summary of Montaigne's life, his letters, critical opinions, and analytical table. The Life of Montaigne, by the President Beubier, is here first printed, and this edition is also the first that contains the *Servitude Volontaire*. These additions constitute the supplement printed in 4to.

An excellent and beautiful edition.

In the new preface to this edition, Coste introduces the sonnet of Expilly, of whom he observes: "L'auteur de ces vers est sans doute le même que Claude Expilly, dont on trouve un éloge historique très intéressant dans le dictionnaire de Moréri;" and he might have readily ascertained the exactness of this supposition, if he had looked at "Les Poemes de Messire Claude Expilly, conseiller du roy en son conseil d'état, president au parlement de Grenoble. *Grenoble, P. Verdier*, 1624. 4to." The sonnet in question is at page 190.

1745.

42. *The same.*—Coste's fifth edition, "corrigée et augmentée." *Londres*, Nourse, 1745. 12mo. 7 vols. An edition conformable to the preceding. The preface of 1739 is here somewhat modified, and new dated, 19th May, 1745. It describes the corrections made by Coste in the present edition. Coste says: "Celle-ci sera selon toutes les apparences la dernière que je publierai; je l'ai revue et corrigée avec tout le soin dont je suis capable." He adds, that with the aid of his emendations and explanations, "les Essais seront dorénevant aussi aisés à entendre que la Princesse de Cleves." This is the best edition published by Coste, who died in 1747.

1754.

43. *The same.*—Londres (Paris), J. Nourse et Vaillant, 1754, 12mo, 10 vols. A reprint of the edition of 1745. A pretty edition, of which there are some copies in Dutch paper, which, says Brunet, are very rare.

1769.

44. *The same.*—Londres (Paris), J. Nourse et Vaillant, 1769. 12mo. 10 vols. Bordered title-page. A pretty-looking edition, but incorrect as to text. It in all other respects resembles the preceding, except that the critical opinions are somewhat abridged.

1771.

45. *The same.*—Londres (Paris), J. Nourse et Vaillant, 1771, 12mo. 10 vols. Portrait, after that of 1725; bordered title-page; reprint of the preceding edition.

1779.

46. *The same.*—*Genève*, Jean-Samuel Cailler, 1779; 12mo. 10 vols. Bordered title-page; edition conformable to the preceding, and quite as incorrect; it contains, in addition, the *Eloge* of Montaigne by the Abbé Talbert, canon of Besançon, a composition which obtained the prize of eloquence given by the Academy of Bordeaux in 1774, and the addition of which renders this edition preferable to the preceding.

1780.

47. *The same. Genève*, Duvillard fils, et Nouffer

1780, 12mo. 10 vols. Edition taken from that of Coste, and conformable to the preceding.

1781.

48. *The same.* (Title the same as in the edition of Holland, 1659.) Amsterdam (Lyon), aux depens de la Compagnie, 1781. 8vo. 3 vols. Portrait; the "Que scais-je?" the scales, and the arms. Mademoiselle de Gournay's dedication and preface. Summary of Montaigne's life. Marginal lemmas and translations. Analytical table. The same mistake in the heading of Montaigne's preface, as in the edition of 1659. A good edition.

1783.

49. This edition is simply entitled: Essais de Michel de Montaigne. Paris, Jean-François Bastien, 1783; 3 vols. Portrait by Noel Pruneau. Of this edition 600 copies were printed in 8vo. (50 on Dutch paper), and 100 in 4to. (25 on Dutch paper). In the copies on fine paper, each volume is divided into 2 volumes, the second volume having a bastard title, but the pagination runs on, the same as in the copies in three volumes.

This edition, which is "dediée *aux Manes respectables* de Michel de Montaigne," contains merely the text of the Essays, *purged*, as the editor expresses it, from all notes and commentaries, and without any translation of the quotations. The only additions are a preface by the *libraire-éditeur*, a summary of the life of Montaigne, and an analytical table. There are marginal summaries and references to the authors quoted; in book i. chapter 28, are La Boëtie's sonnets. An excellent edition, justly esteemed for the correctness of its text, and its exact adherence to the old orthography.

1789.

50. *The same.* Avec les notes de M. Coste, suivis de son éloge. *Nouvelle édition.* A Genève et à Paris, chez Voland, M. DCC. LXXXIX—— M.DCC.XCIII. 12mo. 10 vols.

The four first volumes appeared in 1789, the 5th and 6th in 1790, the 7th in 1791, and the three last in 1793. The first volume is on fine paper; in the succeeding volumes the quality of the papers gradually deteriorates, and that of the two or three last is detestable.

This edition is exceedingly incorrect, especially in the latter volumes. It is a reprint of Coste's edition, with the addition of Talbert's *Eloge;* but it has no analytical table.

1793.

51. *The same. Paris, J. F. Bastien,* 1793. 8vo. 3 vols. Portrait. Reprint of Bastien's edition of 1783, but inferior to that edition in paper and print.

1796.

52. *The same. Paris, Langlois et Gueffier,* 1793. 8vo. 4 vols. Portrait, after that of Fiquet.

The copies on Dutch paper are very fine; while those on common paper are exceedingly bad.

This edition is printed from that of Bastien, which it resembles in typography, and contains precisely the same pieces.

There are some copies on blue paper.

1801.

53. *The same. Edition nouvelle,* où se trouvent les lettres et le discours de La Boëtie sur la *Servitude Volontaire*, ou *le Contr'un;* avec les notes de M. Coste. *Paris,* Louis, 1801. 18mo. 16 vols. Portrait after that of Fiquet. Epigraph, *Novit se ipsum.* No critical opinions.

This edition is reprinted literally from those of Coste. It is the only edition that has the epigraph, *Novit se ipsum,* though M. Vernier states that this epigraph was printed in the first edition of the Essays (1580), a mistake cited, without correction, in the *Biographie Universelle.*

1802.

54. *The same. Edition stéréotypée* d'après le procédé de Firmin Didot.

Paris, Pierre Didot l'aîné et Firmin Didot, MDCCCII. 8vo. and 12mo. 4 vols. Portrait. Some of the copies in octavo are on vellum.

An edition justly esteemed for the correctness of its text and punctuation, which underwent the exact superintendence of M. Didot l'aîné. It contains, besides the text and Montaigne's preface, a preface by M. Naigeon, the editor, directions to the printer, written by Montaigne in a copy of the edition of 1588, whence Naigeon edited the present edition, and a copy of which the reader has already seen under No. 4, Montaigne's Letters, and La Boëtie's *Servitude Volontaire.* La Boëtie's Sonnets are omitted, the editor being of opinion "qu'ils ne meritent pas d'être réimprimés, parcequ'ils ne meritent pas d'être lus." The translations of the passages quoted, and references to the authors, are printed at the bottom of each page, together with various readings, and notes by Naigeon and Coste. There are no marginal summaries, nor is there any analytical table.

This edition was reprinted in 1811, 1816, 1828, 1833.

In a few copies of this edition, besides the pieces mentioned, there is a preface by Naigeon, upon Montaigne's character and religion, dated 15th *Germinal, An* x. This preface is very rare on vellum copies; on common paper it is less unusual. A copy on vellum paper, with this preface, has sold as high as 600 francs. There are but three or four copies of it on vellum, known to be in existence.

"Ce fameux avertissement," says M. Payen, fruit d'une imagination ardente et d'un esprit faux et que M. Amaury-Duval n'hésite pas à qualifier de honteux écrit, avait été annoncé dès 1793 dans une des notes que Naigeon ajouta à l'article Pyrrhonisme de Diderot, inséré au tome III. de la philosophie ancienne et moderne de l'Encyclopédie. Il fut dès son apparition jugé si mauvais, et il était tellement inopportun à cette époque où paraissait le concordat, que l'auteur se trouva forcé de le supprimer. Il a été reproduit dans l'édition de Desoër, sauf quelques suppressions qui portent sur des déclamations philosophiques, ou sur des discussions relatives aux éditions principales des Essais.

"Bibliographiquement parlant, ce commentaire a donné lieu à une singulière succession d'erreurs; ainsi M. Brunet, et d'après lui MM. Peignot et Johanneau, annoncèrent d'abord qu'il avait 73 pages. M. Labouderie releva cette inexactitude et dit que cette avertissement n'avait que 63 pages; dans sa dernière édition, M. Brunet adopta cette correction, qui est pourtant inexacte elle-même. En effet, la dernière page de cette pièce est, il est vrai, numérotée lxiij^{e}; mais la première porte le n^{o} v, de sorte que réellement elle n'a que 59 pages. Ainsi, les pièces liminaires d'un exemplaire complet

sont paginées comme il suit: Le faux titre j-ij, le titre iij-iv, l'avertissement de l'éditeur (celui qui se trouve dans tous les exemplaires), v-vij, l'avis à l'imprimeur viij-x, la préface de Montaigne xj-xij, puis vient l'avertissement supprimé dont la première page porte le n° v, et la dernière le n° lxiij.

" Dans les ex. qui contiennent ce dernier avertissement, on a ajouté les pages 177-82 doubles. En voici la raison : dans toutes les éditions des Essais, au chapitre de l'Institution des enfants, Montaigne suppose le cas d'un disciple, ' *qui aime mieux ouir une fable qu'un sage propos, qui au son du tabourin qui arme la jeune ardeur de ses compaignons se destourne à une aultre qui l'appelle au jeu des basteleurs, etc.* et *il n'y trouve aultre remède sinon qu'on le mette pastissier dans quelque bonne ville, feust-il fils d'un duc, etc.*' La copie de Bordeaux porte : ' *Sinon que de bonne heure son gouverneur l'estrangle s'il est sans témoins, ou qu'on le mette pastissier, etc.*' A cette occasion Naigeon avait primitivement ajouté une longue note dans laquelle on rencontre cette phrase : ' Ce conseil, il faut l'avouer, a quelque chose de sévère et même de dur, comme tous les actes de rigueur commandés dans les temps difficiles par la loi impérieuse des circonstances et la raison d'état ; mais on sent d'autant plus la sagesse et la nécessité de cette mesure qu'on a soi-même plus réfléchi, mieux observé, et qu'on est plus avancé dans la connaissance de l'homme physique et moral.' Et plus loin il dit ' qu'il pense que ce passage existait dans la copie qu'a suivie mademoiselle de Gournay ; mais qu'elle l'aura supprimé et que trop attentive aux opinions aux préjugés, à la voix de son siècle, oubliant la postérité, elle n'a pas osé insérer un conseil aussi ferme, mais très éloigné des idées *reçues alors*, et qui ne plaira pas davantage aujourd'hui à ces esprits vulgaires, si communs dans tous les temps.'

" Cette note dut partager le sort de l'avertissement, et Naigeon se décida à la remplacer par une autre de la même étendue, dans laquelle il défend son opinion dans des termes plus mesurés. On a laissé les deux leçons dans les exemplaires complets, et c'est comme cela que les pages 177 à 182 doivent être doubles.

" Je suis entré dans ses détails à cause de la rareté des exemplaires en question, et parce qu'il m'a paru curieux de connaître l'opinion au moins très naïve de Naigeon sur ce moyen énergique d'améliorer l'espèce humaine.

" Voir sur cet avertissement : les *Annales littéraires et morales*, in-8°, 5e cahier, an XI. *Palissot, Mem. de litterature* 1809, *Gab. Peignot, Répertoire des Bibliographies Spéciales*, 1810. *Labouderie, Christianisme de Montaigne, Amaury-Duval*, dans l'edition de *Chasseriau*, 1820.

" Cette édition de 1802 est la copie exacte de l'exemplaire de la Bibliothèque de Bordeaux, dont il a été parlé à 1588, et qui differe en beaucoup d'endroits du texte publié primitivement par mademoiselle de Gournay qu'on avait toujours suivi jusque-là. Naigeon fait honneur à François de Neufchâteau d'avoir découvert cet exemplaire que, suivant lui, la bibliothèque des Feuillants de Bordeaux possédait sans le savoir, et il rapporte cette circonstance à une époque antérieure de quelques années à la révolution. Je ne sais à qui appartient la priorité de la découverte ; mais il n'était pas possible qu'on ignorât complétement l'existence de cette copie des Essais, seulement on n'était pas fixé sur son plus ou moins d'importance, puisque d'après M. Bernadau, le *nouveau dictionnaire historique* l'annonçait comme un supplément manuscrit et que M. Bernadau lui-même, en faisant connaître par la voie des journaux ce précieux autographe, le considérait comme celui qui avait servi à mademoiselle de Gournay.

" A l'apparition de cette édition, une controverse fort animée s'éleva entre les hommes de lettres pour savoir quelle devait être la leçon préférée. Naigeon se fondant sur un avis à l'imprimeur, écrit de la main de Montaigne au verso du frontispice gravé de l'exemplaire en question, soutenait que c'était bien là celui qui devait servir de copie à la nouvelle édition que l'auteur projetait, et cette opinion est partagée sans restriction par M. Amaury-Duval. Le seul moyen de décider la question, est de comparer les textes, et d'opposer l'une à l'autre, comme l'ont fait MM. Droz, Leclerc et Johanneau, les phrases qui offrent des différences. Or, il résulte manifestement de cette comparison qu'à part un petit nombre d'exceptions, une diction plus animée, des expressions plus énergiques, des tours de phrase plus hardis se rencontrent dans l'exemplaire de 1595 ; et j'ajouterai que le choix de mademoiselle de Gournay doit être ici pris en considération. On sait qu'elle était allée en Guienne après la mort de Montaigne, et qu'elle s'était chargée de publier les Essais *enrichis des traits de sa dernière main* ; peut-être avait-elle reçu quelques instructions de la famille sur la copie qu'elle devait préférer ; mais dans tous les cas elle eut connaissance des deux exemplaires, puisqu'elle appelle en témoignage du soin qu'elle a apporté à l'édition de 1595, *une autre copie qui reste en sa maison*. La vénération qu'elle portait à la mémoire de Montaigne et l'admiration qu'elle professait pour les Essais, ne permettent pas de supposer qu'elle ait négligé de comparer les deux copies avant de choisir l'une d'elles ; et sa préférence, justifiée suivant moi, est une forte présomption en faveur de la version qu'elle a suivie.

" Quoi qu'il en soit, l'édition de Naigeon offre un grand intérêt pour les lecteurs de Montaigne, et c'est avec raison que M. J.-V. Leclerc dit à son sujet : ' L'exemplaire de Bordeaux n'est pas moins precieux pour la critique ; il nous transmet fidèlement, dans les parties manuscrits, l'orthographe de l'auteur, que mademoiselle de Gournay avait trop peu respectée, et quelques heureuses corrections, quelques courtes phrases que n'avaient pas été transportées sur l'autre exemplaire. Profitons de ces avantages, mais ne défigurons pas l'ouvrage de Montaigne, pour le plaisir de suivre mot à mot une copie qu'il avait lui-même évidemment abandonnée.'

" C'est ici le lieu de faire remarquer qu'à la manière dont l'indication de l'édition de 1588 est donné par Naigeon en tête de l'avis à l'imprimeur, on pourrait croire qu'elle était la sixième, tandis qu'elle est marquée *cinquième*, et que c'est Montaigne qui avait ajouté le premier de ces chiffres, eu égard à l'édition qu'il projetait.

— " Le catalogue de la bibliothèque de M. S. Bérard porte au numéro 160 un exemplaire de *Montaigne, Paris, Lefevre*, 1808, petit in-8°. 5 vol. Il y a probablement erreur, et c'est 1818 qui est la date véritable, car je ne connais pas l'édition des Essais publiée par M. Lefevre avant 1818.

1811.

55. *The same. Paris, P. Didot*, 4 vol. in-12. Reprint of the edition of 1802.

1816.

56. *The same.* *Paris, Didot et Tournachon.* 4 vol. in-12.

Reprint of the edition of 1802.

1818.

57. *The same.* Nouvelle édition imprimée par Crapelet. *Paris, Lefevre,* 1818, in-8°, 5 vol. Portrait engraved by Al. Tardieu, after Cocaskis.

A hundred copies were printed on large paper. This edition, superintended by M. Eloi Johanneau, contains, besides the Essays, a notice to the reader; a summary of the life of Montaigne; the dedication and preface of Mad. de Gournay; La Boëtie's sonnets; a notice of his journey into Italy, by M. Aimé St. Martin; an extract from Montaigne's translation of Sebond; La Boëtie's *Servitude Volontaire;* and a table of contents. There are marginal lemmas.

The heading of Montaigne's preface has the mistake pointed out under 1659.

A good and handsome edition, the most correct and complete that had at that time ever appeared, and which still remains one of the best.

The editor has added a great number of notes, and made a selection from those of Coste.

58.—*The same.* Paris, Lefevre, 1818, 18mo. 6 vols. In the title-page is a medallion portrait, signed C. Hulot.

A reprint of the edition in 8vo., omitting M. Johanneau's preface, and the extracts from the journey, and the translation of Sebond.

59. *The same* (edited by M. de l'Aulnaye, and printed by Fain). Paris, Th. Desoer, 1818. 8vo. One volume, in double columns. Portrait engraved by Leroux, after that of Fiquet.

This edition, of which only 500 copies were printed, contains, besides the Essays, a notice by the editor, the *Eloge* of Montaigne, by M. Jay; reflections on the character and religion of Montaigne, by Naigeon; De Gournay's preface; nine letters by Montaigne; the *Servitude Volontaire;* a glossary; and an analytical table. There are translations of the passages quoted, and references to the authors, and select notes from Coste and Naigeon.

This edition is the first, printed in one vol., since the middle of the 17th century, and in this respect is exceedingly convenient. It is very well printed.

60. *The same.* Paris, *Desoer,* 1818. 18mo. 4 vols. The same portrait as in the preceding edition, to which, in all respects, except form, this edition is conformable.

1819.

61. *The same* Paris et Liege, Desoer, no date. 36mo., 9 vols. This edition, which, except as to form, is exactly conformable to the two preceding, forms part of the *Bibliothèque Portative du Voyageur.*

62. *The same.* Publiés d'après l'edition la plus authentique par Amaury-Duval, Membre de l'Institut. Paris, Chasseriau, 1820-1823. 8vo. 6 vols. Portrait by Audouin.

This edition forms part of a proposed collection of the French moralists, of which series, however, only Montaigne and Charron were published.

Life of Montaigne. Critical opinions; notice of some of the principal editions of the Essays; ten letters of Montaigne; extract from Sebond's *Theologie Naturelle;* the *Servitude Volontaire;* extracts from the Journey; *Avis* de Catherine de Medicis and Charles IX. New table of contents, compiled by M. Lourmond. This edition is printed, with some few exceptions, from Naigeon's. At the head of each chapter there is a summary of the principal matters it treats of. Notes selected from Coste, Naigeon, Johanneau, with additional illustrations by the editor.

This edition was sent forth again in 1827, with fresh titles.

Respecting this edition, M. Payen observes:—

"Je ferai quelques observations au sujet de la Xe Lettre, qui pour la première fois se trouve jointe aux Essais, et dont le *fac-simile* existe à la fin de la Notice sur Montaigne, insérée dans la *Galerie française* (Paris, 1821-23, in-4°, 3 vol.). Je remarque d'abord qu'une note annonce que dans cette copie on a exactement suivi l'orthographe de l'original, *qui se voit à la Bibliothèque du roi.* Cette assertion est inexacte: l'erreur a tenu à ce que la lettre a été copiée, non sur l'original ni même sur le *fac-simile,* mais sur une copie qu'on trouve dans les notes de la *Galerie française,* et dans laquelle l'orthographe et les abréviations de la lettre de Montaigne n'ont point été conservées, afin d'en faciliter la lecture. Ainsi Montaigne a écrit *justemant, seulemant, honorablemant, innoçammant,* par un *a* à la dernière syllabe, et on a partout mis un *e;* il fait beaucoup d'abréviations, par exemple, dans les mots que je viens de citer, il écrit *mat* pour *mant,* il écrit *logue* pour *longue, mosieur* pour *monsieur,* et la copie n'en a suivi aucune; on verra plus loin que cette observation n'est pas sans importance. Quant à l'existence de l'original de cette lettre au dépôt des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque, j'aurais pu douter de sa réalité, car, malgré ma persévérance et les recherches faites avec une extrême complaisance par M. Paris, cette lettre n'a point été retrouvée, et les catalogues n'en font aucune mention; mais M. Gouget, qui s'est occupé avec tant de zèle et de succés de la recherche et de l'imitation des autographes, et qui est auteur des *fac-simile* de la *Galerie française,* m'a affirmé avoir *vu, touché et calqué lui même* la lettre originale qui fait partie d'un volume relié intitulé *Lettres françaises de divers grands hommes.* Elle lui fut indiquée par M. Méon et l'abbé Lépine, qui lui parurent l'avoir nouvellement examinée. Je suis donc convaincu de l'existence de cette pièce sans l'avoir vue, et l'examen du *fac-simile* ne me laisse aucun doute sur son authenticité, d'apres la connaissance de l'écriture de Montaigne, que m'a donnée l'étude de manuscrit du Bordeaux.*

* Une circonstance remarquable c'est que cette Lettre est signée MOTAIGNE (*sic*), et toutes les signatures que j'ai vues de l'auteur des *Essais* sont écrites ainsi; l'N de la première syllabe étant supprimeé et remplacée par un trait qui de l'O se porte au sommet du T. C'est ainsi qu'est signé le titre de *l'Histoire de Pologne,* par Herbart de Fulatin (Paris, 1573, in-4°), que possede M. Aime-Martin, et l'*achevé de lire* que Montaigne ajoutait quelquefois à ses livres (*voyez* le chap. x du liv. II), et qui se rencontre à celui-ci, presente encore ce nom (pour celui de son château), écrit de la même manière. On trouve cette même signature (sans N à la première syllabe) sur le titre du precieux exemplaire des *C. Julii Cæsaris Commentariæ* (Antuerpiæ, 1570, in-8°), avec nombreuses notes marginales et une page entière écrites de la main de Montaigne, que posséde M. Parison, de même que sur le *Cento giochi liberali e d ingegno de innocentio Ringhieri* (Bologna, 1551, in-4°), qu'on voit aussi dans la bibliothèque de ce savant. C'est encore cette même signature qu'on lit sur le *Theod. Bezæ poemata* Paris, H. Etienne, 1569, in-8°), qui fait partie de la riche collection de M. Re-

1822.

63. *The same.* Mis en français moderne, auxquels on a ajouté le Discours sur l'Esclavage (la Servitude volontaire), par Etienne de la Boëtie, publiés par M. Galland. *Bruxelles, Voglet*, 5 vol. in-8o. Portrait.

" Ce n'est pas le premier projet qui ait été formé de traduire Montaigne en français moderne ; mais c'est la première fois qu'il ait été suivi d'une exécution complète. Des 1733, un anonyme inséra dans *le Mercure de France* (juin pag. 1279-1307), le projet d'une nouvelle édition des ESSAIS DE MONTAIGNE, fait dans ce sens. Plus tard, le chevalier de Plassac-Méré sollicitait M. Mitton ' d'ôter au style des ESSAIS DE MONTAIGNE les défauts de son temps, qui suivant lui ne sont plus supportables dans celui-ci. Il dit qu'Aristote prit ce soin des Œuvres d'Homére, et que lui-même a essayé ce qu'il conseille, et que la traduction du chapitre *De la Vanité des Paroles* ne lui a pas coûté davantage qu'à le copier. Bastide, qui admettait la necessité de cette version, a employé une grande partie de sa vie à traduire les Essais, et à composer des *Observations grammaticales et critiques sur Montaigne ou à son occasion.* Ces travaux ont été le sujet de communications frequentes faites par lui à l'Academie de Berlin. On trouve une partie de ses Observations grammaticales dans les Mémoires de cette société. Plusieurs lectures du Montaigne moderne y sont mentionnées, mais on n'en rencontre pas même un échantillon ; le peu qu'on trouve des travaux de Bastide sur Montaigne dans les Mémoires de Berlin, rappelle souvent la trop longue plaisanterie du docteur Mathanasius, et n'est pas de nature à faire regretter beaucoup l'ensemble de ce travail, qui est parmi les manuscrits de la Bibliothèque du roi. M. Champollion, qui en a eu connaissance, m'a dit qu'il n'offrait aucun intérêt, et M. Labouderie en a parlé dans le même sens.

" La manière dont ont été exécutées jusqu'ici les diverses tentatives de versior des ESSAIS, ne donnera pas gain de cause à ceux qui soutiennent le principe de ces traductions dont la necessité est au moins douteuse, suivant moi. Bastide prétendait qu'il fallait mettre les ESSAIS à la portée de ceux *qui ont le temps de les lire, mais à qui le loisir manque pour les étudier.* Mais dans ce système il n'y a pas de raison de s'arrêter; on commencera, comme le veut M. de Plassac, par ôter seulement à Montaigne les défauts de son temps, en lui laissant ceux qui lui sont propres, et de proche en proche on arrivera à exécuter ce que voulait déjà l'anonyme de 1733, qui soutenait que *les* ESSAIS *ne sont presque plus un livre français*, et que ce vieux langage est *bas et grossier.* ' Aussi dit-il, en donnant le programme de sa traduction, qu'elle sera extrêmement libre ; qu'il retranchera ce qui lui paraît contraire aux mœurs, et ce qui lui paraîtra peu capable de plaire ; quelquefois il prendra le fonds de la pensée, et il lui donnera un tour différent de celui dont l'auteur s'est servi ; il abrégera les histoires, et il les racontera à sa manière ; au lieu de suivre l'auteur dans son désordre, il essalera de le corriger jusqu'à un certain point, de mettre un peu plus de suite dans ses idées, et de les arranger d'une manière, sinon plus naturelle, du moins plus raisonnable ; enfin, il poussera la liberté jusqu'à ajouter, lorsqu'il croira pouvoir le faire agréablement et utilement pour le lecteur.' On pourrait penser qu'il y a exagération, si ce qui précéde n'était une citation textuelle de l'auteur ; et en preuve il donne la traduction faite à sa manière, des chapitres 1, 2, et 4 du livre I, et dans ce dernier il remplace une phrase de Montaigne par six vers de Fontenelle ! ... Je le demande : où en seraient les ESSAIS DE MONTAIGNE après une telle mutilation ? La comparaison avec le vaisseau des Argonautes ne serait-elle pas au-dessous de la réalité ? L'autorité de M. de Plassac n'est pas plus grande en cette occasion que celle de l'anonyme ; et malgré le mérite réel que lui accordent ses contemporains on peut sans injustice, mettre en doute son bon goût en cette circonstance, si on se souvient que le chevalier " trouvait un esprit mal fait dans Caton, et un esprit étroit dans Scipion ; qu'il faisait

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nouard, et ce savant bibliographe m'a dit qu'il croyait se rappeler que la signature de Montaigne était ainsi figurée sur deux ouvrages italiens dont l'un n'est plus en sa possession, et dont l'autre, qu'il a cité dans le *Catalogue de la bibliothèque d'un amateur*, n'est pas en ce moment dans sa bibliothèque de Paris (*il Catechismo di Bern. Ochino da Siena, in Basilea*, 1561, in-8o). Enfin, M Guilbert de Pixérécourt possède une signature de Montaigne, qui presente encore cette abréviation.

D'après ces exemples, je crois être en droit de conclure que l'auteur des *Essais* signait toujours MOTAIGNE ; et cette opinion me parait d'autant plus probable, que nous avons vu que la suppression de l N lui était très familière, et que toutes les fois cette lettre était suivie d'un T, il la supprimait et la remplaçait par un trait ; peut-être agissait-il ainsi pour se distinguer des familles du même nom qui habitaient la Guyenne, et qu'on voit citées dans du Verdier et Dom de Vienne; du moins j'ai rencontré un certain nombre de signatures de ces personnages. la Bibliothèque royale en possède du president de Montaigne, tout recemment j'ai examiné chez MM. Debure une Bible qui porte cette signature, et qui n'est pas celle de Michel, et dans toutes la première syllabe est écrite sans abréviation.

" C'est ici le lieu de rappeler la lettre datée d'Orleans, 1598. qui parut a la vente que fit, en 1834, le libraire Caillot des livres de madame de Castellane (sous l'anonyme de M***), et qui fut achetée 760 francs par M G. de P., et puis rendue comme apocryphe à son premier propriétaire. Cette pièce portait pour signature *Motaigne*, ce qui confirme encore l'idée que je viens d'émettre. quelle que soit d'ailleurs l'opinion qu'on ait adoptée sur son authenticité, qu'on aurait pu attaquer par des raisons plus puissantes que celles qu'on a tirées de l'emploi du mot *passeport*, qui s'y rencontre. et qu on a dit être inconnu du temps de Montaigne, puisque

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M. Fontaine a cité une lettre du cardinal de Lorraine, antérieure à celle-ci de 20 ans, et dans laquelle cette expression est employée, et qu'elle l'est également dans l'ordonnance de Louis XI sur les postes (1464). Je dois ajouter, au sujet de cette lettre. que M. Parison, qui l'a examinée est d'avis que c'est une copie figurée (non calquée) d'une lettre authentique qui existe ou a du exister. *Sub judice lis est.* (Les personnes qui seraient curieuses de connaitre les détails des discussions qu'a soulevées cette dernière Lettre, pourront consulter des feuilletons du *Journal de la Librairie* (mai 1834, numéros 19 et 22), le *Journal des Débats* de cette époque ; le *Manuel de l'Amateur d'Autographes*, par M. Fontaine (Paris, 1836, *in* 8o), la brochure du même bibliographe. sur l'utilité des collections autographiques (Paris, 1834, in-8o).

" Je terminerai cette digression par une remarque qui n'est pas sans intérêt, après l'*acheré de lire*, de la main de Montaigne, à la fin de l'*Histoire de Pologne* précitée, lequel est daté de 1586. on voit placé entre parenthèses un chiffre 52, que M. Aimé-Martin a très ingenieusement expliqué en le rapportant à l'age qu'avait alors Montaigne. En effet, notre auteur, né le dernier février 1533. n'avait point encore complété sa cinquante-troisième année. bien qu'il en fut très près ; il a donc du se donner cinquante-deux ans. Cette explication, qui paraissait tres probable, est mise hors de toute contestation par l'examen que j'ai fait des *Commentaires de César*, cités précédemment, puisque l'*acheré de lire* daté de juillet 1578, est suivi du chiffre 45, qui indique précisément l'age de Montaigne a cette époque. Ainsi ce philosophe ne se contentait pas d'inscrire à la fin de quelques ouvrages *le jugement qu'il en avait retiré en gros*, comme il dit lui meme, il voulait encore se rappeler l age auquel il avait porté ce jugément."

peu de cas des auteurs anciens, et surtout de Virgile, dont il disait que *l'Enéide* était *ennuyeuse à périr*, qu'il trouvait des choses de *mauvais air* dans Démosthène et dans Cicéron, et qu'Homère le rebutait souvent, etc.'

"Sorel, dans la Bibliothèque française, dit, au sujet même de ces essais de traduction: 'Puisqu'on n'y saurait rien changer sans les rendre tout autre que ce qu'ils sont, il faut les laisser dans un état qui leur a déjà acquis tant de réputation;' et on peut appliquer à Montaigne ce que disait Racine dans la préface de *Mithridate*: 'Je rapporte les paroles de Plutarque telles qu'Amyot les a traduites, car elles ont une grâce, dans le vieux style de ce traducteur, que je ne crois point pouvoir égaler dans notre langue moderne.'

"On peut croire que Montaigne n'aurait pas approuvé l'excès de zèle de ses traducteurs, lui qui ordonne aux imprimeurs de suivre toujours l'ancienne orthographe (chap. 10 du livre iii).

"Je crois ne pouvoir mieux terminer cette digression qu'en citant un passage dans lequel Naigeon me paraît avoir traité cette question avec infiniment de justesse et de goût, en reproduisant exactement des idées énoncées par Sorel: 'je ne vois qu'un seul moyen de rendre ce livre intelligible pour la plupart des lecteurs; c'est de joindre partout un commentaire presque aussi long que le texte, ou plutôt de le traduire dans la langue élégante, harmonieuse, et claire, que Voltaire, Buffon, Diderot, d'Alembert et Rousseau ont parlée et écrite. On réussira sans doute à faire des Essais un livre agréable, peut-être même d'une utilité plus générale; mais je ne crains pas d'assurer que cette espèce de traduction, en la supposant même très exacte, ce qui ne serait pas sans quelques difficultés, ferait très souvent perdre au style de Montaigne une grande partie de sa précision, de son énergie, de sa hardiesse, de ce naturel aisé qui en fait un des principaux charmes, et donnerait à son livre, qu'on ne refera pas plus que celui de Rabelais, un caractère très divers, moins original et beaucoup moins piquant. Le projet de récrire dans notre langue les Essais de Montaigne peut passer comme tant d'autres idées par la tête d'un ignorant ou d'un sot, mais il n'entrera jamais dans celle d'un lecteur judicieux, instruit et d'un goût délicat et sûr.'

"On devra consulter, comme exemple de ce qu'on pourrait se permettre à l'égard du langage des Essais, les citations qu'en fait M. Labouderie dans l'ouvrage qu'il a publié sur le Christianisme de Montaigne. Ce savant, à l'aide de quelques changements presque insensibles, et souvent par la seule addition d'un mot entre parenthèse, a rendu parfaitement intelligible les passages des Essais qu'il a cités. C'est ici le lieu de rappeler que, relativement à l'orthographe de Montaigne, M. Labouderie est d'avis que les variations qu'elle présente dans le même mot employés plusieurs fois et dans les diverses éditions autorisent à ne pas la conserver, et il dit que les raisons alléguées contre cette opinion par les derniers éditeurs n'ont pas changé sa conviction. C'est le système suivi aussi par M. Buchon dans ses éditions de Froissart."

1823.

64. *The same*,—avec les notes de tous les commentateurs. *Paris, Lefevre* (printed by Crapelet), 1823, in 8°, 5 vol.; portrait after that of 1818.

A reprint of the edition of 1818, to which it is conformable in all respects, except that the title page mentions no particular editor; and that M Johanneau's preface is omitted.

It is to be remarked that although this and the following editions are described by their publishers as embodying *les notes de tous les commentateurs*, they do not, in point of fact, contain more than a selection of the notes of *all the commentators*, and hardly any two editors agree in their selection of these notes.

1825.

65. *The same*,—avec les notes de tous les commentateurs, et précédés de l'Eloge de Montaigne, par M. Villemain; *Paris*, Froment, 1825. 18mo. 8 vols. Portrait after that of Fiquet.

Short notice (not signed) by the editor. Notes from Coste, Naigeon, Duval, Johanneau, and Lefevre.—*Eloge* by Villemain.—Summary of the life of Montaigne.—De Gournay's preface.—Nine letters.—The *Servitude Volontaire*.—Analytical table of contents. Edition conformable to the preceding.

1826.

66. *The same*,—avec les notes de tous les commentateurs; édition publiée par J.-V. Leclerc.—Paris, Lefevre (printed by Jules Didot l'aîné), 1826. 8vo. 5 vols. Portrait by Dupont.

A good and handsome edition, forming part of the *Classiques Français*, published by the same bookseller. In addition to the notes of preceding editors, M. Leclerc has added some of his own, and others taken from the commentary of M. l'Avocat-Général Servan upon the two first books of the Essays. Notice of the edition. Remarks upon the life and works of Montaigne. Notes and illustrations. Epochs of the life of Montaigne. His family. His journey. Remarks upon the admirers and detractors of Montaigne. Ten letters. Extract from Sebond's Natural Theology. The *Servitude Volontaire*. Analytical table of contents. La Boëtie's sonnets.

1827.

67. *The same*. *Paris*, Rapilly, 1827, 8vo.

The edition of Chasseriau, 1820, with new titles.

68. *The same*,—avec les notes de Coste, Naigeon, Amaury-Duval, Eloi Johanneau, et autres commentateurs. Paris, Menard et Desenne, 1827. 12mo and 18mo. 10 vols. Portrait. This edition forms part of the *Bibliothèque Française*, published by the same booksellers.

Summary of Montaigne's life; dedication to Richelieu; Gournay's long preface; summaries to chapters; nine letters; the *Servitude Volontaire* no table of contents.

1828.

69. *The same*. Paris, H. Bossange, 1828. 8vo. 4 vols. A reprint of the edition of 1802.

70. *The same*. Edition selon l'orthographe de l'auteur, avec les sommaires analytiques, et les notes de tous les commentateurs; précédés de la préface de Mademoiselle de Gournay et d'un précis de la vie de Montaigne. Paris, Tardieu Denesle, 1828. 8vo. 6 vols.

De Gournay's dedication to Richelieu, and La Boëtie's sonnets, are printed in this edition. The notes are selected from different commentators. There is an analytical table.

1830.

71. *The same*—(édition compacte), collationnée sur les meilleurs textes. Paris, Furne, L. Debure,

1830, royal 8vo, double columns. Some copies of this edition are dated 1831.

Villemain's *Eloge*. Nine letters; the *Servitude Volontaire;* analytical table.—The notes are different from those in Desoër's edition, though Querard says it is a reprint of that edition.

1833.

72. *The same*. Paris, Le Bigre et Firmin Didot, 8vo. 4 vols. Portrait.

A reprint of the edition of 1802.

1834.

73. *The same*, avec les notes de tous les commentateurs. *Paris*, Lefevre, 1834. 1 vol. Royal 8vo. Double columns. Portrait after that of Leclerc's edition.

Edition printed from that of Leclerc in 1826, omitting the preliminary pieces.

1836.

74. *The same*,—avec les notes de tous les commentateurs. *Paris, Lefevre*, 1836. 8vo. 2 vols. Portrait after that of 1826.

The text of the Essays with notes. The letters, the *Servitude Volontaire*, and analytical table.

72. *The same*—(forming part of the *Panthéon Littéraire*). Dedication; notice of the life of Montaigne, by M. Buchan. Bibliographical notice by Doctor Payen. De Gournay's preface. The Essays. Notes selected from all the commentators. Montaigne's journey. Ten letters. Avis de Catherine de Medicis à Charles IX. The *Servitude Volontaire*. List of authors quoted. Index.

CHRONOLOGICAL SUMMARY OF THE EDITIONS OF THE ESSAYS.

No.					
No. 1.	1580	Bordeaux.	Millanges.	in 8vo.	2 vol.
2.	1582	Bordeaux.	Millanges.	8,	1
3.	1587	Paris.	Richer.	12,	1
4.	1588	Paris.	L'Angelier.	4,	1
5.	1593	Lyon.	Lagrange.	8,	1
6.	1595	Paris.	L'Angelier. Sonnius.	fol.	1
7.	1595	Lyon.	Lefebure.	12,	1
8.	1598	Paris.	L'Angelier.	8,	1
9.	1600	Paris.	*Id.*	8.	1
10.	1602	Paris.	*Id.*	8,	1
11.	1602	Leyde.	Doreau.	8,	1
12.	1602	Leyde.	*Id.*	8,	1
13.	1604	Paris.	L'Angelier.	8,	1
14.	1608	Paris.	Sevestre. Petitpas.	8,	1
15.	1609	Leyde.	Doreau.	8,	1
16.	1611	Paris.	Gueffier. Sevestre. Petitpas.	8,	1
17.	1614	Paris.	Gueffier. Petitpas. Sevestre. Nivelle. Rigaud.	4,	1
18.	1616	Cologne.	Albert.	8,	1
19.	1617	Paris.	Gueffier. Petitpas. Sevestre. Nivelle. Rigaud.	4,	1
20.	1616	Rouen.	Osmont. Mann. de Preaulx	8,	1
21.	1619	Rouen.	Daré.	8,	1
22.	1619	„	Jean Durand.	8,	1
23.	1625	Paris.	Dallin. Hulpeau. Gilles. Collet. Bertauld.	4,	1
24.	1627	Rouen.	Valentin. Calloué. Delahaye.	8,	1
25.	1635	Paris.	Camusat. Dubray. Rocolet.	fol.	1
26.	1636	Paris.	Lafosse. Lamy. Loyson. Blageart.	8,	1
27.	1640	Paris.	Blageart. Courbe.	fol.	1
28.	1641	Rouen.	Berthemin. Besongue.	8,	1
29.	1646	Paris.	Blageart.	8,	1
30.	„	Envers.	Maire.	8,	1
No. 31.	1649			8,	1
32	1652	Paris	Courhé. Lepetit.	in fol.	1 v.
33.	1657	Paris	Loyson. Langlois. Lamy. Rocolet. Dupuy. Huré.	fol.	1
34	1659	Paris	Journel.	12,	3
35	1659	Brussels	Foppens.	12,	3
		Amsterdam	Michel.	12,	3
36	1669	Paris	Rondet.	12,	3
37	1669	Lyon	Olyer. Besson.	12,	3
38	1724	Londres	Tonson.	4,	3
39	1725	Paris	la Société.	4,	3
40	1727	Genève La Haye	Gosse.	12.	5
41	1739	Londres	Nourse.	12,	6
42	1745	*Id.*	*Id.*	12,	7
43	1754	*Id.*	*Id.*	12,	10
44	1769	*Id.*	*Id.*	12,	10
45	1771	*Id.*	*Id.*	12,	10
46	1779	Genève	Cailler.	12,	10
47	1780	*Id.*	Duvillard.	12,	10
48	1781	Amsterdam	la Compagnie.	8,	3
49	1783	Paris	Bastien.	8,	3
50	1789	*Id.*	Voland.	12,	10
51	1793	*Id.*	Bastien.	8,	3
52	1799	*Id.*	Gueffier.	8,	4
53	1801	*Id.*	Louis.	18.	16
54	1802	*Id.*	Didot.	8, 12,	4
55	1811	*Id.*	*Id.*	12,	4
56	1816	*Id.*	*Id.*	12,	4
57	1818	*Id.*	Lefevre.	8,	5
58	1818	*Id.*	*Id.*	18,	6
59	1818	*Id.*	Desoer.	8,	1
60	1818	*Id.*	*Id.*	18,	4
61	1819	Paris Liege	Desoer.	36,	9
62	1820	Paris	Chasseriau.	8.	6
63	1822	Bruxelles	Voglet.	8,	5
64	1823	Paris	Lefevre.	8,	5
65	1825	*Id.*	Froment.	18,	8
66	1826	*Id.*	Lefevre.	8,	5
67	1827	*Id.*	Rapilly.	8,	6
68	1827	*Id.*	Menard.	12,	10
69	1828	*Id.*	Bossange.	8,	4
70	1828	*Id.*	Tardieu, D.	8,	6
71	1830	*Id.*	Furne.	8,	1
72	1833	*Id.*	Lebigre.	8,	4
73	1834	*Id.*	Lefevre.	8,	1
74	1836	*Id.*	Lefevre.	8,	2
75	1836	*Id.*	Desrez.	8,	1

EXTRACTS FROM THE ESSAYS OF MONTAIGNE.

1. At the head of these must be placed the edition of the Essays published at Geneva by Goulart. In the *Scaligerana Secunda*, at the article Goulart, we read: "Il a fait châtrer les œuvres de Montaigne: *Quæ audacia in scripta aliena.*" At the article Montaigne, Scaliger says, in reference to Goulart: "Ceux de Genève ont été bien impudents d'en ôter plus d'un tiers."

2. Réponse à plusieurs injures et railleries écrites contre Michel, seigneur de Montaigne, dans un livre intitulé la Logique, ou l'Art de penser, avec un beau traité de l'éducation des enfants et cinq cents excellents passages, tirés du livre des Essais, pour montrer le mérite de cet auteur (by Guillaume *Béranger*, but published anonymously), *Rouen, Laurens Maurry*, 1667, 12mo.

3. *The same.* With the author's name. *Paris, J. Thoury, P. Débats et Augustin Besongue*, 1668, in-12.

"Cet ouvrage," says M. Payen, "n'est à proprement parler qu'un extrait des Essais. L'auteur, voulant défendre Montaigne contre les écrivains de Port-Royal, crut ne pouvoir mieux le faire qu'en leur opposant Montaigne même; il rectifie les *citations inexactes* faites dans la *logique*, en citant le texte des Essais, il rapporte quelques jugemens favorables; il donne une partie du chapitre de l'institution des enfants et termine par 502 pensées extraites des Essais.

This volume is now extremely rare; it is not in the King's Library at Paris, but it is in the British Museum, in the Library Sainte-Geneviève at Paris, and in the Public Library at Bordeaux.

4. *L'Esprit des Essais de Michel*, seigneur de Montaigne. *Paris, Charles de Sercy*, 1677, 12mo. Engraved frontispiece, with portrait, and the *Que Sçais-je?* Printed title-page.

5. *Pensées de Montaigne*, propres à former l'esprit et les mœurs. A Paris, chez Anisson, Directeur de l'imprimerie Royale, rue de la Harpe, 1700, 1 vol. 12mo.

6. *The same.*—Seconde édition, considérablement augmentée, *Amsterdam, Henri Desbordes et Etienne Roger*, 1701, small 12.

7. *The same.*—*Amsterdam*, 1703, *Henri Desbordes* au Kalvestraat, 12mo.

8. *The same.*—*Paris*, nouvelle édition, imprimerie bibliographique, au XIII (1805), 12mo.

9. *L'Esprit de Montaigne*, ou les Maximes, pensées, jugements et réflexions de cet auteur, rédigés par ordre de matières (by Pesselier). Berlin (Paris), Etienne de Bordeaux, 1753, 12mo., 2 vol.

10. *The same.*—Nouvelle édition. *Berlin et Paris. Rozet*, 1767; 12mo., 2 vol.

Same edition as the preceding; there are only the titles changed.

11. *The same.*—*Londres*, 1783, 18mo., 2 vol., portrait.

12. L'Ami des Jeunes Gens, ou Guide pour les conduire dans la société, leur inspirer l'amour des vertus, les éloigner du vice, etc.; ouvrage dans lequel on a extrait des morceaux de Plutarque, Cicéron, Pline, Quintilien, Montesquieu, *Montaigne*, Fénélon, Buffon, Raynal, etc. *Paris, Deterville* (no date), 2 vol. 12, fig. (by Retz, but published anonymously.) This work is the same that appeared in 1790, under the title *Guide des Jeunes Gens de l'un et de l'autre sexe, à leur entrée dans le monde;* the titles only are changed.

13. Le Portrait du Sage, extrait de Confucius, Platon, Zénon, Cicéron, Sénèque, Epictète, Marc Aurèle, Plutarque, *Montaigne*, Bacon, Charron, Fénélon, La Bruyère, Sterne, J.-J. Rousseau, Weiss, etc.; editeur, Gabriel Peignot, *Paris*, 1809, 12mo. 48 pages, "grand papier velin fort, tiré à 75 exemplaires tous numérotés, et deux sur papier rose."

14. *L'Esprit de Montaigne*, avec une préface et des notes, par M. Laurentie, *Paris, Mequignon-Havart et Bricon*, 1829, 18mo., 1 vol. Part of the Bibliothèque choisie, published under the direction of M. Laurentie.

"This volume is extracted not from the Essays, but from the work of Pesselier, which the present editor has, however, abridged: "Nous avons gardé," says he, "dans ce recueil ce qui a dû être inspiré seulement par le christianisme; le grec du portique a disparu. Ce livre contient, non pas Montaigne échappé des écoles d'Athènes, mais Montaigne française et chrétien."

TRAVELS OF MONTAIGNE.

1. *Journal du Voyage* de MICHEL MONTAIGNE en Italie par la Suisse et l'Allemagne, en 1580 et 1581, avec des notes par M. de Querlon. A *Rome* et *Paris, Lejay*, 1774, 4to. A fine portrait, engraved by Saint-Aubin. A magnificent volume, dedicated to Buffon. The notes are drawn up by Querlon, from materials supplied by M. Jamet.

2 and 3. *The same.*—The same titles, the same date. 2 vols. 12mo., or 3 vols. small 12mo. No portrait.

PORTRAITS OF MONTAIGNE.

There are several PORTRAITS, reputed ORIGINALS, of Montaigne.

1. Fiquet has left us one, after a very remarkable portrait, painted in 1578, by Dumoustier.

2. The Montaigne engraved by Chéreau, in 1725, is after a portrait which at that time belonged to M. Berroyer, Counsellor to the Parliament.

3. That published by Delpech is copied from a

portrait which was for a long time in the Depôt des Archives, and has only been recently removed thence.

1. The most ancient of the ENGRAVED PORTRAITS that I am acquainted with is that which appeared in the editions of 1611 and 1617, signed *Thomas de Leu*: it has some resemblance to that of Dumoustier.

2. Father Lelong (in the *Bibliothèque Historique*) mentions, about this epoch, a portrait of Montaigne by Jaspard Isaac.

3. *The same*, by Desrochers. 4to.

4. The edition of 1635 has a portrait, with no signature, which also appeared in the editions of 1652 and 1657. The armorial bearings by which it is accompanied are incorrect. In some copies the arms are omitted.

5. The edition of 1640 has a portrait, but without any signature.

6. There is a portrait, signed *N. de Larmessin*, in the edition of Paris, 1659.

7. *The same*, also in the edition of Holland, 1659, with the signature *P. Clouwet*.

8. Also in the edition of Paris, 1669, with the signature *Matheus*.

9. There is a portrait of Montaigne, in the small size, in the work by Freher, published in 1688.

10, 11, 12. In the edition of the Essays, 1641, in that of "L'Esprit de Montaigne," 1677, and in the "Pensées," 1701, there is respectively a portrait of very small size. That of 1641 is signed *F. Honervogt*.

13. *The same*, designed by *Genest*, engraved by *Chéreau*, 4to. 1723 (after that of 1635), in the edition of London, 1724. The arms here also are incorrect.

14. *The same*, engraved by *Chéreau*, 4to. 1725 (after the portrait announced as original, communicated by M. Berroyer). The arms are correct. In the edition of Paris, 1725.

15, 16, 17. There are three reductions of this portrait: one, in 8vo., in the edition of Amsterdam, 1781; another, in 12mo., in the edition of London, 1771; the third, in 18mo., in the edition of the "Pensées," London, 1783.

18. *The same*, designed by *Jorat*, and engraved by *François*, in the manner of red chalk, in 4to., in the work of *Saverien*. (See the list of authors.)

19. *The same*, *J. Blanchon*, inv. sculps. A reduction, in 8vo., of the preceding; black, with the initials of *François*.

20. *The same*, in the line manner, in the work of Lavater, vol. 3, La Haye, 1796, folio.

21. *The same*, engraved by *Fiquet*, in 8vo., after a portrait by *Dumoustier*, in 1578. This portrait is one of the finest of all that have been published.

22. *The same*, after the same: no signature. In the edition of 1796.

23. *The same*, engraved by *A. de Saint-Aubin*, and finished by *Romanet*, 4to. A fine engraving, in the edition in 4to. of the Journey.

24. *The same*, engraved by *Voyer*, jun., 4to. (after the preceding.)

25. *The same*, signed *F. N. et Martinet*, 8vo. (after the preceding.)

26. *The same*, designed and engraved by *Noel Primeau* (after the preceding), 8vo., in the editions published by Bastien.

27. *The same*, engraved by *Lebeau*, 4to. (Esnauts et Rapilly.)

28. *The same*, *Marillier* del., *Ponce* sculp. In the work entitled *Illustres Français*.

29. *The same*, designed and engraved by *F. Bonneville*, 8vo. (after that by Saint-Aubin.)

30. *The same*, engraved by *P. M. Alix*, after *Dumoustier*, and coloured by *Bechet*, folio, oval form, published by Drouhin.

31. *The same*, designed by *Cocaskis*, engraved by *Alex. Tardieu*, 8vo., in the edition by Lefevre, 1818.

32. *The same*, engraved by *Leroux*, after *Dumoustier*, 8vo., in the edition by Desoer.

33. *The same*, engraved by *P. Audoin*, 8vo., in the edition by Chasserian.

34. *The same*, in the line manner, by *Meysens* (Landon dir.), 8vo. (Biogr. Univ. et galerie hist. de Landon.)

35. *The same*, designed and engraved by *Dupont*, in an edition by Lefevre, 8vo.

36. *The same*, exactly resembling the preceding as to the portrait, engraved by *Pollet*, in another edition of Lefevre, 8vo.

37. *The same*, designed by *Deveria*, engraved by *Fauchery*, 8vo.

38. *The same*, engraved on steel by *Lefevre*, 4to., published by Blaisot.

39. *The same*, *Aug. Saint-Aubin*, a profile in medallion, 8vo., in the edition by Naigeon.

40. *The same*, *C. Hulot*, a profile in medallion, in the edition in 18mo., by Lefevre.

41. *The same*, at the head of a *Notice sur Montaigne*, in the "Iconographie instructive."

42. *The same*, engraved by *Read*, from the original picture in the Depot des Archives du Royaume, at Paris, published by Templeman.

There are several other portraits, in different sizes, without signatures.

The full-length portraits of Montaigne are:—

43. In the engraving by *M. Forster*, from the picture by *Gros*, representing Charles the Fifth visiting the tomb of St. Denis, folio.

44. In the engraving by *Baquoy*, after *Ducis*, of Montaigne visiting Tasso, folio.

45. *The same*, *Leroux* sculp., *Devéria* del., 8vo. 1822.

46. *The same*, engraved by *Leroy*, after *Dupont*, large 8vo., 1835, in the *Plutarque Français*.

47. A lithographed portrait, *Bouillon* del., after the bust in the *Musée des Monumens français*, 4to. in the *Galerie Française*.

48. *The same*, 4to., *Gautheret et Weber*.

49. *The same*, folio, *P. Indré*.

50. *The same*, folio, *Maurin* (after that of the *Musée des Monumens Français*), published by Delpech.

51. *The same*, reduced from the preceding.

REFERENCES TO THE PRINCIPAL OPINIONS

WHICH HAVE BEEN PASSED, DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY, UPON MONTAIGNE AND HIS WRITINGS.

(*Those which were deemed more especially worthy of notice have been reprinted in the present Edition.*)

1. *Scævolæ Sammarthani elogiorum* (lib. ii).
2. *Thuani, historiarum* (lib. CIV., add ann. 1592. Edit. Roverianæ, 1630, in-folio, t. 5, pag. 264).
Idem, *De Vitâ suâ* (lib. iii., pag. 52).
3. *Pasquier* (lettre i., liv. xviii., à M. Pelgé, maître des comptes).
4. *Justi Lipsii epist.* (cent. 1, miscell. epist. 43; Cent 2, epist. 41, 55, 56, 92. Cent. 1, ad Belgas epist. 15. Cent. 2, ad Belgas epist. 21).
5. *Mademoiselle de Gournay, préface des Essais* de l'édition in-fol., *Paris*, 1595, reprinted in the *Promenoir de M. de Montaigne, Paris*, in-12, L'Angelier, 1599; and again in the edition of the Essays, *Paris*, 1617; again, in 1625, in 4to.; and again, with new modifications, in 1635, &c. &c.
6. *Balzac, Dissertation* (19 et 20).
7. *Ptassac Méré* à M. Mitton. M. Payen doubts the authenticity of this letter.
8. *Rolandi Maresii epist.* (lib. i., epist. 22, Joanni Capellano.)
9. *Dominici Baudii iambicorum* (lib. ii., et in notis).
10. *Jonathan de Saint-Servin.* Essais et observations sur les essais du seigneur de Montaigne. *London, Edward Allde*, 1626, 12mo.
11. *Eloges des Hommes Illustres*, qui depuis un siècle ont fleuri en France dans la profession des lettres, composés par Scevole de Sainte-Marthe, et mis en français par G. Colletet. *Paris, Courbé*, 1644 (liv. ii., pag. 147).
12. *Gui Patin*, lettre du 12 septembre, 1645. (Lettres Choisies. *Paris*, 12mo., No. 6.)
13. *Chanet.* Traité de l'esprit de l'homme et de ses fonctions.—*Paris, Camusat et Petit*, 1649, 8vo. (liv. ii., chap. 10, liv. iii., chap. 3.)
14. *Préface* de la galerie des peintures. *Paris, Sercy*, 1663.
15. *Sorel.* Bibliothèque française. *Paris*, 1667, 12mo. (page 80).
16. *De Silhon.* De l'immortalité de l'âme. *Paris*, 1634, 4to. (liv. i., disc. 2; liv. ii. disc. 6.)
17. *Daudiguier.* Traité du vrai et ancien usage des duels (page 88).
18. *Examen* de la manière d'enseigner le latin aux enfants par le seul usage. *Paris*, 1688 (p. 72).
19. *De Villiers.* Réflexions sur les défauts d'autrui (chap. de la nature et du vray, t. ii).
20. *Béranger.* Réponse aux injures écrites contre Michel, seigneur de Montaigne, etc. (Extracts from the Essays, No. 2.) *Paris*, 1667 et 1668, 12mo.
The author quotes several opinions upon the Essays, and, amongst others, that of an illustrious prelate, and that of M. L. D.
21. *Journal des Savants*, August, 1677.
22. *Preface* to the "Esprit des Essais de Montaigne. *Paris, De Sercy*, 1677, 12mo.
23. *De Freheri, med. norib. Theatri virorum eruditione clarorum. Noribergæ*, 1688, folio (tome iii., parag. 4, page 1486): an article extracted from Scevole Sainte-Marthe, with a portrait.
24. *Blaise Pascal.* Œuvres, *La Haye*, 1779, in-8°., 5 vol. (*Pensées*, première partie, article 8, Nos. 10 et 14, art. 9; Nos. 36 et 43, art. 10; No. 7, art. 11, entitled: d'*Epictète et de Montaigne*, deuxième partie, art. 17, No. 34.)
25. *Malebranche.* Récherche de la vérité... (liv. ii., part iii., chap. iii., et les éclaircissemens et chap. 5.)
26. *Nicole.* Essais de morale. (Tome 6, Pensées sur divers sujets de morale, art. 29: des Plaisirs.)
27. *Ant. Arnauld et Nicole.* La Logique, ou l'Art de penser. (Troisième partie, chap. 19, No. 6.)
28. *Leclerc.* Bibliothèque universelle et historique, juin 16 1.
29. *La Chet rdie*, under the word Moncade, *Rouen*, 1691. Réflexion, 161 (*Coste*).
30. *Lafaille* (anonyme). Le portefeuille de M. L. D. F. *Carpentras. Labarre*, 1694, 12mo.
31. *Ancillon.* Mélanges critiques de littérature. Bâle, 1691 (tome ii., art. 79).
32. *Dom Bonaventure d'Argonne*, under the name of Vigneul Marville. Mélanges d'histoire et de littérature. *Rouen*, Maury, 1699, 12mo. (tome i., page 133).
33. *La Bruyère.* Caractères, dixième édition. *Paris*, 1699 (page 31).
34. *Lamy.* Démonstration de la sainteté de la religion chrétienne.
35. *Artaud.* Preface to the *Pensées de Montaigne.*
36. *Jacq. Bernard.* Nouvelles de la république des lettres. Avril, 1701.
37. Mémoires pour l'histoire des sciences et des beaux arts. Mai et juin, 1701.
38. *Sacy* (anonyme). Traité de l'amitié. *Paris*, Barbin, 1704 (page 149).
39. *Saint-Evremond.* Edit. d'*Amsterdam*, 1706, in-12. (Œuvres mêlées, tome iii., page 58. Mélange curieux, tome i., page 173.)
40. *Menagiana.* Edit. de *Paris*, 1715 (tome iii., page 102).
41. *Tessier.* Eloges des hommes illustres. *Leyde*, 1715, 12mo. (Citations de de Thou, réflexions de l'auteur qui rapporte quelques jugemens et critiques.)
42. *Bayle.* Dictionnaire. Edit. de 1720 (tome i. page 852; tome iv., page 2986 et 3025). It is very remarkable that Bayle has not dedicated a special article to Montaigne. The same omission is to be wondered at in the *Dictionnaires* of Moreri, Chaufepié, and Prosper Marchand.
43. *Segraisiana.* Edit. de *Paris*, 1721 (p. 143).
44. *Huetiana.* Edit. de *Paris*, 1722 (art. 6, page 14).
45. *Nicéron.* Mémoires pour servir, etc. etc (tome xvi.)

46. *Beeverwyk.* Défense de la médecine contre les calomnies de Montaigne, dans l'ouvrage intitulé: *Eloge de la médecine et de la chirurgie. Paris.* Rebuffé, 1730, 12mo. (from page 30 to page 121).

47. *Catalogue manuscrit de la Bibliothèque du roi, rédigé vers le milieu du siècle dernier.* (After mentioning the different editions of the Essays, the judicious compiler adds: "Ouvrage suranné, estimé, goûté dans le monde, moins par ce qu'il a de bon que par-ce qu'il a de mauvais.)

48. *Mercure de France,* 1733. Projet de traduction en français moderne des *Essais* de Montaigne.

49. *Crousaz.* Histoire du pyrrhonisme ancien et moderne. *La Haye,* P. de Hondt, 1733, folio (pages 134, 1516).

50. *Bouhier* (the president). La vie de Michel, seigneur de Montaigne (first printed in the edition of the Essays in 1739; then successively in the *Mercure de France,* October, 1740; in the Supplement, in 4to., published the same year at London; in the *Eloges de quelques auteurs francais, Dijon,* Marteret, 1742, 8vo., where it is entitled: *Mémoires pour servir, etc.;* in the edition of the Essays, 1745; and in the subsequent reprints of Coste's edition).

51. *Scaligerana secunda.* Articles Montaigne and Goulart. (See, as to the "Scaligerana prima et secunda," a curious note in the *Répertoire des bibliographies spéciales de Gabr. Peignot. Paris,* Renouard, 1810.)

52. *Montesquieu.* Pensées (sur les modernes).

53. *Pesselier.* Preface to the "Esprit de Montaigne et éloge historique de cet auteur." *Paris,* 12mo.

54. *Marmontel.* Œuvres. *Paris,* Verdière, 1825 (tome i., pages 45, 49, 150, 559; tome iv., pages 465, 479, 482).

55. *P. Coste.* Preface to the edition of the Essays, 1724, and *avis sur l'édition de* 1739, reprinted, with modifications, in 1745.

56. *Voltaire.* Discours à l'Académie.—Lettres philosophiques (lettre xii.), préface de l'Ecossaise. —Dict. philos., art. Français.—Epître sur l'envie. —Lettre au comte de Tressan du 21 aout 1746.—Mélanges philosophiques.

57. *J.-J. Rousseau* often quotes Montaigne, and more frequently avails himself of his ideas without naming him: he answers some of his opinions in the 4th book of the *Emile,* and in the *Confessions,* (partie deuxième, livre x.)

58. *D. J. C. B.* (Dom. Jos. Cajot, bénédictin), Les plagiats de M. J.-J. Rousseau sur l'éducation. *La Haye, Paris,* Durand, 1766, 8vo. et 12mo. (from page 119 to 159).

59. *Tressan.* Voltaire, in his letter to the Comte de Tressan, warmly eulogises the author of the Essays, and says on this subject: "Vous ne vous êtes pas assurément trompé sur Montaigne, je vous remercie bien, monsieur, d'avoir pris sa défense." .... "Je conserverai chèrement l'exemplaire que vous m'avez fait l'honneur de m'envoyer;" and M. Biot says, in his *Discours sur Montaigne,* that M. de Tressan wrote a dissertation on this subject; but there is no such piece in the edition of the works of the Comte de Tressan, published by M. Campenon. *Paris,* Neveu et André, 1822-23, 10 vol.

60. *Saverien.* Histoire des philosophes modernes avec leurs portraits gravés dans le goût du crayon, d'après les dessins des plus grands peintres, par M. Saverien, publié par François, graveur. *Paris,* Brunet, 1760, 4to. 4 vols.

61. Bibliothèques françaises de *Lacroix du Maine* et de *Duverdier,* par M. Rigoley de Juvigny; *Paris,* 1772, 4to., 7 vol. (See under *Michel.*)

62. *Dom de Vienne.* Dissertation sur la religion de Montaigne. *Bordeaux* et *Paris,* 1773, 8vo.—Eloge historique de Michel de Montaigne et dissertation sur la religion; *Paris,* 1775, in-8.—Histoire de la ville de Bordeaux; *Bordeaux,* 1771, 4to., tome i.

63. *De Querlon.* Discours préliminaire du Journal du Voyage de Montaigne.

64. *Talbert.* Eloge de Michel Montaigne qui a remporté le prix d'éloquence à l'Académie de Bordeaux en 1774. (Printed in the editions of the Essays of 1779, 1780, 1789.) This *Eloge* is followed by some interesting notes.

65. *Deslandes.* Réflexions sur les grands hommes qui sont morts en plaisantant; *Amsterdam,* 1732, 12mo. (He cites Montaigne at pages 3, 23, 118, *et sequent.*) "L'idée de cet ouvrage," says M. Payen, "qui est d'une grand pauvreté d'exécution, a certainement été fournie à l'auteur par cette phrase de Montaigne qu'il cite dans sa préface: *Si j'estois faiseur de livres je ferois un registre commenté des morts diverses. Qui apprendroit les hommes à mourir, leur apprendroit à vivre.* Le *registre* existait, mais non *commenté,* du vivant même de Montaigne, car Jean Tixier de Ravisi, plus connu sous le nom de *Ravisius Textor,* et qui était mort dès 1524, a donné dans son *Officina vel potius naturæ historia* une longue liste d'un grand nombre de noms d'hommes classés en trente-six chapitres dont chacun comprend une cause particulière de mort; ainsi: De iis qui podagra mortui; de iis qui aquis submersi interierunt; de iis qui in latrinis perierunt; de gaudio et risu mortuis; de iis qui in actu venereo mortui; de iis qui siti ac fame perierunt, etc. *Voy.* à l'ouvrage cité, édition de *Bâle,* 1552, in-4, de la page 509 à 596. —Plusieurs autres ouvrages ont été composés dans le même sens. *Valere Maxime* a consacré le chap. xii. du livre ix. à quelques exemples de morts remarquables (de mortibus non vulgaribus); on a publié à *Paris,* en 1772, chez *Moutard,* un ouvrage en 2 vol. in-12, intitulé: Derniers sentiments des plus illustres personnages condamnés à mort, lequel est attribué par M. Barbier aux abbés Sabatier et de Vesteuil, et que Sabatier, dans ses articles inédits, attribue à l'abbé *Prévost.* Il a paru en 1813, à Paris, chez A. Emery, un ouvrage in-8°., sans nom d'auteur (*Léon Thiessé*), sous ce titre: Les derniers moments des plus grands hommes français condamnés à mort pour délits politiques.—Le professeur Desgenettes a fait paraître en 1833, un ouvrage intitulé: Etudes sur le genre de mort des hommes illustres de Plutarque et des empereurs romains.—On peut rapprocher les ouvrages suivants de ceux qui précèdent, car la mort est au nombre des *accidents* dont on y trouve le récit: ainsi *Boccace* a écrit un livre, *De casibus virorum, ac fœminarum illustrium,* qui a été plusieurs fois traduit en français sous les titres de: La Ruyne des nobles hommes et femmes, *Lyon,* 1483; le livre des cas des nobles hommes et femmes malheureux, *Paris,* 1483; des Nobles malheureux, *Paris,* 1494; Traités des mésaventures des personages signalés, *Paris,* 1578, etc. La liste commence à Adam et Eve et s'arrête à Jean de France. On attribue à *Georges Chatelain* l'ouvrage intitulé: le Temple

Jehan Boccace de la Ruyne d'aulcuns nobles malheureux fait par *Georges* son imitateur, *Paris*, Galiot Dupré, 1517, in-fol., gothique; *voy.* l'extrait qu'en donne M. Buchon dans la notice qu'il a placée à la tête de son édition de Georges Chatelain du Panthéon Littéraire.—*P. Boitel de Gaubertin* est auteur d'un ouvrage qui a pour titre: Les Tragiques accidents des hommes illustres depuis le premier siècle jusqu'a présent, 1619 in-12; la liste commence par Abel et finit au chevalier de Guise, etc."

66. *Ladvocat* (*J. B.*). Dictionnaire historique et bibliographie portatif (art. *Montaigne*).

67. *Chaudon* (*L. M.*) et *F. A. Delandine*. Nouveau dictionnaire historique (article *Montaigne*).

68. *Feller* (*F. X.*). Dictionnaire historique (l'article *Montaigne*).

69. Dictionnaire historique et bibliographique portatif, par L. G. P. *Paris, Hocquart*, 1815, 8vo.

70. *Paulmy* (Marquis de). Mélanges tirés d'une grande bibliothèque. Tom. xv., vol. P. de la collection. Tome 12 de la lecture des livres français, suite de la huitième partie. A long article is here appropriated to Montaigne, and concludes with a list of expressions in common use at the present time which society owes to our Essayist, and another list of those which he hazarded, but which did not succeed.

71. *Lacombe de Prezel* (anonyme). Dictionnaire de portraits historiques, anecdotes et traits remarquables des hommes illustres. *Paris, Lacombe*, 1768, 8vo., 3 vol. (article *Montaigne.*)

72. *Sabatier de Castres*. Les trois siècles de notre littérature. *Paris, Guefier*, 1772, 8vo., 3 vol. (article *Montaigne.*)

73. *Bret*. Discours préliminaire des œuvres de Molière.

73. *Titon du Tillet*. Essai sur les honneurs et sur les monuments accordés aux illustres savants pendant la suite des siècles. *Paris*, 1784, 12mo., pages 366 and 444.

75. *De la Dixmerie*. Eloge analytique et historique de Michel Montaigne, suivi de notes, d'observations sur la caractère de son style et le génie de notre langue, et d'un dialogue entre Montaigne, Bayle et J.-J. Rousseau. *Amsterdam* et *Paris*, 1781, 8vo.

76. *Ponce*. Les illustres Français, ou Tableaux historiques des grands hommes de la France. *Paris*, 1790, 1816.

77. *Diderot*. Article Pyrrhonisme de l'Encyclopédie; Philosophie ancienne et moderne, 1793, tom. iii., pag. 481.—Pensées philosophiques.

78. *La Harpe*. Cours de littérature, édition by Deterville, 1818, 8vo. (Introduction au discours sur l'état des lettres en Europe, etc., tom. v., p. 38. —Appendice, ou Nouveaux éclaircissements sur l'histoire ancienne, tom. iii., pag. 398; 1re partie, liv. 3, chap. i., sur Plutarque, tom. iv., pag. 304.)

79. *Maréchal* (Sylv.). Dictionnaire des Athées. (This author reckons Montaigne among the class of men who figure in his work.)

80. *Moniteur*. Année 1800, No. 7 (7 vendémaire, an. ix). *Arrêt* of the prefect of the département de la Gironde (*Thibaudeau*) permitting the removal of the body of Montaigne from the church of the *ci-devant Feuillants* to the *salle des Monuments*, and requiring this ceremonial to be observed.

81. *Moniteur*. Année 1800, No. 9. Under the head *Fêtes de l'anniversaire de la fondation de la république* are the details of what passed at the ceremony.

82. *P. La Montagne*. Discours prononcé dans la cérémonie de la translation des cendres de Michel Montaigne, 1er vendémiaire an ix. *Bordeaux*, 1801, 8vo. (The Baron Pierre de la Montagne, *membre de l'Académie des sciences et belles-lettres de Bordeaux*, was at this time also *Professeur de belles-lettres à l'école centrale.*)

82. *Bastide*. "On a vu," says M. Payen, "à l'occasion de l'édition des *Essais* de 1822, que cet auteur s'était beaucoup occupé de Montaigne; on trouve dans les Mémoires de l'Académie de Berlin une faible partie de ses travaux philologiques sur les *Essais*. Quoiqu'on lise en tête d'un article: "Essai d'un Montaigne modernè," il ne s'y trouve rien de sa traduction. Ses observations grammaticales et critiques sur Montaigne ou à son occasion sont insérées dans les volumes publiés à Berlin, in-8, en 1799, 1800, 1801, qui renferment les travaux des années 1796, 1797, 1798, 1799, 1800. Bastide avait déjà entretenu la même Académie de son Montaigne moderne, dans son discours de réception, en 1792."

84. *Desessarts* (N. L. M.). Les siècles littéraires de la France. *Paris*, 1801, 8vo, article Montaigne.

85. *Naigeon*. A note upon Montaigne, and the article Pyrrhonisme of Diderot; the two prefaces of the edition of 1802, and the notes to the same edition.

86. *Vernier*. Notices et observations pour préparer et faciliter la lecture des Essais de Montaigne. *Paris, Testu* et *Delaunay*. 1810, 8vo., 2 vol.

87. *Chenier* (*M. J.*). Tableau historique de la littérature française (chap. ii).

88. *Bernadau*. Letter, dated 14 July, 1789, in the *Journal general de France*, No. 136; 12 November, 1789.—*Antiquités Bordelaises.—Bordeaux, Moreau*, 1797. (Maison natale de Montaigne, p. 243; Manuscrit de Montaigne, p. 367; Mausolée de Montaigne, p. 362.)—Annales politiques, littéraires et statistiques de *Bordeaux*, divisées en cinq parties, formant ensemble un corps complet de recherches chronologiques, pour servir à l'histoire ancienne et moderne de cette ville, depuis sa fondation jusqu'en 1802.—*Bordeaux, Moreau*, 1803, The preface mentions that the fifth part contains an *Ana inedit de Montaigne*, and describes a circumstance relative to the sepulchre of the *premier des philosophes français.*

89. *Palissot*. Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de notre littérature.—*Paris, Colas*, 1809 (art. *Montaigne*).

90. *Bourdic-Viot* (Marie-Henriette Payan de l'Etang de). Eloge de Montaigne.—*Paris, Pougens*, an viii.

91. *Lemercier* (Népomucène). successor to Naigeon in the *Academie française*. Discours de réception prononcé le 5 sept. 1810 (pages 14, 15).

92. *Villemain*. Eloge de Montaigne. Discours qui a remporté le prix d'éloquence, décerné par la classe de la langue et de la littérature françaises de l'Institut; *Paris, Firmin Didot*, 1812, 4to. et 8vo., 46 p. (Printed in the edition of the *Essays* by Frament.)

93. *Jay*. Tableau littéraire de la France pendant le 18e siècle; *Paris*, 1810, 8vo. (pages 3, 81, 83, 93).—Eloge de Montaigne. Discours qui a obtenu l'accessit, etc.; *Paris, Delaunay*, 1812, 8vo. Printed also in the editions of the *Essays* by Desoër.

94. *J. Droz.* Eloge de Montaigne. *Paris, F. Didot*, 1812. To which the *Classe de la langue et de la litterature francaises de l'Institut* awarded a medal, since inserted by M. Droz in his *Essai sur l'Art d'etre heureux*, where he has added some fresh notes, and modified the old ones.

95. *Du Roure* (le marquis, anonyme). Eloge de Montaigne. Discours qui a obtenu une mention honorable, etc. *Paris, Fain*, 1812, 8vo.

96. *J. Dutens.* Eloge de Montaigne. Discours qui a obtenu une mention honorable, etc.; *Paris, F. Didot* et *Favre*, 1813, 8vo.

97. *Biot* (de l'Institut, anonyme). Montaigne. Discours qui a obtenu une mention, etc.; *Paris, Michaud*, 1812, 8vo.

98. *J. V. Leclerc.* Eloge de messire Michel, seigneur de Montaigne, etc.; *Paris, Auguste Delalain*, 1812, 8vo. Reprinted in the edition of the *Essays* of this author, 1826.

99. *Victorin Fabre.* Eloge de Michel de Montaigne; *Paris, Maradan*, 1812, 8vo.

100. *Vincens* (*Emile*). Eloge de Michel de Montaigne qui n'a pas concouru pour le prix de l'Institut.; *Paris, Fantin*, 1812, 8vo.

101. *F. Guizot.* Annales de l'éducation. *Paris, Lenormant*, tome iii., 1812, 8vo. (page 65, 129, 193, 257).

102. *Mazure* (*F. A. J.*). Eloge de Montaigne; *Angers, Mame*, 1814, 8vo., 51 pages.

103. *François* de Neufchâteau. Essai sur les meilleurs ouvrages écrits en prose dans la langue française. *Paris*, 1816, 8vo.

104. *Eloi Johanneau.* Preface to the edition of Lefèvre, 1818, and the notes to this edition.

105. *Labouderie* (M. l'abbé, anonyme). Le Christianisme de Montaigne, ou Pensées de ce grand homme sur la religion; *Paris, Demonville*, 1819, 8vo.

106. *Amaury-Duval.* Preface to the Collection des Moralistes français; Life of Montaigne et notice sur les principales éditions des Essais, in the edition of Chasseriau; 1820.

107. *Gence* (*J. B. M.*). Article *Montaigne*, in the Biographie universelle.

108. *Iconographie instructive*, 8vo., article *Montaigne.*

109. *Charles Nodier.* Questions de littérature légale, du plagiat, de la supposition d'auteurs, des supercheries qui ont rapport aux livres. deuxième édition; *Paris, Roret*, 1828, 8vo. Where the author points out a variety of passages and opinions taken, without acknowledgment, from Montaigne by Corneille, Voltaire, J. B. Rousseau, Pascal, &c. Mélanges tiré d'une petite bibliothèque. *Paris*, 1829.

110. *Laurentie.* Notice sur "l'esprit de Montaigne," 1829.

111. *De Peyronnet.* Notice sur Montaigne, in the Plutarque français; *Paris*, 1834, large 8vo. (dated from the *Chateau de Ham, Sept.* 1834).

112. *Encyclopédie methodique.* Histoire (tom. iii., 1788), art. *Montaigne* et Encyclopédiana.

113. *Landon.* Galerie historique des hommes les plus celèbres. *Paris*, 1806, 12mo. (tome 8.)

114. *Le Comte de la Platrière*, Galerie universelle, etc. *Paris, Bailly*, 1787, 4to., art. *Montaigne.*

115. *Saige Bordes.* Jugements sur les meilleurs écrivains anciens et modernes. *Paris*, 1812, 12mo.

116. *J. A. C. Buchon.* Notice of the Life of *Montaigne*, in the edition of the works of this author, in the *Pantheon Littéraire.*

"On trouve," says M. Payen, "dans *la Gironde*, Revue de Bordeaux, février 1834, 9e livraison, un article intitulé *Installation de Michel Montaigne, maire de Bordeaux*, et l'editeur fait précéder ce récit d'une note signée G. ainsi conçue: "Il y a quelques années que des maçons en travaillant à une maison autrefois habitée par Michel de Montaigne, au coin de l'impasse des Minimettes, à Bordeaux, découvrirent sous une poutre un manuscrit renfermé dans une cassette de bois de cyprès. C'était vraisemblablement le journal inédit d'un ancien serviteur de l'auteur des *Essais*, lequel avait sans doute habité avec lui cette maison, dont la façade gothique a été détruite dernièrement, etc." M. Aimé Martin, à l'obligeance duquel je dois d'avoir eu connaissance de cette pièce, est convaincu que c'est un pastiche, et je crois qu'il ne peut y avoir aucun doute à cet égard. L'auteur a pris textuellement dans les Essais, les discours et les réflexions qu'il prête à Montaigne dans le cours de cette solennité, et cette circonstance seule suffirait pour démontrer la supercherie.

There appeared in 1823, at *Paris, Delaunay*, 8vo., anonymously, a volume entitled *Montaigne aux Champs Elysees*, consisting of eight dialogues in verse, and in which our Essayist successively converses with Democritus, Rabelais, &c.

117. *Hazlitt.* Life, &c., of Montaigne, in the edition of his Works, published by Templeman, London, 1842.

ESSAYS

OF

MICHAEL, SEIGNEUR DE MONTAIGNE.

THE AUTHOR TO THE READER.

THIS, reader, is a book without guile. It tells thee, at the very outset, that I had no other end in putting it together but what was domestic and private. I had no regard therein either to thy service or my glory; my powers are equal to no such design. It was intended for the particular use of my relations and friends, in order that, when they have lost me, which they must soon do, they may here find some traces of my quality and humour, and may thereby nourish a more entire and lively recollection of me. Had I proposed to court the favour of the world, I had set myself out in borrowed beauties; but 'twas my wish to be seen in my simple, natural, and ordinary garb, without study or artifice, for 'twas myself I had to paint. My defects will appear to the life, in all their native form, as far as consists with respect to the public. Had I been born among those nations who, 'tis said, still live in the pleasant liberty of the law of nature, I assure thee I should readily have depicted myself at full length and quite naked. Thus, reader, thou perceivest I am myself the subject of my book; 'tis not worth thy while to take up thy time longer with such a frivolous matter; so fare thee well.

From Montaigne; this 12th of June, 1580.

THE FIRST BOOK.

CHAPTER I.

THAT MEN BY VARIOUS WAYS ARRIVE AT THE SAME END.

THE most usual way of appeasing the indignation of such as we have any way offended, when we see them in possession of the power of revenge, and find that we absolutely lie at their mercy, is, by submission, (than which, nothing more flatters the glory of an adversary,) to move them to commiseration and pity: and yet bravery, firmness, and resolution, however quite contrary means, have sometimes served to produce the same effect. Edward, Prince of Wales,[1] the same who so long governed our province of Guienne, a person whose condition and fortunes have in them a great deal of the most notable parts of grandeur, having, through some misdemeanours of theirs, been highly incensed by the Limosins, in the heat of that resentment, taking their city by assault, was not, either by the outcries of the people, or the prayers and tears of the women and children, abandoned to slaughter, and prostrate at his feet for mercy, to be stayed from prosecuting his revenge; till, penetrating farther into the body of the town, he took notice of three French gentlemen, who, with incredible bravery, alone sustained the whole power of his victorious army.[2] Then it was that consideration and respect for such remarkable valour first stopped the torrent of his fury; and his clemency, beginning in the preservation of these three cavaliers, was afterwards extended to all the remaining inhabitants of the city.

Different modes of mollifying the hearts of the offended.

Scanderberg, Prince of Epirus, in great wrath, pursuing one of his soldiers with a resolute purpose to kill him, and the soldier having in vain tried, by all the ways of humility and supplication, to appease him, seeing him, notwithstanding, obstinately bent to his ruin, resolved, as his last resource, to face about and await him, sword in hand; which behaviour of his gave a sudden check to his captain's fury, who, seeing him assume so noble a resolution, received him to favour. An example, however, that might suffer another interpretation with such as have not read of the prodigious strength and valour of that Prince.

[1] The Black Prince, son of Edward the Third.

[2] Froissart, vol. i., book iv., part ii., ch. cccxx. The names of the three gentlemen were John de Villemur, Hugh de la Roche, and Roger de Beaufort.

The Emperor Conrad III. having besieged Guelph, Duke of Bavaria,[1] would not be prevailed upon, what mean and unmanly satisfactions soever were tendered to him, to condescend to milder conditions than that the gentlewomen only, who were in the town, might go out without violation of their honour, on foot, and with so much only as they could carry about them. Which was no sooner known but that, with magnanimity of heart, they presently resolved to carry out, upon their shoulders, their husbands and children, and the Duke himself: a sight at which the Emperor was so pleased that, ravished with the generosity of the action, he wept for joy, and immediately extinguishing in his heart the mortal and implacable hatred he had conceived against this Duke, he from that time forward treated him and his with all humanity and affection.

Conjugal love.

The one, or the other, of these two ways would, with great facility, work upon my nature; for I have a marvellous propensity to mercy and mildness; nay, to such a degree, that I fancy, of the two, I should sooner surrender my anger to compassion than to esteem: and yet pity is reputed a vice amongst the Stoics, who will that we succour the afflicted, but not that we should be so affected with their sufferings as to suffer or sympathize with them. Now, I conceived these examples suited to the question in hand, and the rather because therein we observe these great souls assaulted and tried by these two several ways to resist the one without relenting, and to be shaken and subjected by the other. It is true that to suffer a man's heart to be totally subdued by compassion may be imputed to facility, effeminacy, and over-tenderness; whence it comes to pass that the weakest natures, as those of women, children, and the common sort of people, are the most subject to it: but after having resisted, and disdained the power of sighs and tears, to surrender a man's animosity to the sole reverence of the sacred image of virtue—this can be no other than the effect of a strong and inflexible soul, enamoured of, and doing honour to, a masculine and obstinate valour. Nevertheless, astonishment and admiration may, in less generous minds, beget a like effect. Witness the people of Thebes, who, having put two of their generals upon trial for their lives, for having continued in arms beyond the prescribed term of their commission, would hardly pardon Pelopidas, who, bowing under the weight of so dangerous an accusation, made no manner of defence for himself, nor produced other arguments than prayers and supplications to secure his head; whereas, on the contrary, Epaminondas being brought to the bar, and falling to magnify the exploits he had performed in their service, and, after a haughty and arrogant manner, reproaching them with ingratitude and injustice, they had not the heart to proceed any further in his trial, but broke up the court, and departed, the whole assembly highly commending the courage and confidence of this great man.[2]

Pity reputed a vice amongst the Stoicks.

Dionysius the Elder, after having, by a tedious siege, and through exceeding great difficulties, taken the city of Rhegium, and in it the governor Phyton, a great and good man, who had made so obstinate a defence, he was resolved to make him a tragical example of his revenge; in order whereunto, and the more sensibly to afflict him, he first told him that he had the day before caused his son and all his kindred to be drowned: to which Phyton returned no other answer but this, that they were then, by one day, happier than he. After which, causing him to be stripped, and delivering him into the hands of the tormentors, he was, by them, dragged through the streets of the town, and most ignominiously and cruelly whipped, and, moreover, vilified with bitter and contumelious language. Yet still, in the fury of all this persecution, he maintained his courage entire all the way, with a strong voice and undaunted countenance, proclaiming the honourable and glorious cause of his death; namely, for that he would not deliver up his country into the hands of a merciless tyrant; at the same time denouncing against him a speedy chastisement from the offended gods. At which the tyrant, rolling his eyes about, and reading in his soldiers' looks that, instead of being incensed at the haughty language of this conquered enemy, to the contempt of him, their captain, and his triumph, they not only seemed struck with admiration of so rare a virtue, but, moreover, inclined to mutiny, and were even ready to rescue the prisoner out of the hangman's hands, he ordered the execution to cease, and, afterwards, privately caused him to be thrown into the sea.[3]

The cruelty of Dionysius the Elder.

Man, in sooth, is a marvellous, vain, fickle, and unstable subject, and on whom it is very hard to form any certain or uniform judgment. For Pompey could pardon the whole city of the Mamertines, though furiously incensed against it, upon the single account of the virtue and magnanimity of one citizen, Zeno, who took the fault of the public wholly upon himself; neither intreated other favour but alone to undergo the punishment for all.[4] And yet Sylla's host having, in the city of Perusia, manifested the same virtue, obtained nothing

Man a variable animal.

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[1] Anno 1140, in Weinsberg, a town of Upper Bavaria.

[2] Plutarch: *How far a man may praise himself*, c. 5.

[3] Diodorus Siculus, xiv. 29.

[4] Plutarch calls him Sthenon in his *Instructions for those who manage state affairs*, c. 17; Sthennius, in the *Apothegms*; and Sthenis, in the *Life of Pompey*; where, however, the anecdote is related of the city of the Himerians, not of that of the Mamertines.

by it, either for himself or his fellow-citizens.'[1] And, directly contrary to my first examples, the bravest of all men, and who was reputed so gracious and kind to all those he overcame, Alexander the Great, having, after many great difficulties, forced the city of Gaza, and, on entering, found Betis, who commanded there, and of whose valour, in the time of this siege, he had most noble and manifest proofs, alone, forsaken by all his soldiers, his armour hacked and hewed to pieces, and his body covered all over with blood and wounds, and yet still fighting in the crowd of a great number of Macedonians, who were laying on him on all sides, he said to him (nettled at so dear-bought a victory, and at two fresh wounds he had newly received in his own person), "Thou shalt not die, Betis, so honourably as thou dost intend, but shalt assuredly suffer all the torments that can be inflicted on a miserable captive." To which menaces the other returning no other answer but only a fierce and disdainful look; "What," says the conqueror (observing his obstinate silence), "Is he too stiff to bend a knee? Is he too proud to utter one supliant word? I will assuredly conquer this silence; and, if I cannot force a word from his mouth, I will, at least, extract a groan from his heart." And, thereupon, converting his anger into fury, presently commanded his heels to be bored through, and caused him to be dragged, alive, mangled, and dismembered, at a cart's tail.[2] Was it that the height of courage was so natural and familiar to this conqueror that, no longer holding it in admiration, he had come not even to respect it? Or was it that he conceived valour to be a virtue so peculiar to himself that his pride could not, without envy, endure it in another? Or was it that the natural impetuosity of his fury brooked not opposition? Certainly had it been capable of any manner of moderation, it is to be believed, that in the sack and desolation of Thebes, to see so many valiant men, lost and totally destitute of any farther defence, cruelly massacred before his eyes, would have appeased it. For there were above six thousand put to the sword, of whom not one was seen to fly, or heard to cry out for quarter; but, on the contrary, every one running here and there to seek out and to provoke the victorious enemy to help them to an honourable end. There was not one who did not, to his last gasp, endeavour to revenge himself; and, with all the fury of a brave despair, to sweeten his own death in the death of an enemy. Yet did their valour create no pity, and the length of one day was not enough to satiate the conqueror's revenge; but the slaughter continued to the last drop of blood that was capable of being shed, and stopped not till it met with none but naked and impotent persons, old men, women, and children, of whom thirty thousand were carried away slaves.[3]

Obstinate silence of Betis.

CHAPTER II.

OF SORROW.[4]

No man living is more free from this passion than I, who neither like it in myself, nor admire it in others; and yet, generally, the world is pleased to honour it with a particular esteem; endeavouring to make us believe that wisdom, virtue, and conscience shroud themselves under this grave and affected appearance. Foolish and sordid guise! The Italians, however, more fitly apply the term[5] to indicate a clandestine nature, a dangerous and bad nature. And with good reason, it being a quality always hurtful, always idle and vain, and so cowardly, mean, and base that 'tis by the Stoics expressly and particularly forbidden their sages.

A contemptible passion.

But the story, nevertheless, says, that Psammenitus, King of Egypt, being defeated and taken prisoner by Cambyses, King of Persia, seeing his own daughter pass by him habited as a menial, with a bucket to draw water, though his friends about him were so concerned as to break out into tears and lamentations at the miserable sight, yet he himself remained unmoved, without uttering a word, with his eyes fixed upon the ground. And seeing, moreover, his son, immediately after, led to execution, still maintained the same gravity and indifference of countenance; till spying, at last, one of his domestics[6] dragged away amongst the captives, he could then hold no longer, but fell to tearing his hair and beating his breast, with all the other extravagances of a wild and desperate sorrow.[7] A story that may very fitly be coupled with another of the same kind, of a late prince of our own nation, who, being at Trent, and having news there brought him of the death of his elder brother, a brother on whom depended the whole support and honour of his house; and, soon after, of that of a younger brother, the second hope of his family; and, having withstood these two assaults with an exemplary resolution, one of his servants happening, a few days after, to die, he suffered his constancy to be overcome by this last accident; and, parting with his

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[1] Plutarch, *Instructions for those who manage state affairs*, c. 17, tells this story of Præneste, a city of Latium; and not of Perusia, which is in Tuscany.

[2] Quintus Curtius, iv. 6. [3] Diod. Sic. xvii. 4.

[4] *De la Tristesse*, by which Montaigne would seem to convey a *sullen habit of sorrow*

[5] *Mestaggine.*

[6] Herodotus iii. 14. The word domestic does not here mean a servant, but an intimate friend, a *domestic* friend, in which sense the term was still used even in the reign of Louis XIV. Herodotus, indeed, mentions that the old man referred to had always had a place at the king's table.

[7] Valerius Maximus, viii. ii., *ext.* 6.; Cicero *Orator.* c. 22; Pliny, xxxv. 10.; Quintilian, ii. 13.

courage, so abandoned himself to sorrow and mourning, that some, thence, were forward to conclude that he was only touched to the quick by this last stroke of fortune; but, in truth, it was that, being before brim-full of grief, the least addition overflowed the bounds of all patience. Which might also be said of the former example, did not the story proceed to tell us that Cambyses asking Psammenitus why, not being moved at the calamity of his son and daughter, he should with so great impatience bear the misfortune of his friend? "It is," answered he, "because this last affliction was only to be manifested by tears, the two first exceeding all manner of expression."

Extreme sorrow is unutterable.

And, peradventure, something like this might be working in the fancy of the painter of old, who, having, in the sacrifice of Iphigenia, to represent the sorrow of the bystanders, proportionably to the several degrees of interest each had in the death of this fair innocent virgin; and having, in the other figures, exhausted the utmost power of his art, when he came to that of her father, he drew him with a veil over his face, meaning thereby that no kind of countenance was capable of expressing such a degree of sorrow. Which is also the reason why the poets feign the miserable mother, Niobe, having first lost seven sons, and then successively as many daughters, overwhelmed with misery, to be at last transformed into a rock,

Diriguisse malis,[1]

"Hardened with woes—a statue of despair."

thereby to express that melancholy, dumb, and deaf stupidity, which benumbs all our faculties when oppressed with misfortunes greater than we are able to bear; and, indeed, the violence and impression of an excessive grief must, of necessity, astonish the soul, and wholly deprive her of her ordinary functions: as it happens to every one of us who, upon any sudden alarm of very ill news, find ourselves surprised, stupified, and in a manner deprived of all power of motion, till the soul, beginning to vent itself in sighs and tears, seems a little to free and disengage itself from the oppression, and to obtain some room to work itself out at greater liberty.

Et via vix tandem voci laxata dolore est.[2]

"Till sorrow breaks
A passage, and at once he weeps and speaks."

In the war that King Ferdinand made upon the widow of King John of Hungary, in a battle near Buda, a man at arms was particularly taken notice of by every one, for his singularly gallant behaviour in an encounter; and, though unknown, was highly commended and lamented when left dead upon the spot; but by none so much as by Raisciac, a German lord, who was infinitely enamoured of so rare a valour. The body being brought off, the Count, with the common curiosity, came to view it; and the armour was no sooner taken off, but he immediately knew him to be his own son. A thing that added a second blow to the compassion of all the beholders; he only, without uttering a word or turning away his eyes, stood fixedly contemplating the body of his son, till the vehemence of sorrow, having overcome his vital spirits, made him sink down, stone dead, to the ground.

Great grief deprives us of the use of speech, and sometimes causes death.

Chi può dir com' egli arde, é 'n picciol fuoco![3]

"He loves but lightly who his love can tell."

say the inmoratosa when they would represent an insupportable passion.

Misero quod omnes
Eripit sensus mihi: nam, simul te,
Lesbia, adspexi, nihil est super mi
Quod loquar amens:
Lingua sed torpet; tenuis sub artus
Flamma dimanat; sonitu suopte
Tinniunt aures; gemina teguntur
Lumina nocte.[4]

"Thou, Lesbia, robb'st my soul of rest,
And rais'dst those tumults in my breast;
For while I gazed, in transports tost,
My breath was gone, my voice was lost.
My bosom glowed, the subtle flame
Ran quick through all my vital frame;
O'er my dim eyes a darkness hung,
My ears with hollow murmurs rung."

So that it is not in the height and greatest fury of the fit that we are in a condition to pour out our complaints and our persuasions, the soul being, at that time, overburthened, and labouring with profound thoughts, and the body dejected and languishing with desire. And thence it is that proceed those accidental impotences that sometimes so unseasonably surprise the willing lover, and that frigidity which, by the force of an immoderate ardour, seizes him even in the very lap of fruition. All passions that suffer themselves to be relished and digested are but moderate.

Curæ leves loquuntur, ingentes stupent.[5]

"Light griefs are plaintive, but the great are dumb."

The surprise of unexpected joys often produces the same effect.

Ut me conspexit venientem, et Troïa circum
Arma amens vidit, magnis exterrita monstris,
Diriguit visu in medio; calor ossa reliquit;
Labitur, et longo vix tandem tempore fatur.[6]

"But when, at nearer distance, she beheld
My Trojan armour and my Trojan shield,
Astonished at the sight, the vital heat
Forsakes her limbs, her veins no longer beat:
She faints, she falls, and, scarce recovering strength,
Thus, with a faltering tongue she speaks at length."

Besides the examples of the Roman lady who died for joy to see her son safe returned from the defeat of Cannæ;[7] of Sophocles, and Dionysius the tyrant, who died of joy;[8] and of Talva, who died in Cor-

Other effects of grief.

[1] *Ovid Met.* vi. 304. The text has *diriguitque malis.*
[2] Virgil, Æneid, ii. 151.
[3] Petrarch, Son. 137.
[4] Catullus, li. 6.
[5] Seneca, *Hipp.* ii. 3, 607.
[6] Æneid, iii. 306.
[7] Pliny vii. 54.
[8] Id. ib. 53.

sica, on reading the news of the honours the Roman senate had decreed him,[1] we have, moreover, one in our own time, of Pope Leo the Tenth, who, upon news of the taking of Milan, a thing he had so ardently desired, was wrapt with so sudden an excess of joy that he immediately fell into a fever and died.[2] And, for a more notable testimony of the imbecility of human nature, it is recorded, by the ancients,[3] that Diodorus the Dialectician, died on the spot, out of an extreme passion of shame, for not having been able, in his own school, and in the presence of a great auditory, to disengage himself from a nice argument that was propounded to him. I, for my part, am very little subject to these violent passions; I am naturally of a stubborn apprehension, which, by reason, I every day harden and fortify more and more.

CHAPTER III.

THAT OUR AFFECTIONS CARRY THEMSELVES BEYOND US.

Mankind too curious after futurity.

SUCH as accuse mankind of always gaping after future things, and advise us to make the most of the good which is present, and to set up our rest upon that, as having no hold upon that which is to come, even less than that we have upon what is past, have hit upon the most universal of human errors, if that may be called an error to which nature itself has disposed us, who, in order to the subsistence and continuation of her own work, has, amongst several others, prepossessed us with this deceiving imagination, as being more jealous of our action than afraid of our knowledge.

We are never present with, but always beyond, ourselves. Fear, desire, and hope, are still pushing us on towards the future, depriving us, in the mean time, of the sense and consideration of that which is, to amuse us with the thought of what shall be, even when we shall be no more. Calamitosus est animus futuri anxius.[4] "'Tis a great calamity to have a mind anxious about things to come." We find this great precept often repeated in Plato, "Do thine own work, and know thyself." Of which two parts, both the one and the other, generally comprehends our whole duty, and, in like manner, do each of them involve the other. He who will do his own work aright will find that his first lesson is to know himself, and what is proper for him; and he who rightly understands himself will never mistake another man's work for his own, but will love and improve himself above all other things, will refuse superfluous employments, and reject all unprofitable thoughts and propositions. As folly on the one side, though it should enjoy all it can desire, would, notwithstanding, never be content; so, on the other, wisdom ever acquiesces with the present, and is never dissatisfied with its immediate condition; and that is the reason why Epicurus dispenses his sages from all forecast and care of the future.

That the conduct of princes should be canvassed after death.

Amongst those laws that relate to the dead, I look upon that to be a very sound one, by which the actions of princes are to be examined and sifted after their decease.[5] While living, they are equal with, at least, if not above, the laws, and, therefore, what justice could not inflict upon their persons it is but reason should be executed upon their reputations and the estates of their successors; things that we often value above life itself. It is a custom of singular advantage to those countries where it is in use, and much to be desired by all good princes who have reason to take it ill, that the memories of the tyrannical and wicked should be treated with the same respect as theirs. We owe, it is true, subjection and obedience to all our kings, whether good or bad, alike, for that has respect unto their office; but, as to affection and esteem, these are only due to their virtue. Let it be granted that, for the sake of political order, we are, with patience, to endure unworthy princes, to conceal their vices, and to assist them in their indifferent actions, whilst their authority stands in need of our support; yet, the relation of prince and subject being once at an end, there is no reason we should deny the expression of our resentment to our own liberty, and to common justice; or, more especially, deprive good subjects of the glory of having submissively and faithfully served a prince whose imperfections were, to them, so well known; this were to rob posterity of a most useful example; and those who, out of respect to some private obligation, iniquitously vindicate the memory of a faulty prince, do a private right at the expense of public justice. Livy very truly says: "That the language of men bred up in courts is always full of vain ostentation and false testimony,"[6] every one indifferently magnifying his own master, and stretching his commendation to the utmost extent of virtue and sovereign grandeur. And it is not impossible but some may condemn the magnanimity of those two soldiers, who so roundly answered Nero to his face; the one being asked, by him, Why he bore him ill-will? "I loved thee," answered he, "whilst thou wert worthy of it; but since thou art become a parricide, an incendiary, a player, and a coachman, I hate thee as thou

[1] Valerius Maximus, ix. 12. The name is not Talva, but Thalna.

[2] Guicciardini, xiv.

[3] Pliny, *ut supra*.

[4] Seneca, Epist. 98. "La Prevoyance qui nous porte sans cesse au delà de nous, et souvent nous place où nous n'arriverons point, voilà la veritable source de toutes nos misères." Rousseau—*Emile* ii.

[5] Cicero, Tusc. Quæs. v. 13.

[6] Livy xxxv. 48.

dost deserve." And the other, Why he should attempt to kill him? "Because," said he, "I could think of no other remedy against thy perpetual mischiefs."[1] But the public and universal testimonies that were given against him, after his death (and will be to all posterity, both against him and against all other wicked princes like him), of his tyrannies and abominable conduct, who, of a sound judgment, can reprove them?

Ceremony of the Lacedemonians at the interment of their kings.

I am scandalized, I confess, that in so sacred a government as that of the Lacedemonians, there should have been mixed that hypocritical ceremony at the death of their kings; where all their confederates and neighbours, and all sorts and degrees of men and women, as well as their slaves, cut and slashed their foreheads in token of sorrow, repeating in their cries and lamentations that that king (let him have been as wicked as the devil,) was the best that ever they had; thus attributing to his quality the praises that only belong to merit, and that of right are due to desert, though lodged in the lowest and most inferior subject.[2]

No man is happy till he is dead.

Aristotle (who will still have a hand in every thing,) makes a query upon the saying of Solon, "That none can be said to be happy until he is dead;" whether, then, any one who has lived and died according to his heart's desire, if he have left an ill repute behind him, and that his posterity be miserable, can be said to be happy?[3] Whilst we have life and motion, we convey ourselves, by fancy and anticipation, whither and to what we please; but once out of being, we have no more any manner of communication with what is in being; and Solon, therefore, had better have said, "That man is never happy at all, since he is never so till after he is no more."

——— Quisquam
Vix radicitus e vita se tollit, et ejicit:
Sed facit esse sui quiddam super inscius ipse.
Nec removet satis à projecto corpore sese, et
Vindicat.[4]

"No dying man can truss his baggage so,
But something of him he must leave below;
Nor from his carcase, that doth prostrate lie,
Himself can clear, or far enough can fly."

The dead treated as though alive.

Bertrand du Glesquin dying before the castle of Randon,[5] near unto Puy, in Auvergne, the besieged were afterwards, upon surrender, enjoined to lay down the keys of the place upon the corpse of the dead general. Bartholomew d'Alviano, the Venetian general, dying in the service of the Republic, in their wars in Brescia, and his corpse being to be carried to Venice, through the territory of Verona, an enemy's country, most of the army were of opinion to demand safe conduct from the Veronese: but Theodore Trivulsio opposed the motion, rather choosing to make way for the body by force of arms, and to run the hazard of a battle; saying, it was not fit that he, who in his life was never afraid of his enemies, should seem to apprehend them when he was dead.[6] And, in truth, in cases of the same nature, by the Greek laws, he who made suit to an enemy for a body to give it burial, did, by that act, renounce his victory, and had no longer the right to erect a trophy; and he to whom such suit was made was ever, whatever otherwise the success had been, reputed victor. By this means it was that Nicias lost the advantage he had visibly obtained over the Corinthians,[7] and that Agesilaus, on the contrary, assured that which he had before very doubtfully gained over the Bœotians.[8]

These things might appear very odd had it not been a general practice in all ages not only to extend the concern of our persons beyond this life, but, moreover, to fancy that the favours of heaven accompany us to the grave, and continue, even after life, to our ashes. Of which there are so many examples among the ancients, waiving those of our times, that it is not necessary I should insist upon it. Edward the First, King of England, having, in the long wars between him and Robert, King of Scotland, had sufficient experience of how great importance his own immediate presence was to the success of his affairs, having ever been victorious in whatever he undertook in his own person; when he came to die, bound his son in a solemn oath, that so soon as he should be dead, he should boil his body till the flesh parted from the bones, and, having burned the flesh, preserve the bones to carry continually with him in his army so often as he should be obliged to go against the Scots; as if destiny had attached victory even to those miserable remains. John Zisca, the same who so often, in vindication of Wickliffe's errors, overran Bohemia, left order that they should flay him after his death, and of his skin make a drum, to carry in the war against his enemies, fancying this would contribute to the continuation of the successes he himself had always obtained in the war against them. In like manner some Indians, in a battle with the Spaniards, carried with them the bones of one of their captains, in consideration of the victories they had formerly obtained under his conduct. And other people, in the same new world, carry about with them, in their wars, the relics of valiant men, who have died in battle, to incite their courage and advance their fortune. Of which examples the first reserve nothing for the tomb but the reputation they have acquired by

[1] Tacitus, Annal. xv. 67.
[2] Herod. vi. 68.
[3] Herod. i. 32. Aristotle, *Ethics*, i. 10.
[4] Lucretius iii. 890 and 895. Montaigne has slightly altered the text of the autho..
[5] July 12, 1380.
[6] Brantome ii. Guicciard. xii.
[7] Plutarch, *in vitâ*, c. ii.
[8] Id., *in vitâ*, c. vi.

their former achievements; while these assign to these great men, even in the grave, a certain power of operation.

The last act of the captain Bayard is of a much better composition; who, finding himself wounded to death with a harquebuss shot, and, being by his friends importuned to retire out of the fight, made answer, "That he would not begin, at the last gasp, to turn his back to the enemy;" and, accordingly, still fought on, till, feeling himself too faint and no longer able to sit his horse, he commanded his steward to set him down against the root of a tree, but so that he might die with his face towards the enemy, which he did.[1]

I must yet add another example, equally remarkable, for the present consideration, with any of the former. The Emperor Maximilian, great grandfather to the present King Philip,[2] was a prince endowed with great qualities, and, amongst the rest, with a singular beauty of person; but had, withal, a humour very contrary to that of other princes, who, for the dispatch of their most important affairs, convert their close-stool into a chair of state; which was that he would never permit any of his bed-chamber, in what familiar degree of favour soever, to see him in that posture; and would steal aside to make water, as religiously shy as a virgin, not to discover either to his physician, or any other person, those parts that we are accustomed to conceal. And I myself, who have so impudent a way of talking, am, nevertheless, so modest this way that, unless at the great importunity of necessity or pleasure, I very rarely and unwillingly communicate to the sight of any, those parts or actions, that custom orders us to conceal; wherein I suffer more constraint than I conceive is very well becoming a man, especially of my profession. But he nourished this modest humour to such a degree that he gave express orders in his last will that they should put him on drawers so soon as he should be dead; to which, methinks, he would have done well to have added, by way of codicil, that he should be hoodwinked, too, who put them on. The charge that Cyrus left with his children, that neither they nor any other should either see or touch his body after the soul was departed from it,[3] I attribute to some superstitious devotion of his; both his historian and himself, amongst their other great qualities, having strewed the whole course of their lives with a singular attention and respect to religion.

Modesty of Maximilian the Emperor.

Cyrus's reverence to religion.

I was by no means pleased with a story that was told me by a man of great quality, of a relation of mine, one who had given a very good account of himself both in peace and war; that, coming to die in a very old age, tormented with an excessive pain of the stone, he spent the last hours of his life in an extraordinary solicitude about ordering the pomp and ceremony of his funeral, pressing all the men of condition who came to see him to engage their word to attend him to his grave; importuning this very prince, who came to visit him at his last gasp, with a most earnest supplication, that he would order his family to be assisting there, alleging several reasons and examples to prove that it was a respect due to a man of his condition; and seemed to die content, having obtained this promise, and appointed the method and order of his funeral parade. I have seldom heard of so long-lived a vanity. The contrary solicitude, of which also I do not want domestic example, seems to be somewhat a-kin to this; that a man shall cudgel his brains, at the last moments of his life, to contrive his obsequies to some particular and unusual a parsimony, to one single servant with a candle and lanthorn; yet I see this humour commended, and the appointment of Marcus Æmilius Lepidus, who forbad his heirs to bestow upon his corpse even the common ceremonies in use upon such occasions.[4] Is it temperance and frugality to avoid expense and pleasure, of which the use and knowledge is imperceptible to us? This were an easy and cheap reformation. If instructions were at all necessary in this case, I should be of opinion that in this, as in all other actions of life, the ceremony and expense should be regulated by the condition of the person deceased; and the philosopher Lycon prudently ordered his executors to dispose of his body where they should think most fit, and as to his funeral, to order it to be neither too superfluous, nor too mean.[5] For my part, I shall wholly refer the ordering of this ceremony to custom, and leave the whole matter to the discretion of those to whose lot it shall fall to do me that last office. *Totus hic locus est contemnendus in nobis, non negligendus in nostris.*[6] "The place of our sepulture is wholly to be contemned by us, but not to be neglected by our friends." And it was a holy saying of a saint, *Curatio funeris, conditio sepulturæ, pompa exsequiarum, magis sunt vivorum solatia, quàm subsidia mortuorum.*[7] "The care of funerals, the place of sepulture, and the pomp of obsequies, are rather consolations to the living than any benefit to the dead." Which made Socrates answer Criton, who, at the hour of his death, asked him, how he would be buried? "How you will," said he.[8] If I were to concern myself farther

The foolishness of much funeral pomp.

[1] Mem. of Martin du Bellay, iv.
[2] Philip II. of Spain.
[3] Xenophon, Cyrop. viii. 7.
[4] Livy, *Epit.* xlviii.
[5] Diog. Laert., *in vitâ.*
[6] Cicero., *Tusc. Quæs*, 45.
[7] St. August, *de Civitate Dei.* I. 13.
[8] Plato, *Phædo.*

about this affair, I should be most tempted, as the greatest satisfaction of this kind, to imitate those who in their life-time entertain themselves with the ceremony of their own obsequies before-hand, and are pleased with viewing their own monument, and beholding their own dead countenance in marble. Happy are they who can gratify their senses by insensibility, and live by their death! I can hardly keep from an implacable hatred against all popular government, though I cannot but think it the most natural and equitable of all others, so often as I call to mind the inhuman injustice of the people of Athens, who, without remission, or once vouchsafing to hear what they had to say for themselves, put to death their brave captains, newly returned triumphant from a naval victory they had obtained over the Lacedæmonians near the Arginusian Isles, the most bloody and obstinate engagement that ever the Greeks fought at sea, for no other reason but that they had followed up their blow and pursued the advantages presented to them by the rule of war, instead of staying to gather up and bury their dead; an execution that is yet rendered more odious by the behaviour of Diomedon, one of the condemned, and a man of eminent virtue, both political and military, who, after having heard their sentence, advancing to speak, no audience till then having been allowed, instead of pleading his cause, and representing the evident injustice of so cruel a sentence, only expressed a solicitude for his judges' preservation, beseeching the gods to convert this sentence to their good, and praying that for neglecting to fulfil those vows which he and his companions had made (which he also acquainted them with,) in acknowledgment of so glorious a success they might not pull down the indignation of the gods upon them; and so without more words went courageously to his death.[1] But fortune a few years after punished the Athenians in a suitable way. For Chabrias, captain-general of their naval forces, having got the better of Pollis, admiral of Sparta, off the Isle of Naxos, totally lost the fruits of his victory, of very great importance to their affairs, in order not to incur the danger of this example, and in his anxiety not to lose a few bodies of his dead friends that were floating in the sea, gave opportunity to a world of living enemies to sail away in safety, who afterwards made them pay dear for this unseasonable superstition.

Quæris, quo jaceas, post obitum, loco?
Quo non nata jacent.[2]

"Dost ask where thou shalt lie when dead?
With those that never being had."—

The other restores the sense of repose to a body without a soul.

Neque sepulcrum, quo recipiatur habeat, portum corporis; Ubi, remissa humana vita, corpus requiescat à malis.[3]

"Nor with a tomb as with a haven blest,
Where, after life, the corpse in peace may rest."

Just as nature demonstrates to us that several dead things retain yet an occult sympathy and relation to life; wine changes its flavour and complexion in cellars, according to the changes and seasons of the vine whence it came; and the flesh of venison, 'tis said, alters its condition and taste in the powdering tub, according to the seasons of the living flesh of its kind.

CHAPTER IV.

THAT THE SOUL DISCHARGES ITS PASSIONS UPON FALSE OBJECTS, WHERE THE TRUE ARE WANTING.

A GENTLEMAN of my country, who was very subject to the gout, being importuned by his physicians totally to abstain from all manner of salt meats, was wont pleasantly to reply, that he must needs have something to quarrel with in the extremity of his pain, and that he fancied that railing at and cursing, one while the Bologna sausages, and at another the dried tongues and the hams, was some mitigation to his torments. And, in good earnest, as one's arm when it is advanced to strike, if it fail of meeting with that upon which it was designed to discharge the blow, and spends itself in vain, does offend the striker himself; and as, also, to make a pleasant prospect the sight should not be lost and dilated in a vast extent of empty air, but have some bounds to limit and circumscribe it at a reasonable distance—

Ventus ut amittit vires, nisi robore denso
Occurrunt Silvæ, spatio diffusus inani;[4]

"As winds exhaust their strength, unless withstood
By some thick grove of strong opposing wood."

so it appears that the soul, being transported and discomposed, turns its violence upon itself, if not supplied with something to oppose it, and therefore always requires an object at which to aim, and to keep it in action. Plutarch says of those who are delighted with monkeys and lap dogs, that the amorous part which is in us, for want of a legitimate object, rather than lie idle, does after that manner forge and create one frivolous and false;[5] and we see that the soul, in the exercise of its passions, inclines rather to deceive itself, by creating a false and fantastical subject, even contrary to its own belief, than not to have something to work upon. And after this manner brute beasts direct their fury to fall upon the stone or weapon that has hurt them, and with their teeth even execute their revenge upon themselves, for the injury they have received from another.

[1] Diod. Sic. xiii. 31.
[2] Senec. *Troad, Chor.* ii. 30.
[3] Ennius, *apud* Cicer. *Tusc. Quæs.* i. 44.
[4] Lucan, iii. 362.
[5] Life of Pericles, at the beginning.

Pannonis haud aliter post ictum sævior ursa,
Quam jaculum parva Lybis amentavit habena,
Se rotat in vulnus, telumque irata receptum
Impetit, et secum fugientem circuit hastam.[1]

"So the fierce bear, made fiercer by the smart
Of the bold Lybian's mortal wounding dart,
Turns round upon the wound, and the tough spear
Contorted o'er her breast doth, flying, bear."

What causes of the misadventures that befal us do we not invent? What is it that we do not lay the fault to, right or wrong, that we may have something to quarrel with? 'Tis not those beautiful tresses, young lady, you so liberally tear off, nor is it the whiteness of that delicate bosom you so unmercifully beat, that, with an unlucky bullet, have slain your beloved brother; quarrel with something else. Livy, speaking of the Roman army in Spain, says, that for the loss of the two brothers,[2] their great captains, *Flere omnes repente, et offensare capita.*[3] "They all wept and tore their hair." 'Tis the common practice of affliction. And the philosopher Bion said pleasantly of the king, who by handfuls pulled his hair off his head for sorrow, "Does this man think that baldness is a remedy for grief?"[4] Who has not seen peevish gamesters tear the cards with their teeth, and swallow the dice in revenge for the loss of their money? Xerxes whipped the sea, and wrote a challenge to Mount Athos.[5] Cyrus employed a whole army several days at work, to revenge himself of the river Gnidus, for the fright it had put him into in passing over it;[6] and Caligula demolished a very beautiful palace for the discomfort his mother had once had there.[7]

There was a story current, when I was a boy, that one of our neighbouring kings,[8] having received a blow from the hand of God, swore he would be revenged, and, in order to it, made proclamation that, for ten years to come, no one throughout his dominions should pray to him, nor mention him, nor believe in him; by which we are not so much to take measure of the folly, as of the vain-glory of the nation of which this tale was told. These are vices that indeed always go together; but such actions as these have in them more of presumption than want of sense. Augustus Cæsar, having been tost with a tempest at sea, fell to defying Neptune, and in the pomp of the Circensian games, to be revenged of him, deposed his statue from the place it had amongst the other deities.[9] Wherein he was less excusable than the former, and less than he was afterwards, when, having lost a battle under Quintilius Varus in Germany, in rage and despair, he went running his head against the walls, and crying out, "O Varus! give me my men again!"[10] for these exceed all folly, forasmuch as impiety is joined with it, who invade God himself, or at least Fortune, as if she had ears that were subject to our batteries; like the Thracians, who, when it thunders or lightens, fall to shooting against heaven with Titanian fury,[11] as if by flights of arrows they intended to reduce God to reason. The ancient poet in Plutarch tells us,

We must not quarrel heaven in our affairs,
That nothing for a mortal's anger cares.[12]

But we can never enough condemn the senseless and ridiculous sallies of our passions.

CHAPTER V.

WHETHER THE GOVERNOR OF A PLACE BESIEGED OUGHT HIMSELF TO GO OUT TO PARLEY.

Deceit in warfare condemned.

LUCIUS MARCIUS,[13] the Roman Legate, in the war against Perseus, king of Macedon, to gain time wherein to re-inforce his army, set on foot some overtures of accommodation, with which the king being lulled asleep, concluded a cessation for certain days; by this means giving his enemy opportunity and leisure to repair his army, which was afterwards the occasion of his own ruin. The elder sort of senators, notwithstanding, mindful of their forefathers' virtue, were by no means satisfied with this proceeding; but on the contrary condemned it, as degenerating from their ancient practice, which they said was by valour, and not by artifice, surprises, and night encounters, or by pretended flight, ambuscades, and deceitful treaties, to overcome their enemies; never making war till having first denounced it, and very often assigned both the hour and place of battle. Out of this generous principle it was that they delivered up to Pyrrhus his treacherous physician, and to the Phaliscians their disloyal school-master. And this was indeed a procedure truly Roman, and nothing allied to the Græcian subtilty, or Punic cunning, where it was reputed a victory of less glory to overcome by force than by fraud. Deceit may serve for a need, but he only confesses himself overcome who knows he is neither subdued by policy nor misadventure, but by dint of valour, in a fair and manly war. And it very well appears by the discourse of these good old senators, that this fine sentence was not yet received amongst them,

——Dolus, an virtus, quis in hoste requirat?[14]

"No matter if by valour, or deceit,
We overcome, so we the better get."

[1] Lucan, vi. 220.
[2] Publius and Cneius Scipio.
[3] Livy, xxv. 37.
[4] Cicero, *Tusc. Ques*, iii. 26.
[5] Herodotus, vii. 24, 35. [6] Plutarch, *on Anger*.
[6] Herodotus, i. 189, who calls the river Gyndes, not Gnidus, says that Cyrus spent a whole summer on this fine occupation.
[7] She had been imprisoned in it. Seneca, *on Anger*, iii. 22.
[8] Alphonzo XI. king of Castile; died, 1350.
[9] Suetonius, *in vitâ*, c. 16.
[10] Id. ib. c. 23. [11] Herod., iv. 94.
[12] Plutarch, *on Contentment*, c. iv.
[13] Livy, xlii. 37, call him Quintus Marcius.
[14] *Æneid* ii. 390.

The Achaians, says Polybius, abhorred all manner of double-dealing in war, not reputing it a victory unless where the courage of the enemy was fairly subdued. *Eam vir sanctus et sapiens scietveram esse victoriam, quæ, salva fide et integra dignitate, parabitur.*[1] "An honest and wise man will acknowledge that only to be a true victory which is obtained without violation of faith, or blemish upon honour," says another.

Vosne velit, an me, regnare hera, quidve ferat, fors,
Virtute experiamur.[2]

"If you or I shall rule, let 's fairly try,
And force or fortune give the victory."

In the kingdom of Ternate, amongst those nations which we so roundly call barbarian, they have a custom never to commence war till it be first denounced; adding withal, an ample declaration of what they have to carry it on withal, how many men, what supplies, and what arms, both offensive and defensive; but, that being done, if their enemies do not yield, they afterwards deem it lawful to employ this power without reproach, by any means that may best conduce to their own ends.

The ancient Florentines were so far from wishing to obtain any advantage over their enemies by surprise that they always gave them a month's warning before they drew their army into the field, by the continual tolling of a bell they called Martinella.[3]

As to us, who are not so scrupulous in this matter, who attribute the honour of the war to him who has the better of it, after what manner soever obtained, and who, after Lysander, say, "Where the lion's skin is too short, we must eke it out with the fox's case,"[4] the most usual occasions of surprise are derived from this practice, and we hold that there are no moments wherein a chief ought to be more circumspect, and to have his eye so much at watch, as those of parlies and treaties of accommodation; and it is therefore become a general rule amongst the military men of these latter times that a governor of a place never ought in a time of siege to go out himself to parley. It was for this that in our fathers' days the Seigneurs de Montmord and de l'Assigni, defending Mousson against the Count de Nassau, were so highly censured; yet in this case it would be excusable in that governor who, going out for this purpose, should do it in such a manner that the safety and advantage should be on his side; as Count Guido de Rangoni did at Reggio, (if we are to believe du Bellay, for Guicciardin says it was he himself,) when Monsieur de l' Escut approached to parley; for he went so little a way from the wall of his fortress that, a disorder happening during the parley, not only Monsieur de l' Escut and his party, who were advanced with him, found themselves by much the weaker (insomuch that Alessandro de Trivulcio was there slain), but he himself was constrained, as the surest way, to follow the Count, and relying upon his honour to secure himself from the danger of the shot within the very walls of the town.[5]

Eumenes, being shut up in the city of Nora, by Antigonus, and by him importuned to come out to speak with him, as he sent him word it was fit he should to a better man than himself, who had the advantage over him, returned this noble answer, "I never shall think any man better than myself, whilst I have my sword in my hand;" and would not consent to come out to him, till first, according to his own demand, Antigonus had delivered his own nephew Ptolemy in hostage.[6]

And yet some have done well in going out in person to parley with the assailant on his word of honour; witness Henry de Vaux, a cavalier of Champagne, who being besieged by the English in the castle of Courmicy,[7] and Bartholomew de Bruwes,[8] who commanded at the siege, having so sapped the greatest part of the castle without that nothing remained but setting fire to the props to bury the besieged under the ruins, he required the said Henry to come out to speak with him for his own good; which the other accordingly doing, with three more in company with him, and his own evident ruin being made apparent to him, he conceived himself singularly obliged to his enemy, to whose discretion he and his garrison then surrendered themselves; and, fire being presently applied to the mine, the props no sooner began to fail but the castle was immediately turned topsy-turvy, no one stone being left upon another.[9]

I could, and do, with great facility, rely upon the faith of another; but I should very unwillingly do it in any case where it might be judged that it was rather an effect of my despair and want of courage than voluntarily and out of confidence and security in the faith of him with whom I had to do.

CHAPTER VI.

THAT THE HOUR OF PARLEY IS DANGEROUS.

YET I saw, lately at Mussidan,[10] a place not far from my house, that those who were driven out thence by our army, and others of their party, highly complained of treachery, for that, during a treaty of accommodation, and in the very interim that their deputies were treating, they were surprised and cut to pieces: a thing that, peradventure, in another age, might have

[1] Florus, i. 22. [2] Ennius, *apud* Cicero *de Officiis*, i. 12.
[3] From the name of St. Martin, derived from that of Mars, the God of war.
[4] Plutarch, *in Vitâ*, c. 4.
[5] Mem. of Martin du Bellay, i. Guicciard. xiv.
[6] Plut. *in Vitâ*, c. v.
[7] Most of the editions have it Commercy.
[8] Or as it is now written Burghersh.
[9] Froissart, i. c. 118.
[10] Or Mucidan.

had some colour of foul play; but, as I said before, the practice of arms in these days is quite another thing, and there is now no confidence in an enemy excusable till after the last seal of obligation is fixed; and even then the conqueror has enough to do to keep his word; so hazardous a thing it is to intrust the observation of the faith a man has engaged to a town that surrenders upon easy and favourable conditions, to the necessity, avarice, and license of a victorious army, and to give the soldiers free entrance into it in the heat of blood.

The faith of military men very uncertain.

Lucius Æmilius Regillus, a Roman Prætor, having lost his time in attempting to take the city of Phocæa by force, by reason of the singular valour wherewith the inhabitants defended themselves against him, conditioned at last to receive them as friends to the people of Rome, and to enter the town, as into a confederate city, without any manner of hostility; of which he gave them all possible assurance: but, having, for the greater pomp, brought his whole army in with him, it was no more in his power, with all the endeavour he could use, to command his people; so that, avarice and revenge despising and trampling under foot both his authority and all military discipline, he there at once saw his own faith violated, and a considerable part of the city sacked and ruined before his face.[1]

Cleomenes was wont to say that, whatever mischief a man could do his enemy in time of war was above justice, and nothing accountable to it in the sight of Gods and men. And, according to this principle, having concluded a cessation with those of Argos for seven days, the third night after he fell upon them when they were all buried in security and sleep, and put them to the sword; alleging, for his excuse, that there had no nights been mentioned in the truce. But the Gods punished his subtle perfidy.[2] In a time of parley also, and while the citizens were intent upon their capitulation, the city of Casilinum was taken by surprise,[3] and that even in the age of the justest captains, and the most perfect discipline of the Roman army; for it is not said that it is not lawful for us in time and place to make advantage of our enemies' want of understanding, as well as their want of courage. And doubtless war has naturally a great many privileges that appear reasonable, even to the prejudice of reason. And therefore here the rule fails, *Neminem id agere, ut ex alterius prædetur inscitia.*[4] "No one should prey upon another's folly." But I am astonished at the great liberty allowed by Xenophon in such cases,[5] and that both by precept and the example of several exploits of his complete general; an author of very great authority, I confess, in those affairs, as being in his own person both a great captain and a philosopher of the first form of Socrates' disciples; and yet I cannot consent to such a measure of license as he dispenses in all things and places.

Monsieur d'Aubigny besieging Capua, after having played a furious battery against it, Signior Fabricio Colonna, governor of the town, having from a bastion begun to parley, and his soldiers in the mean time being a little more remiss in their guard, our people took advantage of their security, entered the place at unawares, and put them all to the sword. And of later memory, at Yvoy,[6] Signior Juliano Rommero having played that part of a novice to go out to capitulate with Monsieur the Constable, at his return found his place taken. But, that we might not escape scot free, the Marquis of Pescara having laid siege to Genoa, where Duke Ottavio Fregosa commanded under our protection, and the articles betwixt them being so far advanced that it was looked upon as a done thing, and upon the point to be concluded, the Spaniards, in the mean time, being slipped in under the privilege of the treaty, seized on the gates, and made use of this treachery as an absolute and fair victory.[7] And since, at Ligny in Barrois, where the Count de Brienne commanded, the Emperor having in his own person beleagured that place, and Bartheville, the said Count's lieutenant, going out to parley, while he was capitulating the town was taken.[8]

Fù il vincer sempre mai laudabil cosa
Vincasi o per fortuna, o per ingegno.[9]

"Fame ever doth the victor's praises ring,
And conquest aye was deem'd a glorious thing,
Which way soe'er the conqu'ror purchas'd it,
Whether by valour, fortune, or by wit,"

say they. But the philosopher Chrysippus was of another opinion, wherein I also concur; for he was used to say that those who run a race ought to employ all the force they have in what they are about, and to run as fast as they can; but that it is by no means fair in them to lay an hand upon their adversary to stop him, nor to set a leg before him to throw him down.[10] And still more generous was the answer of the Great Alexander to Polypercon, who was persuading him to take the advantage of the night's obscurity to fall upon Darius; "no," said he, "it is not for such a man as I to steal a victory:" *malo me fortunæ pœniteat, quam victoriæ pudeat.*[11] "I had rather have to lament my fortune than be ashamed of my victory."

[1] Livy, xxxvii. 32.
[2] Plutarch, *Apothegms.*
[3] Livy, xxiv. 19.
[4] Cicero, *de Offic.* iii. 17.
[5] In his *Cyropædia.*
[6] Or Carignan, a small town of old French Luxembourg, on the river Chiers, four leagues from Sedan.
[7] Mem. of Martin du Bellay, ii.
[8] Mem. of William du Bellay, ix.
[9] Ariosto, Cant. xv. 1.
[10] Cicer. *de Offic.* iii. 10.
[11] Quint. Curt. iv. 13.

Atque idem fugientem haud est dignatus Oroden
Sternere, nec jacta cæcum dare cuspide vulnus,
Obvius, adversoque occurrit, seque viro vir
Contulit, haud furto melior, sed fortibus armis.[1]

"Then with disdain, the haughty victor viewed
Orodes flying, nor the wretch pursued;
Nor thought the dastard's back deserved a wound,
But, hastening to o'ertake him, gained the ground;
Then, turning short, he met him face to face,
To give his victory the better grace."

CHAPTER VII.

THAT THE INTENTION IS JUDGE OF OUR ACTIONS.

Whether death discharges us of an obligation.

'Tis a saying, that death discharges us of all our obligations. However, I know some who have taken it in another sense. Henry VII., king of England, articled with Don Philip, son to Maximilian the emperor, or, to give him the more honourable title, father to the Emperor Charles V., that the said Philip should deliver up into his hands the duke of Suffolk, of the White Rose, his mortal enemy, who was fled into the Low Countries; which Philip (not knowing how to evade it) accordingly promised to do, but upon condition, nevertheless, that Henry should attempt nothing against the life of the said duke, which during his own life the king kept to; but, coming to die, in his last will, he commanded his son to put him to death immediately after his decease.[2] And lately, in the tragedy that the duke of Alva presented to us at Brussels, in the persons of Count Egmont and Horne, there were many very remarkable passages, and one amongst the rest, that Count Egmont, upon the security of whose word and faith Count Horne had come and surrendered himself to the duke of Alva, earnestly entreated that he might first mount the scaffold, to the end that death might disengage him from the obligation he had passed to the other. In these cases, methinks death did not acquit the king of his promise, and the Count was freed from his, even though he had not died. For we cannot be obliged beyond what we are able to perform, by reason that effects and performances are not at all in our power, and that indeed we are masters of nothing but the will, in which, by necessity, all the rules and whole duty of mankind are founded and established. And therefore Count Egmont, holding his soul and will bound and indebted to his promise, although he had not the power to make it good, had doubtless been absolved of his obligation, even though he had out-lived the other; but the king of England, premeditatedly breaking his faith, was no more to be excused for deferring the execution of his infidelity till after his death than Herodotus' mason, who having inviolably, during the time of his life, kept the secret of the treasure of the king of Ægypt his master, at his death discovered it to his children.[3]

I have noticed several, in my time, who, plagued by their consciences for unjustly detaining the goods of another, have thought to make amends by their will, and after their decease; but they had as good do nothing as delude themselves both in taking so much time in so pressing an affair, and in going about to repair an injury with so little damage to themselves. They owe, over and above, something of their own, and by how much their payment is more strict and incommodious to themselves, by so much is their restitution more perfect, just, and meritorious; for penitence requires penance. But they do yet worse than these, who reserve the declaration of their animosity against their neighbour to the last gasp, having concealed it all the time of their lives before, wherein they declare themselves to have little regard for their own honour, irritating the party offended against their memory only; and less for their conscience, not having the power, even out of respect to death itself, to make their malice die with them; but extending the life of their hatred even beyond their own. Unjust judges, who defer judgment to a time wherein they can have no cognizance of the cause! For my part I shall take care, if I can, that my death discover nothing that my life has not first declared, and that openly.

CHAPTER VIII.

OF IDLENESS.

As we see ground that has long lain idle and untilled, if it be rich and naturally fertile, abound with innumerable sorts of weeds and unprofitable wild herbs; and that, to make it perform its true office, we must cultivate and prepare it for such seeds as are proper for our service; and as we see women that, without the knowledge of men, do sometimes of themselves bring forth inanimate and formless lumps of flesh, but that to cause a natural and perfect generation they are to be husbanded with another kind of seed; even so it is with our minds, which if not applied to some certain study that may fix and restrain them, run into a thousand extravagances, and are eternally roving here and there in the inextricable labyrinth of restless imagination.

Sicut aquæ tremulum labris ubi lumen ahenis,
Sole repercussum, aut radiantis imagine lunæ
Omnia pervolitat late loca; jamque sub auras
Erigitur summique ferit laquearia tecti.[4]

"Like as the quivering reflection
Of fountain waters, when the morning sun
Sheds on the bason, or the moon's pale beam
Gives light and colour to the captive stream,
Darts with fantastic motion round the place,
And walls and roof strikes with its trembling rays."

[1] Æneid, x. 732. [2] Mem. of Martin du Bellay, l.

[3] Herod. ii. 121. [4] Æneid, viii. 22.

In which wild and irregular agitation, there is no folly, nor idle fancy they do not light upon:

Velut ægri somnia, vanæ
Finguntur species.[1]

"Like sick men's dreams, that, from a troubled brain,
Phantasms create, ridiculous and vain."

The soul that has no established limit to circumscribe it, loses itself; for as the Epigrammatist says: He that is every where is no where.

Quisquis ubique habitat, Maxime, nusquam habitat.

When I lately retired myself to my own house, with a resolution, as much as possibly I could, to avoid all manner of concern in affairs, and to spend in privacy and repose the little remainder of time I have to live, I fancied I could not more oblige my mind than to suffer it at full leisure to entertain and divert itself, which I hoped it might now the better be entrusted to do, as being by time and observation become more settled and mature; but I find,

Variam semper dant otia mentem.[2]

"—— E'en in the most retir'd estate,
Leisure itself does various thoughts create:"

that, quite the contrary, it is like a horse that has broken from his rider, who voluntarily runs into a much wilder career than any horseman would put him to, and creates me so many chimæras and fantastic monsters, one upon another, without order or design, that, the better at leisure to contemplate their strangeness and absurdity, I have begun to commit them to writing, hoping in time to make them ashamed of themselves.

CHAPTER IX.

OF LIARS.

THERE is not a man living whom it would so little become to speak of memory as myself, for I have scarcely any at all; and do not think that the world has again another so marvellously treacherous as mine. My other faculties are all very ordinary and mean; but in this I think myself so singular, and to have the defect to such a degree of excellence, that I deserve, methinks, to be famous for it, and to have more than a common reputation. Besides the natural inconveniences which I experience from this cause, (for, in truth, the use of memory considered Plato had reason when he called it a great and powerful Goddess;[4]) in my country, when they would describe a man that has no sense, they say, such an one has no memory; and when I complain of mine,[5] they seem not to believe I am in earnest, and presently reprove me, as though I accused myself for a fool, not discerning the difference betwixt memory and understanding; wherein they are very wide of my intention, and do me wrong, experience rather daily shewing us, on the contrary, that a strong memory is commonly coupled with infirm judgment. And they do me, moreover, who am so perfect in nothing as in friendship, a greater wrong in this, that they make the same words, which accuse my infirmity, represent me for an ungrateful person; bringing my affection into question upon the account of my memory, and, from a natural imperfection, unjustly derive a defect of conscience. "He has forgot," says one, "this request, or that promise; he no longer remembers his friends, he has forgot to say or do, or to conceal, such and such a thing for my sake." And truly, I am apt enough to forget many things, but to neglect any thing my friend has given me in charge, I never do it. And it should be enough, methinks, that I feel the misery and inconvenience of it without being branded with malice, a vice so contrary to my nature.

Montaigne's bad memory.

However, I derive these comforts from my infirmity; first, that it is an evil from which, principally, I have found reason to correct a worse, that would easily enough have grown upon me, namely ambition; this defect being intolerable in those who take upon them the negociations of the world. That, as several like examples in the progress of nature demonstrate to us, she has fortified me in my other faculties proportionably as she has left me unfurnished in this; I should otherwise have been apt, implicitly, to have reposed my understanding and judgment upon the bare report of other men, without ever setting them to work for themselves upon any inquisition whatever, had the inventions and opinions of others been ever present with me by the benefit of memory. That by this means I am not so talkative, for the magazine of the memory is ever better furnished with matter than that of the invention; and had mine been faithful to me, I had, e'er this, deafened all my friends with my eternal babble, the subjects themselves rousing and stirring up the little faculty I have of handling and applying them, and heating and extending my discourse. 'Tis a great imperfection, and what I have observed in several of my intimate friends who, as their memories supply them with a present and entire review of things, carry back their narratives so far, and crowd them with so many irrelevant circumstances, that, though the story be good in itself, they make a shift to spoil it; and if

The advantages of a defective memory.

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[1] Horace, *de Arte Poet.* 7.

[2] Martial, vii. 73.

[3] Lucan, iv. 704.

[4] Plato, *Critias.*

[5] He complains of this defect again in the 17th chapter of the second book. Malebranche, and others, charge him with falsehood, in this respect, (see particularly Baudius, *Not. ad Jamb. II.*) and they alledge, as a proof of this, his numerous quotations. But besides that these quotations are frequently inexact, and that he occasionally contradicts himself, even when not quoting, persons accustomed to authorship know that it requires no great memory to quote, and this frequently. *A faulte de memoire naturelle*, says the forgetful Montaigne, *j'en forge de pupier* (book 3. c. 13.) and this is the whole secret.

otherwise, you are either to curse the strength of their memory, or the weakness of their judgment. And it is a hard thing to close up a discourse and to cut it short, when you are once in, and have a great deal more to say. There is nothing wherein the strength and breeding of a horse is so much seen as in a round, graceful, and sudden stop. I see some, even among those who talk pertinently enough, who would, but cannot, stop short in their career; for whilst they are seeking out a handsome period to conclude with, they go on talking at random, and are so perplexed and entangled in their own eloquence that they know not what they say, but go on staggering amidst unmeaning sentences, as men stagger and totter on their feet from weakness. But, above all, old men, who yet retain the memory of things past, and forget how often they have told them, are the most dangerous company for this fault; and I have known stories from the mouth of a man of very great quality, otherwise very pleasant in themselves, become very troublesome by being a hundred times repeated over and over again.

The second obligation I have to this infirm memory of mine is that, by this means, I less remember the injuries I have received; insomuch that (as one of the ancients[1] said,) I should have a protocol, a register of injuries, or a prompter, like Darius, who, that he might not forget the offence he had received from those of Athens, so often as he sat down to dinner, ordered one of his pages three times to bawl in his ear, "Sir, remember the Athenians."[2] And, besides, the places which I revisit, and the books I read over again, still smile upon me with a fresh novelty.

Liars should have good memories.

It is not without good reason said that he who has not a good memory should never take upon him the trade of lying. I know very well that the grammarians distinguish betwixt an untruth and a lie, and say that to tell an untruth is to tell a thing that is false, but which we ourselves believe to be true;[3] but that the definition of the Latin verb, to lie,[4] whence our French verb is taken, signifies the going against our conscience; and that, therefore, this touches only those who speak against their own knowledge; and it is to this last sort of liars only that I now refer. Now, these either wholly contrive and invent the untruths they utter, or so alter and disguise a true story, that it always ends in a lie; and when they disguise and often alter the same story according to their own fancy, 'tis very hard for them at one time or another to escape being trapped, by reason that the real truth of the thing having first taken possession of the memory, and being there lodged, and imprinted by the way of knowledge and fact, it will be ever ready to present itself to the imagination, and to shoulder out any falsehood of their own contriving, which cannot there have so sure and settled footing as the other; and the circumstances of the first true knowledge evermore running in their minds, will be apt to make them forget those that are illegitimate, and only forged by their own fancy. In what they wholly invent, forasmuch as there is no contrary impression to justle their invention, there seems to be less danger of tripping; and yet, even this also, by reason it is a vain body, and without any other foundation than fancy only, is very apt to escape the memory, if they be not careful to make themselves very perfect in their tale. Of which I have often had very pleasant experience at the expense of such as profess only to form and accommodate their speech to the affair they have in hand, or to the humour of the personage with whom they have to do; for the circumstances to which these men stick not to enslave their consciences and their faith, being subject to various changes, their language must vary accordingly. Whence it happens, that of the same thing they tell one man that it is this, and another that it is that, giving it several forms and colours; but if these several men once come to compare notes and find out the cheat, what becomes of this fine art? Besides which they must, of necessity, very often ridiculously trap themselves; for what memory can be sufficient to retain so many different shapes as they have forged upon one and the same subject? I have known many in my time very ambitious of the reputation of this fine sort of cleverness; but they do not see that he who has the reputation of it can do nothing with it.

In plain truth, lying is a hateful and an accursed vice. We are not men, we have no other tie upon one another but our word. If we did but perceive the horror and ill consequences of it, we should pursue it with fire and sword, and more justly than other crimes. I see that parents commonly, and with indiscretion enough, correct their children for little innocent faults, and torment them for wanton childish tricks that have neither impression, nor tend to any consequence: whereas, in my opinion, lying only, and, what is of something a lower form, wilful obstinacy, are the faults which ought, on all occasions, to be combatted, both in the infancy and progress of these vices, which will otherwise grow up and increase with them; and, after a tongue has once got the knack of lying, 'tis not to be imagined how impossible almost it is to reclaim it. Whence it comes to pass that we see some, who are otherwise very honest men, so subject to this vice. I have a good fellow for my tailor,

[1] Cicero, *pro Lig.* c. 12. "Oblivisci nihil solet, præter injurias."

[2] Herod. v. 105.

[3] Nigidius, *apud Aul. Gell.* xi. 2. Nonius, v.

[4] *Mentiri*, quasi, *contra mentem ire.*

who, yet, I never knew guilty of one truth; no, not even when it had been to his advantage. If falsehood had, like truth, but one face only, we should be upon better terms; for we should then take the contrary to what the liar says for certain truth; but the reverse of truth has a hundred thousand shapes, and a field indefinite, without bound or limit. The Pythagoreans make *good* to be certain and finite; *evil*, infinite and uncertain; there are a thousand ways to miss the white, there is only one to hit it. For my own part, I have this vice in so great horror, that I am not sure I could prevail with my conscience to secure myself from the most manifest and extreme danger by an impudent and solemn lie. An ancient father says that a dog we know is better company than a man whose language we do not understand. *Ut externus alieno non sit hominis vice.*[1] And how much less sociable is false speaking than silence?

King Francis the First bragged that he had, by this means, nonplussed Francis Taverna, the Ambassador of Francis Sforza, Duke of Milan, a man very famous for his eloquence in those days. This gentleman had been sent to excuse his master to his Majesty about a thing of very great consequence, which was this: King Francis, to maintain some correspondence in Italy, out of which he had been lately driven, and particularly in the Duchy of Milan, had thought it, to that end, convenient to have a gentleman, on his behalf, reside at the Court of that Duke; an Ambassador in effect, but in outward appearance no other than a private person, who pretended to be there upon the single account of his own particular affairs; for the Duke, much more depending upon the Emperor, especially at that time, when he was in a treaty of a marriage with his niece, daughter to the King of Denmark, and since Dowager of Lorraine, could not own any friendship or intelligence with us, but very much to his own prejudice. For this commission then, one Merveille, a Milanese gentleman, and equerry to the King, being thought very fit, he was accordingly dispatched thither, with private letters of credence and his instructions of Ambassador, and with other letters of recommendation to the Duke about his own private concerns, the better to colour and cloak the business; and he so long continued in that Court that the Emperor, at last, had some notion of his real employment there, and complained of it to the Duke, which was the occasion of what followed after, as we suppose; which was, that under pretence of a murder by him said to be committed, his trial was in two days dispatched, and his head, in the night, struck off in prison. Signior Francisco then, being upon this account come to the Court of France, prepared with a long counterfeit story to excuse a thing of so dangerous example, (for the King had applied himself to all the Princes of Christendom, as well as to the Duke himself, to demand satisfaction for this outrage upon the person of his minister,) had his audience at the morning council, where, after he had, for the support of his cause, in a long premeditated oration, laid open several plausible justifications of the fact, he concluded with roundly saying that the Duke, his master, had never looked upon this Merveille for other than a private gentleman, and his own subject, who was there only in order to his own business, and who had lived there under no other character; absolutely disowning that he had ever heard he was one of the king's servants, or that his Majesty so much as knew him, so far was he from taking him for an Ambassador. When he had made an end, the King, pressing him with several objections and assertions, and sifting him on all hands, gravelled him at last by asking, why then the execution was performed by night, and as it were by stealth? At which the poor confounded Ambassador, the more handsomely to disengage himself, made answer that the Duke would have been very loth, out of respect to his Majesty, that such an execution should have been performed in the face of the sun. Any one may guess if he was not well schooled when he came home, for having so grossly tripped in the presence of a prince of so delicate a nostril as King Francis.[2]

Pope Julius the Second having sent an Ambassador to the King of England, to animate him against King Francis, the Ambassador having had his audience, and the King, before he would give a positive answer, insisting upon the difficulties he found in setting on foot so great a preparation as would be necessary to attack so potent a king, and, urging some reasons to that effect, the Ambassador very unseasonably replied that he had also himself considered the same difficulties, and had represented as much to the Pope. From which speech of his, so directly opposite to the thing propounded, and the business he came about, which was immediately to incite him to war, the King first derived argument to conceive, which he afterwards found to be true, that this Ambassador, in his own private bosom, was a friend to the French; of which, having advertised the Pope, his estate, at his return home, was confiscated, and himself very narrowly escaped the losing his head.[3]

[1] "As a foreigner, to one that understands not what he says, cannot be said to supply the place of a man." Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* vii. where, however, the text is *pene non sit*, scarcely is, &c.

[2] Mem. of Martin du Bellay, i. The incident occurred in 1534.

[3] Erasmus, in his *Lingua*, relates this circumstance as having occurred when he was in England.

CHAPTER X.

OF QUICK OR SLOW SPEECH.

Onc ne feurent à tous toutes graces données.[1]

"All graces were never yet to all men given,"

as we see in the gift of eloquence, wherein some have such a facility and promptness, and that which we call a present wit, so easy that they are ever ready upon all occasions, and never to be surprised: and others, more heavy and slow, never venture to utter anything but what they have long premeditated, and taken great care and pains to fit and prepare. Now, as we teach young ladies those sports and exercises which are the most proper to set out the grace and beauty of those parts wherein their chief ornament and perfection lie; so in these two different advantages of eloquence, of which the lawyers and preachers of our age seem principally to make profession, if I were worthy to advise, the slow speaker, methinks, should be more proper for the pulpit, and the other for the bar; and this because the employment of the first does naturally allow him all the leisure he can desire to prepare himself, and, besides, his career is performed in an even and unintermitted line, without stop or interruption; whereas, the pleader's business and interest compels him to enter the lists upon all occasions, and the unexpected objections and replies of his adverse party often justle him out of his course, and put him, upon the instant, to pump for new and extempore answers and defences. Yet, at the interview betwixt Pope Clement and King Francis, at Marseilles, it happened, quite contrary, that Monsieur Poyet, a man bred up all his life at the bar, and in the highest repute for eloquence, having the charge of making the harangue to the Pope committed to him, and having so long meditated on it beforehand, as, it was said, to have brought it ready along with him from Paris; the very day it was to have been pronounced, the Pope, fearing something might be said that might give offence to the other Princes' Ambassadors who were there attending on him, sent to acquaint the King with the argument which he conceived most suiting to the time and place, which, by chance, was quite another thing to that Monsieur Poyet had taken so much pains about; so that the fine speech he had prepared was of no use, and he had, upon the instant, to contrive another; which, finding himself unable to do, Cardinal du Bellay was constrained to perform that office.[2] The pleader's part is, doubtless, much harder than that of the preacher; and yet, in my opinion, we see more passable lawyers than preachers, at least in France. It should seem that the nature of wit is to have its operation prompt and sudden, and that of judgment, to have it more deliberate and more slow: but he who remains totally silent for want of leisure to prepare himself to speak well, and he also whom leisure does no ways benefit to better speaking, are equally unhappy.

The different sorts of eloquence.

'Tis said of Severus Cassius, that he spoke best extempore, that he stood more obliged to fortune than his own diligence, that it was an advantage to him to be interrupted in speaking, and that his adversaries were afraid to nettle him, lest his anger should redouble his eloquence.[3] I know, by experience, a disposition so impatient of a tedious and elaborate premeditation, that if it do not go frankly and gaily to work, can do nothing to the purpose. We say of some compositions that they smell of the lamp, by reason of a certain rough harshness that laborious handling imprints upon those where it has been employed. But, besides this, the extreme solicitude of doing well, and the striving and contending of a mind too far strained and over-bent upon its undertaking, breaks and hinders itself, like water that, by force of its own pressing violence and abundance, cannot find a ready issue through the neck of a bottle, or a narrow sluice. In this condition of nature, of which I now speak, there is this also, that it would not be disordered and stimulated with such a passion as the fury of Cassius; for such a motion would be too violent and rude; it would not be justled, but solicited; it would be roused and heated by unexpected, sudden, and accidental occasions. If it be left to itself, it flags and languishes; agitation only gives it grace and vigour. I am always worst in my own possession; and when wholly at my own disposition, accident has more title to any thing that comes from me, than I; occasion, company, and even the very rising and falling of my own voice, extract more from my fancy than I can find when I examine and employ it by myself, so that the things I say are better than those I write, if either were to be preferred where neither is worth any thing. This also befals me, that I am at a loss when I seek, and light upon things more by chance than by any inquisition of my own judgment. I, perhaps, sometimes hit upon a good point, when I am writing (I mean that seems so to me, though it may appear dull and heavy to another—but no more of these complimentaries—every one says this sort of thing about himself,) but when I come to read it, afterwards, I cannot make out what I meant to say, and, in such cases, a stranger often finds it out before me. If I were always to scratch out such parts, I should make clean work of my book; but then, some other time, chance shews me the meaning as clear as the sun at noon-day, and makes me wonder what I should stick at.

[1] Etienne de la Boetie; in the Collection of *Vers Français* published by Montaigne in 1572. *Sonnet* xiv.

[2] *Mem.* of Martin du Bellay, iv.

[3] *Senec. Rhetor. Controv.* iii.

CHAPTER XI.

OF PROGNOSTICATIONS.

Decay of oracles.

As to oracles, it is certain that, long before the coming of Jesus Christ, they began to lose their credit; for we see that Cicero is troubled to find out the cause of their decay, in these words: *Cur isto modo jam oracula Delphis eduntur, non modo nostrâ ætate, sed jamdiu, ut nihil possit esse contemptius.*[1] "What should be the reason that the oracles at Delphos are so uttered, not only in this age of ours, but for a great while since, that nothing can be more contemptible?" But as to the other prognostics, calculated from the anatomy of beasts at sacrifices, which Plato does, in part, attribute to the natural constitution of the intestines of the beasts themselves, from the scraping of poultry, the flight of birds, (*Aves quasdam, rerum augurandarum causâ natas esse putamus*;[2] "We think some sorts of birds were purposely created for the purposes of augury;") claps of thunder, the winding of rivers, *multa cernunt aruspices, multa augures provident, multa oraculis declarantur, multa vaticinationibus, multa somniis, multa portentis.*[3] "Soothsayers and augurs conjecture and foresee many things, and many things are foretold in oracles, prophecies, dreams, and portents;" and others of the like nature, upon which antiquity founded most of their public and private enterprizes, our Christian religion has totally abolished, although there yet remain amongst us some practices of divination from the stars, from spirits, from the shapes and complexions of men, from dreams and the like (a notable proof of the wild curiosity of our nature grasping at, and anticipating, future things, as if we had not enough to do to digest the present).

Cur hanc tibi, rector Olympi,
Sollicitis visum mortalibus addere curam,
Noscant venturas ut dira per omnia clades?
* * * * * * * *
Sit subitum quodcunque paras; sit cæca futuri
Mens hominum fati; liceat sperare timenti.[4]

"Why, sov'reign ruler of Olympus, why
To human breasts, which breathe the anxious sigh,
Add'st thou this care, that men should be so wise
To know, by omens, future miseries?
* * * * * * * *
Unlook'd for send the ills thou hast design'd;
Let human eyes to future fate be blind,
That hope, amidst our fears, some place may find."

Ne utile quidem est scire quid futurum sit; miserum est enim nihil proficientem angi.[5] "It is of no avail to know what shall come to pass, for it is a miserable thing to be vexed and tormented to no purpose." Yet are they of much less authority now than heretofore. Which makes the example of Francis, Marquis of Saluzzo, so much more remarkable; who, being lieutenant to King Francis the First, in his army beyond the mountains, infinitely favoured and esteemed in our Court, and obliged to the king's bounty for the Marquisate itself, which had been forfeited by his brother; and, as to the rest, having no manner of provocation given him to do it, and even his own affection opposing any such disloyalty; suffered himself to be so terrified, as it was confidently reported, with the fine prognostics that were spread abroad in favour of the Emperor Charles the Fifth, and, to our disadvantage, especially in Italy; where these foolish prophecies were so far believed that, at Rome, great sums of money were ventured out upon return of greater when they came to pass, so certain they made themselves of our ruin; that, having bewailed, to those of his acquaintance who were most intimate with him, the mischiefs that he saw would inevitably fall upon the Crown of France, and the friends he had in that Court, he revolted and turned to the other side; but to his own misfortune, however, what constellation soever governed at that time. But he carried himself in this affair like a man agitated with divers passions; for, having both towns and forces in his hands, the enemy's army, under Antonio de Leyva, close by him, and we not at all suspecting his design, it had been in his power to have done more than he did; for we lost no men by this treason of his, nor any town but Fossan only, and that after a long siege and a brave defence.[6]

Prudens futuri temporis exitum
Caliginosâ nocte premit Deus;
Ridetque, si mortalis ultra
Fas trepidat.[7]

"The God of wisdom has, in shades of night,
Future events conceal'd from human sight;
And laughs when he beholds the tim'rous race
Tremble at what shall never come to pass."

Ille potens sui,
Lætusque deget, cui licet in diem
Dixisse, vixi; cras vel atrâ
Nube polum pater occupato,
Vel sole puro.[7]

"He's master of himself alone,
He lives, that makes each day his own;
Who for to-morrow takes no care,
Whether the day prove foul or fair."

Lætus in præsens animus, quod ultrà est
Oderit curare.[8]

"The man that's cheerful in his present state
Is never anxious for his future fate."

And, on the contrary, those who believe this saying are in the wrong: *Ista sic reciprocantur, ut et, si divinatio sit, dii sint; et, si dii sint, sit divinatio.*[9] "These things have that mutual relation to one another that, if there be such a thing as divination, there must be deities; and, if deities, divination." Much more wisely Pacuvius:

[1] Cicer. *de Divin.* ii. 57.
[2] Cicer. *de Nat. Deorum*, ii. 64.
[3] Cic. *de Nat. Deo.* iii. 6.
[4] Id. ib. 65.
[5] Lucan ii. 4.
[6] Anno. 1536. Mem. of William du Bellay, vi.
[7] Horace, iii. 29.
[8] Id. ib. ii. 16.
[9] Cic. *de Divin.* i. 6.

Nam istis, qui linguam avium intelligunt,
Plusque ex alieno jecore sapiunt, quam ex suo,
Magis audiendum, quàm auscultandum censeo.[1]

"Those who birds' language understand, and who
More from brutes' livers than themselves do know,
Are rather to be heard than hearken'd to."

Origin of the art of divination.

The so celebrated art of divination, amongst the Tuscans, took its beginning thus: a labourer, striking deep with his coulter into the earth, saw the Demi-God Tages to ascend with an infantile aspect, but endued with a mature and senile wisdom. Upon the rumour of which all the people ran to see the sight, by whom his words and knowledge, containing the principles and means to attain to this art, were collected and kept for many ages.[2] A birth suitable to its progress! I, for my part, should sooner regulate my affairs by the chance of a die than by such idle and vain dreams. And indeed, in all Republics, a good share of the government has ever been referred to chance. Plato,[3] in the system that he models according to his own fancy, leaves the decision of several things, of very great importance, wholly to it; and will, amongst other things, that marriages, of the better sort, as he reputes, be appointed by lot, attributing so great virtue and adding so great a privilege to this accidental choice as to ordain that the children begot in such wedlock be brought up in the country, and those begot in any other to be thrust out as spurious and base; yet so that if any of those exiles, notwithstanding, should, peradventure, in growing up, give any early hopes of future ability, they might be recalled, as, on the other hand, those who had been retained were to be exiled in case they gave little promise of themselves in their greener years.

I see some, who are mightily given to study, pore and comment upon their almanacs, and produce them for authority when any thing has fallen out; and, indeed, it is hardly possible but that, in saying so much, they must sometimes stumble upon some truth amongst an infinite number of lies. *Quis est enim qui totum diem jaculans non aliquando collineet?* "For who shoots all day at buts that does not sometimes hit the white?" I think never the better of them for some accidental hits. There would be more certainty in it if there were a rule and a truth in always lying. Besides, nobody records their flim-flams and false prognostics, forasmuch as they are infinite and common; but if they chop upon one truth, that carries a mighty report, as being rare, incredible, and prodigious. So Diagoras, surnamed the Atheist, answered him in Samothrace, who shewing him, in the Temple, the several offerings and stories, in painting, of those who had escaped shipwreck, said to him, "Look, you who think the Gods have no care of human things, what do you say to so many persons preserved from death by their especial favour?" "Why, I say," answered he, "that their pictures are not here who were cast away, which were by much the greater number."

Cicero observes that, of all the philosophers who have acknowledged a Deity, only Xenophanes, the Colophonian, has endeavoured to eradicate all manner of divination.[6] Which makes it the less a wonder if we have sometimes seen some of our princes, to their own cost, rely too much upon these fopperies. I had given any thing, that I had, with my own eyes, seen those two great rarities, the book of Joachim, the Calabrian Abbot, which foretold all the future Popes, their names, and figures; and that of the Emperor Leo, which prophesied all the Emperors and Patriarchs of Greece. This I have been an eye-witness of, that, in public confusions, men, astonished at their fortune, have abandoned their own reason, superstitiously to seek out, in the stars, the ancient causes and menaces of their present mishaps, and, in my time, have been so strangely successful in it as to make me believe that, as this study is the amusement for men of leisure and penetration, those who have been versed in this knack of unfolding and untying riddles are able, in any writing, to find out what they want to find there. But, above all, that which gives them the greatest room to play in is the obscure, ambiguous, and fantastic gibberish of their prophetic canting, where the authors deliver nothing of clear sense, but shroud all in riddle, to the end that posterity may interpret and apply it according to their own fancy.

Socrates' Dæmon.

Socrates's Dæmon, or Familiar, might perhaps be no other but a certain impulsion of the will, which obtruded itself upon him without the advice or consent of his judgment; and, in a soul so enlightened as his was, and so prepared by a continual exercise of wisdom and virtue, 'tis to be supposed those inclinations of his, though sudden and undigested, were ever very important and worthy to be followed. Every one finds in himself some image of such agitations, of a prompt, vehement, and fortuitous opinion; and I must needs allow them some authority who attribute so little to our own prudence, and who also myself have had some, weak in reason, but violent in persuasion or dissuasion (which were most frequent with Socrates),[7] by which I have suffered myself to be carried away so fortunately, and so much to

[1] Pacuvius *apud* Cic. *ut supra*, i. 57.
[2] Ovid. Met. xv. Cicero, *ut supra*, ii. 25.
[3] Republic, v.; where he requires that the chiefs of his commonwealth should so order it that the men of the greatest excellence should be matched with the most excellent women; and, on the contrary, that the most contemptible men should be married to women of their own low character; but that the thing should be decided by a sort of lottery, so artfully managed (κλῆροι ποιήσουσι κομψοί) that the latter may blame fortune for it, and not their governors.
[4] Cicero *de Divinat.* ii. 59.
[5] Cicero *de Nat. Deor.* i. 37.
[6] Id. *de Divinat.* i. 3.
[7] Plato, *Theages.*

my own advantage, that they might have been judged to have had something in them of a divine inspiration.

CHAPTER XII.

OF CONSTANCY, OR FIRMNESS.

In what constancy and resolution consists.

THE law of resolution and constancy does not imply that we ought not, as much as in us lies, to decline, and to secure ourselves from, the mischiefs and inconveniences that threaten us; nor, consequently, that we shall not fear lest they should surprise us; on the contrary, all decent and honest ways and means of securing ourselves from harm are not only permitted, but moreover commendable, and the business of constancy chiefly is bravely to stand to, and stoutly to suffer those inconveniences which are not to be avoided. There is no motion of body nor any manner of handling arms, how irregular or ungraceful soever, that we condemn, if it serve to defend us from the blow that is made against us.

Several very warlike nations have made use of a retiring and flying way of fight, as a thing of singular advantage, and, by so doing, have made their backs more dangerous than their faces to their enemies. Of which kind of fighting the Turks yet retain something in their practice of arms to this day; and Socrates, in Plato, laughs at Laches, who had defined fortitude to be standing firm in the ranks against the enemy: "What," says he, "would it then be reputed cowardice to overcome them by giving ground?"[1] urging, at the same time, the authority of Homer, who commends Æneas for his skill in running away. And whereas Laches, considering better of it, admits 'twas the practice of the Scythians, and in general of all cavalry whatever, he again attacks him with the example of the Lacedemonian foot (a nation, of all others, the most obstinate in maintaining their ground), who, in the battle of Platea, not being able to break into the Persian phalanx, bethought themselves to disperse and retire, that, by the enemies' supposing they fled, they might break and disunite that vast body of men in the pursuit, and, by that stratagem obtained the victory.

As for the Scythians, 'tis said of them that, when Darius went on his expedition to subdue them, he sent, by a herald, highly to reproach their King that he always retired before him and declined a battle; to which Indathyrsis,[2] for that was his name, returned answer, "That it was not for fear of him or of any man living, that he did so, but that it was the way of marching in practice with his nation, who had neither tilled fields, cities, nor houses to defend, or to fear the enemy should make any advantage of; but that if he had such a stomach to fight, let him come but to view their ancient place of sepulture, and there he should have his fill."

Nevertheless, as to what concerns cannon shot, when a body of men are drawn up in the face of a train of artillery, as the occasion of war does often require, 'tis unhandsome to quit their post to avoid the danger, and a foolish thing to boot, forasmuch as by reason of its force and swiftness we account it inevitable, and many a one, by ducking, stepping aside, and such other motions of fear, has, if no worse, got laughed at by his companions. And yet, in the expedition that the Emperor Charles the Fifth made against us into Provence, the Marquis de Guasto going to reconnoitre the city of Arles, and venturing to advance out of the shelter of a wind-mill, under favour of which he had made his approach, was perceived by the Seigneurs de Bonneval and the Seneschal d'Agenois, who were walking upon the *Theatre aux arènes*,[3] who, having shewed him to the Sieur de Villiers, commissary of the artillery, he traversed a culverine so admirably well, and levelled it so exactly right at him, that had not the Marquis, seeing fire put to it, slipped aside, it was certainly concluded the shot had taken him full in the body.[4] And, in like manner, some years before Lorenzo de Medici, Duke of Urbino, and father to the Queen-mother,[5] laying siege to Mondolpho, a place in the territories of the Vicariat, in Italy, seeing the cannoneer give fire to a piece that pointed directly against him, ducked, and it was well for him, for otherwise the shot, that only razed the top of his head, had, doubtless, hit him full in the breast. To say truth, I do not think that these dodgings are at all a matter of judgment or reflection; for how is a man to judge of high or low aim on so sudden an occasion? It is much more easy to believe that fortune favoured their fear, and that the same movement, that at one time saves a man, may, at another, make him step into danger. For my own part, I confess, I cannot forbear starting when the rattle of a harquebuse thunders in my ears on a sudden, and in a place where I am not to expect it, which I have also observed in others, braver fellows than I.

Philosophers not blameable for yielding to the first impulses of the passions.

Neither do the Stoicks pretend that the soul of their philosopher should be proof against the first visions and fantasies that surprise him; but, as a natural subject, consent that he should tremble at the terrible noise of thunder or the sudden clatter of some falling ruin, and be affrighted even to paleness and convulsion.

[1] Plato, *Laches*.

[2] Or rather *Idanthyrses*. Her. iv. 127. [were exhibited.

[3] A theatre where public shows of riding, feneing, &c.,

[4] Mem of William du Bellay, vii.

[5] Catherine de Medici.

And so in other passions, provided a man's judgment remains sound and entire, and that the site of his reason suffers no concussion nor alteration, and that he yields no consent to his fright and discomposure. To him who is not a philosopher, a fright is the same in the first part of it, but quite another thing in the second; for the impression of the passions does not only remain superficially in him, but penetrates farther, even to the very seat of reason, and so as to infect and to corrupt it. He judges according to his fear, and conforms his behaviour to it.[1] But in this verse you may see the true state of the wise stoick learnedly and plainly expressed.

Mens immota manet, lacrymæ volvuntur inanes.[2]

"His humid eye frail, fruitless, tear-drops rains,
But the firm purpose of his mind remains."

The wise Peripatetick is not himself totally free from perturbations of mind, but he moderates them by his wisdom.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE CEREMONY OF THE INTERVIEW OF PRINCES.

THERE is no subject so frivolous that does not merit a place in this rhapsody. According to the common rule of civility, it would be a notable affront to an equal, and much more to a superior, to fail of being at home when he has given you notice he will come to visit you. Nay, queen Margaret of Navarre farther adds that it would be rudeness in a gentleman to go out to meet any one that is coming to see him, let him be of what condition soever; and that it is more respectful and more civil to stay at home to receive him, if only upon the account of missing of him by the way, and that it is enough to receive him at the door, and to wait upon him to his chamber. For my part, who, as much as I can, endeavour to reduce the ceremonies of my house, I very often forget both the one and the other of these vain offices, and peradventure some one may take offence at it; if he do, I am sorry, but I cannot find in my heart to help it; it is much better to offend him once than myself every day, for it would be a perpetual slavery; and to what end do we avoid the servile attendance of courts, if we bring the same, or a greater, trouble, home to our own private houses? It is also a common rule in all assemblies that those of less quality are to be first at the place, by reason that it is a state more due to the better sort to make others wait for them.

The respect which gentlemen are obliged to pay to a great man who visits them.

Nevertheless, at the interview betwixt pope Clement,[3] and king Francis, at Marseilles, the king, after he had in his own person taken order for the necessary preparations for his reception and entertainment, withdrew out of the town, and gave the pope two or three days' leisure for his entry, and wherein to repose and refresh himself before he came to him. And in like manner, at the meeting of the pope[4] and the emperor at Bologna, the emperor gave the pope opportunity to come thither first, and came himself after; for which the reason then given was this—that, at all the interviews of such princes, the greater ought to be first at the appointed place, especially before the other in whose territories the interview is appointed to be, intimating thereby a kind of deference to the other, and that it appears proper for the less to seek out, and to apply themselves to the greater, and not the greater to them

The usual ceremony at the interview of princes.

Not every country only, but every city, and so much as every profession, has its particular forms of civility. There was care enough taken in my education, and I have lived in good company enough to know the formalities of our own nation, and am able to give lessons in it; I love also to follow them, but not to be so servilely tied to their observation that my whole life should be enslaved to ceremonies; of which there are some that, provided a man omits them out of discretion, and not for want of breeding, it will be every whit as handsome in him. I have seen some people rude, by being over civil, and troublesome by their courtesy; though, these excesses excepted, the knowledge of courtesy and good manners is a very necessary study. It is, like grace and beauty, that which begets liking and an inclination to love one another at the first sight, and in the very beginning of an acquaintance and familiarity; and, consequently, that which first opens the door for us to better ourselves by the example of others, if there be any thing in the society worth notice.[5]

Too much nicety in behaviour not desirable.

The advantages of good manners.

CHAPTER XIV.

THAT MEN ARE JUSTLY PUNISHED FOR BEING OBSTINATE IN THE DEFENCE OF A FORT THAT IS NOT IN REASON TO BE DEFENDED.

VALOUR, as well as other virtues, has its bounds, which once transgressed, the next step is into the territories of vice; so that by having too large a proportion of this heroic virtue, unless a man be

Valour and its limits.

[1] Arrian, *Life of Epictetus.* Apud. Aul. Gell. xix. 1.
[2] Æneid, iv. 449.
[3] The Seventh, in 1533.
[4] Pope Clement VII. and Charles V. in 1532. See Guicciardine xx.

[5] In the edition of 1588, Montaigne placed here the chapter "That the relish of good and evil depends on the opinion we have of either," which he afterwards made the fortieth chapter.

very perfect in its limits, which upon the confines are very hard to discern, he may very easily unawares run into temerity, obstinacy, and folly. From this consideration it is that we have derived the custom, in time of war, to punish, even with death, those who are obstinate to defend a place that is not tenable by the rules of war. Otherwise, if there were not some examples made, men would be so confident upon the hopes of impunity that not a hen-roost but would resist and stop a royal army.

Why too obstinate a defence of a place is punished.

Monsieur the constable de Montmorency, having at the siege of Pavia been ordered to pass the Tesino, and to take up his quarters in the Fauxbourg St. Antonio, being hindered from doing so, by a tower that was at the end of the bridge, which was so impudent as to stand a battery, hanged every man he found within it for their labour.[1] And again, since, accompanying the Dauphin in his expedition beyond the Alps, and taking the castle of Villano by assault, and all within it having been put to the sword, the governor and his ensign only excepted, he caused them both to be trussed up for the same reason;[2] as also did Captain Martin du Bellay, then governor of Turin, the governor of St. Bony, in the same country, all his people being cut in pieces at the taking of the place.[3]

But, forasmuch as the strength or weakness of a fortress is always measured by the estimate and counterpoise of the forces that attack it (for a man might reasonably enough despise two culverines that would be a mad-man to abide a battery of thirty pieces of cannon); where also the greatness of the prince who is master of the field, his reputation, and the respect that is due unto him, are put into the account, there is always danger that the balance will turn that way; and thence it is that such people have so great an opinion of themselves and their power that, thinking it unreasonable any place should dare to shut its gates against them, they put all to the sword where they meet with any opposition, whilst their fortune continues; as is observable in the fierce and arrogant forms of summoning towns and denouncing war, savouring so much of barbarian pride and insolence, in use amongst the oriental princes, and which their successors to this day do yet retain and practise. And in that part of the world where the Portuguese subdued the Indians, they found some states where it was an universal and inviolable law amongst them that every enemy, overcome by the king in person, or by his representative lieutenant, was out of composition both of ransom and mercy.

So that above all things a man should take heed of falling into the hands of a judge who is an enemy, in arms, and victorious.

CHAPTER XV.

OF THE PUNISHMENT OF COWARDICE.

I ONCE heard of a prince, and a great captain, who having a narration given him as he sat at table of the proceeding against Monsieur de Vervins, who was sentenced to death for having surrendered Boulogne to the English,[4] openly maintained that a soldier could not justly be put to death for his want of courage. And in truth, a man should make a great difference betwixt faults that merely proceed from infirmity and those that are visibly the effects of treachery and malice; for, in the last, men wilfully act against the rules of reason that nature has imprinted in us; whereas in the former it seems as if we might produce the same nature, who left us in such a state of imperfection and defect of courage, for our justification. Insomuch that many have thought we are not justly questionable for any thing but what we commit against the light of our own conscience. And it is partly upon this rule that those ground their opinion who disapprove of capital and sanguinary punishments inflicted upon heretics and infidels; and theirs also who hold that an advocate or a judge is not accountable for having failed in his commission from ignorance.

How cowardice ought to be punished in a soldier.

But as to cowardice, it is certain that the most usual way of chastising it is by ignominy and disgrace; and it is supposed that this practice was first brought into use by the legislator Charondas; and that before his time the laws of Greece punished those with death who fled from a battle; whereas he ordained only that they should be three days exposed in the public place dressed in women's attire, hoping yet for some service from them, having awakened their courage by this open shame;[5] *Suffundere malis hominis sanguinem quam effundere*,[6] "Choosing rather to bring the blood into their cheeks than to let it out of their bodies." It appears, also, that the Roman laws did anciently punish those with death who had run away; for Ammianus Marcellinus says that the emperor Julian commanded ten of his soldiers, who had turned their backs in an encounter against the Parthians, to be first degraded, and afterwards put to death, according, says he, to the ancient laws.[7] Yet, elsewhere for the like offence, he only condemns others to remain amongst the prisoners

The usual mode of punishing cowardice.

[1] *Mem. of Martin du Bellay, ii.*
[2] —— William du Bellay, viii. [3] Id. ib. ix.
[4] To Henry VIII. who besieged it in person. *Mem. of Martin du Bellay, x.*
[5] Diod. Siculus, xii. 4.
[6] Tertullian, *Apolog.* p. 583.
[7] Ammianus Marcellinus, xxiv. 4 and xxvi. 1.

under the baggage ensign. The severe punishment the people of Rome inflicted upon those who fled from the battle of Cannæ, and in the same war upon those who ran away with Cneius Fulvius, at his defeat, did not extend to death.[1] And yet methinks men should consider what they do in such cases, lest disgrace should make such delinquents desperate, and not only faint friends, but implacable and mortal enemies.

How the governor of a place was punished for his cowardice.

Of late memory, the Seigneur de Frauget, lieutenant to the Mareschal de Chatillon's company, having, by the Mareschal de Chabannes, been put in governor of Fontarabia, in the place of Monsieur de Lude, and having surrendered it to the Spaniards, he was for that condemned to be degraded from all nobility, and both himself and his posterity declared ignoble, taxable, and for ever incapable of bearing arms; which hard sentence was executed at Lyons;[2] and since that all the gentlemen who were in Guise when the Count de Nassau entered it, underwent the same punishment, as several others have done since for the like offence. However, in case of such a manifest ignorance or cowardice as exceeds all ordinary example, 'tis but reason to take it for a sufficient proof of treachery and malice, and to punish it accordingly.

CHAPTER XVI.

A PROCEEDING OF SOME AMBASSADORS.

A wise custom observed by Montaigne.

I OBSERVE in my travels this custom, ever to learn something from the information of those with whom I confer (which is the best school of all others) and to put my company upon those subjects they are the best able to speak of:

> Basti al nocchiero ragionar de' venti,
> Al bifolco dei tori; et le sue piaghe
> Conti 'l guerrier, conti 'l pastor gli armenti.[3]
>
> "The seaman best discourses of the winds,
> Of oxen none so well as lab'ring hinds;
> The soldier best can talk of wounds and knocks,
> And gentle shepherds of their harmless flocks;"

for it often falls out that, on the contrary, every one will rather choose to be prating of another man's business than his own, thinking it so much new reputation acquired; witness the jeer Archidamus put upon Periander, that he had quitted the glory of being an excellent physician to gain the repute of a very bad poet.[4] And do but observe what a vast deal of pains Cæsar is at to make us understand his inventions in building bridges, and contriving engines of war,[5] and how succinct and reserved in comparison, where he speaks of the rules of his profession, and his own valour, and military conduct. His exploits sufficiently prove him a great captain, and that he knew well enough, but he would be thought a good engineer to boot; a quality not to be expected in him. The elder Dionysius was a very great captain, as it befitted his fortune he should be; but he took very great pains to get a particular reputation by poetry, and yet he never was cut out for a poet. A gentleman of the long robe being not long since brought to see a study furnished with all sorts of books, both of his own and all other faculties, took no occasion to discourse of any of them, but fell very rudely and impertinently to animadvert upon a barricado placed before the study door, a thing that a hundred captains and common soldiers see every day without taking any notice or offence at.

> Optat ephippia bos piger, optat arare caballus.[6]
>
> "The lazy ox would saddle have and bit,
> The steed a yoke; neither for either fit."

By this course a man shall never improve himself, nor arrive at any perfection in any thing. He must, therefore, make it his business always to put the architect, the painter, the shoe-maker, and so on, upon discourse of his own business.

The importance of knowing the profession of the writer of any book

And, to this purpose, in reading histories, which is every body's subject, I use to consider what kind of men are the authors; if they be persons that profess nothing but mere learning, I, in and from them, principally observe and learn the style and language; if physicians, I upon that account the rather incline to credit what they report of the temperature of the air, of the health and complexions of princes, of wounds, and diseases; if lawyers, we are from them to take notice of the controversies of right and title, the establishment of laws and civil government, and the like; if divines, of the affairs of the church, ecclesiastical censures, marriages and dispensations; if courtiers, of manners and ceremonies; if soldiers, of the things that belong to their trade, and principally the accounts of such actions and enterprizes wherein they were personally engaged; and if ambassadors, we are to observe their negotiations, intelligences, and practices, and the manner how they are to be carried on.

And this is the reason why that which perhaps I should have lightly passed over in another, I dwelt upon and maturely considered in the history writ by the Seigneur de Langey,[7] (a man well versed in, and of very great judgment in things of that nature,) that is, where after having given a narrative of the fine oration Charles V. had made in the consistory at Rome, and in the presence of the bishop of Mascon and the Seigneur du Velly, our ambassadors

[1] Livy, xxv. 7., xxvi. 2.
[2] In 1523. Mem. of Martin du Bellay, ii.
[3] Propertius, ii. Eleg. i. 43, as rendered by Ariosto.
[4] Plutarch, *Apoth. of the Lacedemonians.*
[5] See, in particular, his description of the bridge over the Rhine. *De Bell. Gall.* iv. 17.
[6] Horace, Epist. xiv. 1.
[7] Martin du Bellay, Seigneur de Langey. See his Mem

there, wherein he had mixed several tart and injurious expressions to the dishonour of our nation; and, amongst the rest, that if his captains and soldiers were not men of another kind of fidelity, resolution, and sufficiency in the knowledge of arms, than those of the king, he would immediately go with a rope about his neck and sue to him for mercy (and it should seem the emperor had really this, or a very little better, opinion of our military men, for he afterwards, twice or thrice in his life, said the very same thing); as also that he challenged the king to fight him in his shirt with rapier and poniard, in a boat: the said Sieur de Langey, pursuing his history, adds that the forenamed ambassadors, sending a dispatch to the king of these things, concealed the greatest part, and particularly the two last passages.

A question whether a prince's ambassador ought to conceal any thing from him of his own affairs.

At which I could not but wonder that it should be in the power of an ambassador to dispense with any thing which he ought to signify to his master especially of so great importance as this, coming from the mouth of such a person, and spoken in so great an assembly; and should rather conceive it had been the servant's duty faithfully to have represented to him the whole and naked truth as it passed, to the end that the liberty of disposing, judging and concluding might have remained in the master; for either to conceal, or to disguise the truth, for fear he should take it otherwise than he ought to do, and lest it should prompt him to some extravagant resolution, and in the mean time to leave him ignorant of his affairs, should seem, methinks, rather to belong to him who is to give the law, than to him who is only to receive it; to him who is in supreme command, and best can judge of his own interests, and not to him who ought to look upon himself as inferior, not only in authority, but in prudence and good counsel. At any rate, I for my part would be loth to be so served in my little concerns.

Nothing more dear to a superior than implicit obedience.

We do so willingly slip the collar of command, upon any pretence whatever, and are so ready to usurp dominion, and every one does so naturally aspire to liberty and power, that no advantage whatever derived from the wit or valour of those he employs ought to be so dear to a superior as a downright and implicit obedience. To obey more as a matter of discretion than subjection is to corrupt the office, and to subvert the power of command; and P. Crassus, the same whom the Romans reputed five times happy,[1] at the time when he was consul in Asia, having sent to a Greek engineer to cause the greater of two masts of ships, that lie had taken notice of at Athens, to be brought to him, to be employed about some engine of battery he had a design to make; the other, presuming upon his own science and sufficiency in those affairs, thought fit to do otherwise than directed, and to bring the less: as being, according to the rules of his art, more proper for the use to which it was designed. But Crassus, though he gave ear to his reasons with great patience, caused him to be well whipped for his pains, valuing the interest of discipline much more than that of the thing in hand.

Yet we may, on the other side, consider that so precise and implicit an obedience as this is only due to positive and peremptory commands. The functions of an ambassador are not so fixed and precise but they must, in the various and unforeseen occurrences and accidents that may fall out in the management of a negociation, be wholly left to their own discretion. They do not simply execute the will of their master, but by their own wisdom form and model it also; and I have in my time known men of command who have been checked for having rather obeyed the express words of the king's letters than the necessity of the affairs they had in hand. Men of understanding do yet to this day condemn the custom of the Kings of Persia, to give their lieutenants and agents so little rein that, upon the least arising difficulties they must evermore have recourse to farther commands; this delay, in so vast an extent of dominion, having often very much prejudiced their affairs. And Crassus writing to a man whose profession it was best to understand those things, and pre-acquainting him to what use this mast was designed, did he not seem to consult his advice, and in a manner invite him to interpose his judgment?

CHAPTER XVII.

OF FEAR.

Obstupui, steterunteque comæ, et vox faucibus hæsit.[2]

"Aghast, astonished, and struck dumb with fear,
I stood: like bristles rose my stiffened hair."

The strange effects of fear.

I AM not so good a naturalist (as they call it[3]) as to discern by what secret springs fear acts in us; but I am wise enough to know that it is a strange passion, and such an one that the physicians say there is no other whatever that sooner dethrones our judgment from its proper seat; which is so true that I myself have seen very many become frantic through fear; and even in those of the best settled temper, it is most certain that it begets a terrible astonishment and confusion during the fit. I omit the vulgar sort, to whom it one while represents their great grandsires risen out of their graves

[1] In that he was very rich, most noble, most eloquent, most skilful in the law, and the highest in the priesthood.—*Aul. Gell.* i. 13.

[2] Æneid, ii. 774.

[3] By this parenthesis, it would appear that the term *naturalist* was but just adopted into the French language.

in their shrouds, another while hobgoblins, weir-wolves, and chimeras; but even amongst soldiers (a sort of men over whom, of all others, it ought to have the least power) how often has it converted flocks of sheep into armed squadrons, reeds and bull-rushes into pikes and lances, friends into enemies, and the French white into the red crosses of Spain! When Monsieur de Bourbon took the city of Rome,[1] an ensign, who was on guard at the Bourg St. Pierre, was seized with such a fright, upon the first alarm, that he threw himself out at a breach with his colours upon his shoulder, ran directly upon the enemy, thinking he was retreating toward the inward defences of the city; and, with much ado, seeing Monsieur de Bourbon's people, who thought it had been a sally upon them, draw up to receive him, at last came to himself; and finding his error, and then facing about, retreated full speed through the same breach by which he had gone out; but not until he had first blindly advanced above three hundred paces into the open field. It did not, however, fall out so well with Captain Julius's ensign, at the time when St. Pol was taken from us by the Count de Bures and Monsieur du Reu; for he, being so scared with fear as to throw himself and his fellows out at a port-hole, was immediately cut to pieces by the enemy;[2] and in the same siege it was a very memorable fear that so seized, contracted, and froze up the heart of a young gentleman, that he sunk down stone dead in the breach, without any manner of wound or hurt at all.[3] The like madness sometimes seizes on a whole multitude; for in one of the encounters that Germanicus had with the Germans, two great parties were so amazed with fear that they ran two opposite ways, the one flying to the same place from which the other set out.[4] Sometimes it adds wings to the heels, as in the two first cases, and sometimes nails them to the ground, and fetters them from moving; as we read of the Emperor Theophilus, who, in a battle he lost against the Agarenes, was so astounded and stupified that he had no power to fly; *adeò pavor etiam auxilia formida*:[5] "so much does fear dread even the means of safety:" 'till such time as Manuel, one of the principal commanders of his army, having jogged and shaken him so as to rouse him out of his trance, said to him, "Sir, if you will not follow me, I will kill you; for it is better you should lose your life than, by being taken, lose the empire."[6] But fear does then manifest its utmost power and effect when it throws us upon a valiant despair, having before deprived us of all sense, both of duty and honour. In the first pitched battle the Romans lost against Hannibal, under the Consul Sempronius, a body of ten thousand foot, that had taken a fright, seeing no other escape for their cowardice, went and threw themselves headlong upon the great array of the enemy, which, with wonderful force and fury, they charged through and through, and routed with a very great slaughter of the Carthaginians; thus purchasing an ignominious flight at the same price they might have done a glorious victory.[7]

Fear sometimes incites to desperate valour.

The thing in the world I am most afraid of is fear; and with good reason, that passion alone, in the trouble of it, exceeding all other accidents. What affliction could be greater or more just than that of Pompey's followers and friends, who, in his ship, were spectators of his horrid and inhuman murder? Yet so it was, that the fear of the Egyptian vessels they saw coming to board them possessed them with so great a fear that it is observed, they thought of nothing but calling upon the mariners to make haste, and, by force of oars, to escape away; 'till being arrived at Tyre, and delivered from the apprehension of further danger, they then had leisure to turn their thoughts to the loss of their captain, and to give vent to those tears and lamentations that the other more prevalent passion had 'till then suspended.[8]

Fear supersedes every other passion.

Tum pavor sapientiam omnem mihi ex animo expectorat.[9]

"My mind with great and sudden fear oppress'd,
Was, for the time, of judgment dispossessed."

Such as have been well banged in some skirmish may yet, all wounded and bloody as they are, be brought on again the next day to charge: but such as have once conceived a good sound fear of the enemy will never be got so much as to look him in the face. Such as are in immediate fear of losing their estates, of banishment, or of slavery, live in perpetual anguish, and lose all appetite and repose; whereas such as are actually poor, slaves and exiles, oft-times live as merrily as men in a better condition. And so, many people who, impatient of the perpetual alarms of fear, have hanged and drowned themselves, and thrown themselves from precipices, give us sufficiently to understand that it is still more importunate and insupportable than death itself.

The Greeks recognise another kind of fear, exceeding any we have spoken of yet,—a fear that surprises us without any visible cause, by an impulse from heaven; so that whole armies and nations have been struck with it. Such a one was that which brought so wonderful a desolation upon Carthage, where nothing was to be heard but voices and outcries of fear; where the inhabitants were seen to sally out of their houses as to an alarm, and there to charge,

[1] In 1527. Mem. of Mart. du Bellay, iii.
[2] Mem. of William du Bellay, viii. [3] Id. ib.
[4] Tacitus, *Annal.* i. 63.
[5] Quint. Curt. iii. 2. [6] Zonaras, iii.
[7] Livy, xxi. 56. [8] Cicero, *Tuscul. Quæs.* iii. 26.
[9] Ennius, *apud* Cicero, *Tuscul. Quæs.* iv. 8.

wound, and kill one another, as if they had been enemies come to surprise their city. All things were in disorder and fury, till with prayers and sacrifices they had appeased their gods. And this is that they call a panic terror.[1]

CHAPTER XVIII.

THAT MEN ARE NOT TO JUDGE OF OUR HAPPINESS TILL AFTER DEATH.

Scilicet ultima semper
Expectanda dies homini est, dicique beatus,
Ante obitum nemo supremaque funera debet.[2]

"Till man's last day is come, we should not dare
Of happiness to say what was his share:
Since of no man can it be truly said
That he is happy, 'till he first be dead."

EVERY school-boy knows the story of King Crœsus, to this purpose:—that, being taken prisoner by Cyrus, and by him condemned to die, as he was going to execution he cried out, "O Solon! Solon!" which being presently reported to Cyrus, and he sending to enquire of him what it meant, Crœsus gave him to understand that he now found the warning Solon had formerly given him, true to his cost; which was, "That men, however fortune may seem to smile upon them, could never be said to be happy 'till they had been seen to pass over the last day of their lives; by reason of the uncertainty and mutability of human things, which in an instant are subject to be totally changed into a quite contrary condition."[3] And therefore it was that Agesilaus made answer to one that was saying what a happy man the King of Persia was, to come so young to so mighty a kingdom, "True," said he, "but neither was Priam unhappy at his years."[4] In a short space of time kings of Macedon, successors to the mighty Alexander, have become joiners and scriveners at Rome; a tyrant of Sicily a pedant at Corinth; a conqueror of one half of the world, and general of innumerable armies, a miserable suppliant to the rascally officers of a king of Egypt! So much did the prolongation of five or six months of life cost the great and noble Pompey; and no longer since than our fathers' days, Lodovico Sforza, the tenth Duke of Milan, at whose name all Italy had so long trembled, was seen to die a wretched prisoner at Loches,[5] not till he had lived ten years in captivity, which was the worst part of his fortune. The fairest of all queens,[6] widow to the greatest King in Christendom, has she not just come to die by the hand of an executioner? Unworthy and barbarous cruelty! and a thousand more examples there are of the same kind; for it seems that, as storms and tempests have a spite against the proud and towering heights of our lofty castles, there are also spirits above that are envious of the grandeurs here below.

Usque adeò res humanas vis abdita quædam
Obterit, et pulchros fasces sævasque secures
Proculcare, hac ludibrio sibi habere videtur![7]

"And hence we fancy unseen powers in those
Whose force and will such strange confusion brings,
And spurns and overthrows our greatest kings."

And it should seem also that fortune sometimes lies in wait to surprise the last hour of our lives, to shew the power she has in a moment to overthrow what she has been so many years in building, making us cry out with Laberius, *Nimirum hac die unâ plus vixi mihi quàm vivendum fuit*:[8] "I have lived longer by this one day than I ought to have done." And in this sense the good advice of Solon may reasonably be taken; but he being a philosopher, with which sort of men the favours and disgraces of fortune stand for nothing, either to the making a man happy or unhappy, and with whom grandeur and power are mere accidents, almost equally indifferent, I am apt to think he had some further aim, and that his meaning was, that the very felicity of life itself, which depends upon the tranquillity and contentment of a well-descended spirit, and the resolution and assurance of a well-ordered soul, ought never to be attributed to any man till he has first been seen to play the last, and doubtless the hardest, act of his part, because there may be disguise and dissimulation in all the rest, where these fine philosophical discourses are only put on, or where accidents not touching us to the quick, give us leisure to maintain the same sober gravity; but in this last scene of death and ourselves there is no more counterfeiting, we must speak plain, and must discover what there is of pure and clean in the bottom.

Nam verse voces tum demum pectore ab imo
Ejiciuntur, et eripitur persona, manet res.[9]

"For then their words will with their thoughts concur,
And, all the mask pulled off, show what they were."

Wherefore, at this last, all the other actions of our life ought to be tried and sifted. 'Tis the master-day, 'tis the day that is judge of all the rest, "'tis the day," says one of the ancients, "that ought to judge of all my foregone years."[10] To death do I refer the proof of the fruit of all my studies. We shall then see whether my discourses came only from my mouth or from my heart. I have seen many, by their death, give a good or an ill repute to their whole life. Scipio, the father-in-law of Pompey the Great, in dying well, wiped away the ill opinion that, till then, every one had

[1] Diod. Sic. xv. 7; and Plutarch, *on Isis and Osiris*, c. 8.
[2] Ovid, *Met.* iii. 137.
[3] Herod. i. 86.
[4] Plutarch, *Apotheg. of the Lacedemonians.*
[5] In Touraine, under Louis XII., who shut him up there in 1500, in an iron cage, which was still to be seen in 1778.
[6] Mary, Queen of Scotland, and mother of James I., King of England, was beheaded in this kingdom, by order of Queen Elizabeth, in 1587. Montaigne surely wrote this long after the passage in the following chapter, where he tells us that the year he then wrote in was but 1572; but we do not find this particular in the quarto edition of 1588.
[7] Lucretius, v. 1233.
[8] Macrobius, *Saturnal.* ii. 7.
[9] Lucretius, iii. 57.
[10] Seneca, *Epist.* 102.

conceived of him.[1] Epaminondas being asked which of the three he had in greatest esteem, Chabrias, Iphicrates, or himself, "You must first see us die," said he, "before that question can be resolved:"[2] and, in truth, he would infinitely wrong that great man who would weigh him without the honour and grandeur of his end. God has ordered these things as it has best pleased him. But I have, in my time, seen three of the most execrable persons that ever I knew in all manner of abominable living, and the most infamous, who all died a very regular death, and, in all circumstances, composed even to perfection. There are brave and fortunate deaths: I have seen death cut the thread of the progress of a prodigious advancement, and in the flower of its increase, of a certain person,[3] with so glorious an end that, in my opinion, his ambitious and generous designs had nothing in them so high and great as was their interruption; and he arrived, without completing his course, at the place to which his ambition pretended, with greater glory and grandeur than he could himself have either hoped or desired, and anticipated by his fall the name and power to which he had aspired by perfecting his career. In the judgment I make of another man's life, I always observe how he carried himself at its close; and the principal concern I have for my own is that I may die handsomely, that is, patiently and without noise.

CHAPTER XIX.

THAT TO STUDY PHILOSOPHY IS TO LEARN TO DIE.

What is the study of philosophy.

CICERO says that to study philosophy is nothing but to prepare a man's self to die.[4] The reason of which is because study and contemplation do, in some sort, withdraw from us, and deprive us of our soul, and employ it separately from the body, which is a kind of discipline of, and a resemblance of, death, or else because all the wisdom and reasoning in the world does, in the end, conclude in this point, to teach us not to fear to die. And, to say the truth, either our reason does grossly abuse us, or it ought to have no other aim but our contentment only, nor to endeavour any thing but, in sum, to make us live well, and, as the Holy Scripture says,[5] at our ease. All the opinions of the world agree in this, that pleasure is our end, though we make use of divers means to attain unto it; they would all of them otherwise be rejected at the first motion; for who would give ear to him that should propose affliction and misery for his end? The controversies and disputes of the philosophical sects upon this point are merely verbal; *Transcurramus solertissimas nugas.*[6] "Let us skip over those learned trifles." There is more in them of opposition and obstinacy than is consistent with so sacred a profession: but what kind of person soever man takes upon him to personate, he ever mixes his own part with it. Let the philosophers say what they will, the main thing at which we all aim, even in virtue itself, is pleasure. It pleases me to rattle in their ears this word, which they so nauseate to hear; and, if it signify some supreme pleasure and excessive delight, it is more due to the assistance of virtue than to any other assistance whatever. This delight for being more gay, more sinewy, more robust, and more manly, is only more seriously voluptuous, and we ought to give it the name of pleasure; as that which is more benign, gentle, and natural, and not that of vigour, from which we have derived it.

Pleasure the universal aim.

The other more mean and sensual part of pleasure, if it could deserve this fair name, it ought to be upon the account of concurrence, and not of privilege; I find it less exempt from traverses and inconveniences than virtue itself; and, besides that, the enjoyment is more momentary, fluid, and frail; it has its watchings, fasts, and labours, even to sweat and blood; and, moreover, has, particular to itself, so many several sorts of sharp and wounding passions, and so stupid a satiety attending it, as are equal to the severest penance. And we much mistake to think that difficulties serve it for a spur and a seasoning to its sweetness, as in nature, one contrary is quickened by another; and to say, when we come to virtue, that like consequences and difficulties overwhelm and render it austere and inaccessible; whereas, much more aptly than in voluptuousness, they ennoble, sharpen, and heighten the perfect and divine pleasure they procure us. He renders himself unworthy of it who will counterpoise

[1] This remark is taken, if I mistake not, from Seneca. It is a pretty long passage, but so curious a one that I cannot help transcribing it here. Seneca, desirous to fortify his friend against the terrors of death, said to him, in the first place, "I should prevail on you with more ease were I to show that not only heroes have despised the moment of the soul's departure out of the body, but that even dastards have, in this matter, equalled those of the greatest fortitude of mind." And, immediately after, he adds, "Even like that Scipio, the father-in-law of Cn. Pompey, who, being driven by contrary winds to the coast of Africa, when he saw his ship detained by the enemy, stabbed himself with his own sword; and, to those who asked him 'where the General was,' said, 'The General is well.' This word equalled him to his superiors, and did not suffer the glory fatal to the Scipios, in Africa, to be interrupted. It was a great task to conquer Carthage, but a harder to conquer death." Seneca, *Epist.* 24.

[2] Plutarch, *Apoth. of the Ancient Kings, &c.*

[3] Montaigne speaks here of his friend Boetius, at whose death he was present, as appears by a speech which Montaigne caused to be printed at Paris, in 1571, wherein he mentions the most remarkable particulars of Boetius's sickness and death. As this speech does honour to both these eminent friends, and is become very scarce, I shall insert it hereafter.

[4] *Tuscul. Quæs.* i. 31. The passage is a translation from the *Phædo* of Plato.

[5] "I know that there is no good *in* them, but *for* a man to rejoice and do good in this life."—*Ecclesiast.* iii. 12.

[6] Senec. *Epist.* 117.

his expense with the fruit, and does neither understand the blessing, nor how to use it. Those who preach to us that the quest of it is craggy, difficult, and painful, but the fruition pleasant and grateful, what do they mean by that, but to tell us that it is always unpleasing? What human means ever attained it? the most perfect have been forced to content themselves to aspire unto it, and to approach it only without ever possessing it. But they are deceived, for of all the pleasures we know the very pursuit is pleasant. The attempt ever relishes of the quality of the thing to which it is directed, for it is a good part of, and consubstantial with, the effect. The felicity and beatitude that glitters in virtue, shines throughout all her avenues and ways, even to the first entry, and utmost pale and limits.

The contempt of death one of the principal benefits of virtue.

Now, of all the benefits that virtue confers upon us, the contempt of death is one of the greatest, as the means that accommodates human life with a soft and easy tranquillity, and gives us a pure and pleasant taste of living, without which all other pleasures would be extinct; which is the reason why all the rules of philosophy centre and concur in this one article.[1] And although they all, in like manner, with one consent, endeavour to teach us also to despise grief, poverty, and the other accidents, to which human life, by its own nature and constitution, is subjected, it is not, nevertheless, with the same earnestness, as well by reason these accidents are not so certain, the greater part of mankind passing over their whole lives without ever knowing what poverty is; and some without sorrow or sickness, as Xenophilus, the musician, who lived a hundred and six years in a perfect and continual health; as also, because at the worst, death can, whenever we please, cut short and put an end to all of these inconveniences. But as to death it is inevitable.

> Omnes eodem cogimur; omnium
> Versata urna; serius, ocyus
> Sors exitura, et nos in æternum
> Exilium impositura cymbæ.[2]
>
> "To the same fate we all must yield in turn,
> Sooner or later, all must to the urn:
> When Charon calls abroad, we must not stay,
> But to eternal exile sail away."

And consequently, if it frights us, 'tis a perpetual torment, and for which there is no consolation nor redress. There is no way by which we can possibly avoid it; it commands all points of the compass: we may continually turn our heads this way and that, and pry about as in a suspected country; *quæ quasi saxum Tantalo, semper impendet*;[3] "But it ever, like Tantalus's stone, hangs over us." Our courts of justice often send back condemned criminals to be executed upon the place where the fact was committed, but carry them to all the fine houses by the way and give them the best entertainment they can.

> —— non Siculæ dapes
> Dulcem elaborabunt saporem;
> Non avium citharæque cantus
> Somnum reducent.[4]
>
> "Choicest Sicilian dainties cannot please,
> Nor yet of birds or harps the harmonies
> Once charm asleep, or close their watchful eyes."

Do you think they could relish it? And that the fatal end of their journey being continually before their eyes would not alter and deprave their palate from all relish of these fine things?

> Audit iter numeratque dies, spatioque viarum
> Metitur vitam, torquetur peste futurâ.[5]
>
> "He time and space computes by length of ways,
> Sums up the number of his few sad days;
> And his sad thoughts, full of his fatal doom,
> Have room for nothing but the blow to come."

The end of our race is death, 'tis the necessary object of our aim: if it frights us, how is it possible to advance a step without a fit of ague? The remedy the vulgar use is not to think on't: but from what brutish stupidity can they derive so gross a blindness? He must needs bridle the ass by the tail:

> Qui capite ipse suo instituit vestigia retro.
>
> "He who the order of his steps has laid
> To light and natural motion retrograde."

'Tis no wonder if he be often trapped in the pitfall. They used to fright people with the very mention of death, and most cross themselves as if it were the name of the devil; and because the making a man's will is in reference to dying, not a man will be persuaded to take a pen in hand, to that purpose, till the physician has passed sentence upon him and totally given him over; and then, betwixt grief and terror, God knows in how fit a condition of understanding he is to do it.

The Romans, by reason that this poor syllable death was observed to be so harsh to the ears of the people, and the sound so ominous, found out a way to soften and spin it out by a periphrasis, and instead of pronouncing bluntly "such a one is dead," to say "such a one has lived," or, "such a one has ceased to live." For, provided there was any mention of life in the case, though 'twas past, it carried yet some sound of consolation. And from them it is that we have borrowed our expression of "the late Monsieur such a one." Peradventure, as the saying is, the term is worth the money.[7] I was born betwixt eleven and twelve o'clock in the forenoon, the last of February, 1533, according

The author's birth.

[1] *Omnis humani incommodi expers* (says Valerius Maximus, viii. 13, in *Externis*, sect. 3.) *in summo perfectissimæ splendore doctrinæ extinctus est*; i. e., After having lived free from every human ailment, he died in the highest reputation of being perfect master of his science.

[2] Hor. *Od.* ii. 3, 25.

[3] Cic. *de Finib.* i. 18.

[4] Hor. *Od.* iii. 1, 18.

[5] Claudian in *Ruf.* ii. 137.

[6] Lucret. iv. 474.

[7] This proverb is mostly used by such as, having borrowed money for a long term, take no care for the payment, flattering themselves that something will happen, in the meantime, for their benefit or discharge.

to our present computation, beginning the year the first of January,[1] and it is now just fifteen days since I was complete nine and thirty years old; I make account to live, at least, as many more. In the mean time, to trouble a man's self with the thought of a thing so far off, is a senseless foolery. But, after all, young and old die after the very same manner, and no one departs out of life otherwise than as though he had just before entered into it; neither is any so old and decrepid, who has heard of Methusalem, that does not think he has yet another twenty years of constitution good at least. Fool that thou art, who has assured unto thee the term of thy life? Thou dependest upon physicians, and their old wives' tales, but rather consult fact and experience, and the fragility of human nature. According to the common course of things, 'tis long since that thou livest by extraordinary favour. Thou hast already out-lived the ordinary term of life, and, to convince thyself that it is so, reckon up thy acquaintance, how many more have died before they arrived at thy age, than have attained unto it; and of those who have ennobled their lives by their renown, take but an account, and I dare lay a wager thou wilt find more who have died before, than after, five and thirty years of age. It is full both of reason and piety too to take the example of the human existence of Jesus Christ himself, who ended his life at three and thirty years. The greatest man that ever was, who was no more than man, Alexander, died also at the same age. How many several ways has death to surprise us!

> Quid quisque vitet, nunquam homini satis.
> Cautum est in horas.[2]
>
> "Man fain would shun, but 'tis not in his power
> T' evade the dangers of each threat'ning hour."

To omit fevers and pleurisies, who would ever have imagined that a Duke of Brittany should be pressed to death in a crowd, as that Duke was at the entry of Pope Clement, my neighbour, into Lyons?[3] Have we not seen one of our Kings killed at a tilting;[4] and did not one of his ancestors die by the justle of a hog?[5] Æschylus, being threatened with the fall of a house, got nothing by going into the fields to avoid that danger, for there he was knocked on the head by a tortoise falling out of an eagle's talons.[6] Another was choaked with a grape-stone.[7] An Emperor was killed with the scratch of a comb, in combing his head; Æmilius Lepidus with a stumble at his own threshold;[8] Aufidius, with a justle, against the door, as he entered the council-chamber. And, in the very embrace of women, Cornelius Gallus, the Prætor; Tigillinus, captain of the watch at Rome; Ludovico, son of Guido de Gonzaga, Marquis of Mantua; and a still worse example, Speusippus, a platonick philosopher;[9] and one of our Popes. The poor Judge Bibius, in the eight days' reprieve he had given a criminal, was himself caught hold of, his own reprieve of life being expired.[10] And Caius Julius, the physician, while anointing the eyes of a patient, had death close his own;[11] and if I may bring in an example of my own blood, a brother of mine, Captain St. Martin, a young man of three and twenty years old, who had already given sufficient testimony of his valour, playing a match at tennis, received a blow of a ball a little above his right ear, which, though it was without any manner or sign of wound, or depression of the skull, and though he took no great notice of it, nor so much as sat down to repose himself, he nevertheless died within five or six hours after, of an apoplexy occasioned by that blow.

Which so frequent and common examples passing every day before our eyes, how is it possible a man should disengage himself from the thought of death; or avoid fancying that it has us every moment by the collar? What matter is it, you will say, which way it comes to pass, provided a man does not terrify himself with the expectation? For my part, I am of this mind, and by whatever means one could shield ones-self from the blow, were it under a calf's skin, I am not the man to shrink from it; for all I want is to pass my time pleasantly and at my ease, and the recreations that most contribute to it I take hold of; as to the rest, as little glorious and exemplary as you would desire.

> Prætulerim * * * delirus inersque videri,
> Dum mea delectent mala me, vel denique fallant,
> Quam sapere, et ringi.[12]
>
> "As fool, or sluggard, let me censur'd be.
> Whilst either fault does please or cozen me,
> Rather than be thought wise, and feel the smart
> Of a perpetual aching anxious heart."

But 'tis folly to think of doing any thing that way. People go and come, and dance and gad about, and not a word of death. All this is very fine while it lasts, but when death does come either to themselves, or their wives, or

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[1] By an ordonnance of Charles IX., promulgated in 1563, the beginning of the year was fixed to be on the first of January, instead of on Easter Day, as before. The year 1564, consequently, began on the first of January, 1563. The Parliament, however, did not conform to this ordonnance till two years after.

[2] Horace, *Od.* xiii. 13.

[3] In 1305, in the reign of Philip le Bel. This Duke of Brittany was named John II. The Pope, whom Montaigne mentions as his neighbour, was Bertrand de Got, Archbishop of Bordeaux, who was elected Pope 5th of June, 1305, and took the title of Clement V.

[4] Henry II. of France, mortally wounded in a tournament by the Count de Montgomery, one of the captains of his guards.

[5] Philip, or as some say, Lewis VII., son of Louis le Gros, who was crowned in the life time of his father.

[6] Val. Max. ix. 12.

[7] Anacreon. See Val. Max. ix. 12.

[8] Pliny, *Nat. H.* vii. 33., whence are also taken the following instances.

[9] Tertullian mentions this in his *Apologetics*, c. 46., but without absolutely affirming it. Diogenes Laertius says, on the contrary, that being shattered with a violent palsy, and broken down with the weight of old age and vexation, Spensippus put an end to his own life

[10] Pliny, vii. 53. [11] Id. Ib. [12] Horace, *Epis.* ii. 2, 126.

their children, or their friends, surprising them at unawares, unprepared, then what torments, what outcries, what madness and despair overwhelm them! Did you ever see any thing so subdued, so changed, and so confounded? A man must, therefore, make himself more early ready for it; and this brutish negligence, even could it lodge in the brain of any man of sense, which I think utterly impossible, sells us its merchandize too dear. Were it an enemy that could be avoided, I would then advise to borrow arms, even of cowardice itself, to that effect. But seeing it is not, and that it will catch you as well flying and playing the poltroon, as standing to it, like a man of honour:

Mors et fugacem persequitur virum,
Nec parcit imbellis juventæ
Poplitibus timidoque tergo.[1]

"No speed of foot can rob death of his prize,
He cuts the hamstrings of the man that flies;
Nor spares the fearful stripling's back who starts
To run beyond the reach of 's mortal darts."

And seeing that no temper of arms is of proof to secure us,—

Ille licet ferro, cautus se condat et ære,
Mors tamen inclusum protrahet inde caput;[2]

"Shield thee with steel or brass, advised by dread,
Death from the casque will pull thy cautious head;"

let us learn bravely to stand our ground and fight him. And, to begin to deprive him of the greatest advantage he has over us, let us take a way quite contrary to the common course. Let us disarm him of his strangeness; let us converse and be familiar with him, and have nothing so frequent in our thoughts as death: let us, upon all occasions, represent him in all his most dreadful shapes to our imagination. At the stumbling of a horse, at the falling of a tile, at the least prick of a pin, let us presently consider, and say to ourselves, "Well, and what if it had been death itself?" And thereupon let us encourage and fortify ourselves: let us evermore, amidst our jollity and feasting, keep the remembrance of our frail condition before our eyes, never suffering ourselves to be so far transported with our delights but that we have some intervals of reflecting upon and considering how many several ways this jollity of ours tends to death, and with how many traps it threatens us. The Egyptians were wont to do after this manner, who, in the height of their feasting and mirth, caused a dried skeleton of a man to be brought into the room to serve for a memento to their guests.[3]

Omnem crede diem tibi diluxisse supremum,
Grata superveniet, quæ non sperabitur, hora.[4]

"Think every day, soon as the day is past,
Of thy life's date that thou hast lived the last;
The next day's joyful light thine eyes shall see,
As unexpected, will more welcome be."

Where death waits for us is uncertain; let us every where look for him. The premeditation of death is the premeditation of liberty; he who has learnt to die has forgot what it is to be a slave. There is nothing of evil in life for him who rightly comprehends that the loss of life is no evil; to know how to die delivers us from all subjection and constraint. Paulus Æmilius answered him whom the miserable King of Macedon, his prisoner, sent to intreat him that he would not lead him in his triumph, "Let him make that request to himself."[5]

In truth, in all things, if nature do not help a little, it is very hard for art and industry to perform anything to purpose. I am, in my own nature, not melancholy, but thoughtful; and there is nothing I have more continually entertained myself withal than the imaginations of death, even in the gayest and most wanton time of my life;—

Jucundum cùm ætas florida ver ageret.[6]

"When that my youth rolled on in pleasant spring."

In the company of ladies, and in the height of mirth, some have perhaps thought me possessed with some jealousy, or meditating upon the uncertainty of some imagined hope, whilst I was only entertaining myself with the remembrance of some one surprised a few days before with a burning fever, of which he died, returning from an entertainment like this, with his head full of idle fancies of love and jollity, as mine was then, and that, for aught I knew, the same destiny was attending me.

Jam fuerit, neque post unquam revocare licebit.[7]

"He who of late a being had 'mongst men,
Is gone, and ne'er to be recalled again."

Yet did not this thought wrinkle my forehead any more than any other. No doubt it is impossible but we must feel a sting in such imaginations as these, at first; but with often revolving them in a man's mind, and having them frequent in our thoughts, they at last become so familiar as to be no trouble at all. Otherwise I, for my part, should be in a perpetual fright and frenzy; for never man was so distrustful of his life, never man so indifferent for its duration. Neither health, which I have hitherto ever enjoyed very strong and vigorous, and very seldom interrupted, prolongs, nor sickness contracts, my hopes. Every minute methinks 'tis about to escape me; and it eternally runs in my mind that what may be done to-morrow may be done to-day. Hazards and dangers do in truth little or nothing hasten our end; and if we consider how many more remain and hang over our heads beside the misfortune that immediately threatens us, we shall find that the sound and the sick, those that are abroad at sea and those that sit by the fire; those that are in the wars, and those that sit idle at home, are the one as near it as the other: *Nemo altero fragilior est, nemo in crastinum sui certior.*[8] "No man

[1] Horace, *Od.* iii. 2, 14.
[2] Propertius, iii. 18. 25.
[3] Herod. ii. 78.
[4] Horace, *Epist.* i. 4, 13.
[5] Plut. *in vitâ*, c. 17. Cicero, *Tusc. Quæs.* v. 40.
[6] Catullus, lxviii. 16.
[7] Lucret. iii. 928.
[8] Senec. *Epist.* 91.

is more frail than another, nor more certain of the morrow. For anything I have to do before I die, the longest leisure would appear too short, were it but an hour's business I had to do.

A friend of mine, the other day, turning over my table-book, found in it a memorandum of something I would have done after my decease; whereupon I told him, as was really true, that, though I was no more than a league's distance from my own house, and merry and well, yet when that thing came into my head I made haste to write it down there, because I was not certain to live till I came home. As a man that am eternally brooding over my own thoughts, and who confine them to my own particular concerns, I am at all hours as well prepared as I am ever like to be; and death, whenever he shall come, can bring nothing along with him I did not expect long before. We should always (as near as we can) be booted and spurred, and ready to go, and, above all things, take care at that time to have no business with any one but ones-self.

Quid brevi fortes jaculamur ævo
Multa?[1]

"Why cut'st thou out such mighty work, vain man?
Whose life's short date 's comprised in one poor span?"

For we shall then find work enough to do, without any need of addition. One complains, more than of death, that he is thereby prevented of a glorious victory; another that he must die before he has married his daughter, or settled and educated his children; a third seems only troubled that he must lose the society of his wife; a fourth the conversation of his son, as the principal concerns of his being. For my part I am, thanks be to God, at this instant in such a condition that I am ready to dislodge, whenever it shall please him, without any manner of regret. I disengage myself throughout from all worldly relations: my leave is soon taken of all but myself. Never did any one prepare to bid adieu to the world more absolutely and purely, and to shake hands with all manner of interest in it, than I expect to do. The deadest deaths are the best.[2]

—— miser! O miser! (aiunt) omnia ademit
Una dies infesta mihi tot præmia vitæ.[3]

"Wretch that I am (they cry) one fatal day
So many joys of life has snatched away."

And the builder,

—— manent (says he) opera interrupta, minæque
Murorum ingentes, aequataque machina cœlo.[4]

"The mounds, the works, the walls neglected lie,
Short of their promised height, that seemed to threat the sky."

A man must design nothing that will require so much time to the finishing, or at least with no such passionate desire to see it brought to a conclusion. We are born to action.

Cùm moriar, medium solvar et inter opus.[5]

"When death shall come, he me will find
Engaged on something I've design'd."

I would always have a man to be doing, and as much as in him lies, to extend and spin out the offices of life; and then let death take me planting cabbages, but without any careful thought of him, and much less of my garden's not being finished. I saw one die, who, at his last gasp, seemed to be concerned at nothing so much as that destiny was about to cut the thread of a history he was then compiling, when he was got no farther than the fifteenth or sixteenth of our kings.

Illud in his rebus non addunt, nec tibi earum
Jam desiderium rerum, super insidet una.[6]

"They tell us not, that, dying, we've no more
The same desire of things as heretofore."

We should discharge ourselves from these vulgar and hurtful humours and concerns. To this purpose it was that men first put the places of sepulture, the dormitories of the dead, near adjoining to the churches, and in the most frequented places of the city, to accustom (says Lycurgus) the common people, women, and children, that they should not be startled at the sight of a dead corpse; and to the end that the continual sight of bones, graves, monuments, and funeral obsequies, should keep us in mind of our frail condition.[7]

Quinetiam exhilarare viris convivia cæde
Mos olim, et miscere epulis spectacula dira
Certantum ferro, sæpè et super ipsa cadentum
Pocula, respersis non parco sanguine mensis.[8]

"'Twas therefore that the ancients at their feasts
With tragic slaughter used to treat their guests;
Making their fencers, with their utmost spite,
Skill, force, and fury in their presence fight;
Till streams of blood o'erflow'd the spacious hall,
Crims'ning their tables, drinking-cups, and all."

And as the Egyptians after their feasts were wont to present the company with a great image of death, by one that cried out to them, "Drink and be merry, for such shalt thou be when thou art dead;" so it is my custom to have death not only in my imagination, but continually in my mouth. Neither is there any thing of which I am so inquisitive, and delight to inform myself, as the manner of men's deaths, their words, looks, and gestures; nor any places in history I am so intent upon; and it is manifest enough, by my crowding in examples of this kind, that I have a particular fancy for that subject. If I were a writer of books, I would compile a register, with a comment, of the various deaths of men; and it

1 Horace, *Od.* ii. 16, 17.

2 Death is here considered as the introduction and actual passage to a state of insensibility which puts a period to our life. The more silently and rapidly we arrive to that state the less ought the passage to terrify us. This comes up very near to the import of that bold and enigmatical expression of Montaigne, viz. "That the deadest deaths are the best."

3 Lucret. iii. 911.

4 *Æneid*, iv. 88. The text has *pendent*.

5 Ovid, *Amor.* ii. 10. 36.

6 Lucret. iii. 918.

7 Plutarch, *in vitâ*.

8 Silius Italicus, ii. 31.

could not but be useful, for he who should teach men to die would at the same time teach them to live. Dicearchus made one, to which he gave some such title; but it was designed for another and less profitable end.[1] Peradventure some one may object, and say that the pain and terror of dying indeed does so infinitely exceed all manner of imagination that the best fencer will be quite out of his play when it comes to the push. But, let them say what they will, to premeditate it is doubtless a very great advantage; and besides, is it nothing to get so far, at least, without any visible disturbance or alteration? But moreover Nature herself does assist and encourage us. If the death be sudden and violent, we have not leisure to fear; if otherwise, I find that as I engage further in my disease, I naturally enter into a certain loathing and disdain of life. I find I have much more ado to digest this resolution of dying when I am well in health than when sick, languishing of a fever; and by how much I have less to do with the comforts of life, I even begin to lose the relish and pleasure of them, and by so much I look upon death with less terror; which makes me hope that the further I remove from the first, and the nearer I approach to the latter, I shall sooner strike a bargain, and with less unwillingness exchange the one for the other. And, as I have experienced in other occurrences what Cæsar says, "That things often appear greater to us at a distance than near at hand,"[2] I have found that, being well, I have had diseases in much greater horror than when really afflicted with them. The vigour wherein I now am, and the jollity and delight wherein I now live, make the contrary estate appear in so great a disproportion to my present condition, that by imagination I magnify and make those inconveniences twice greater than they are, and apprehend them to be much more troublesome than I find them really to be, when they lie the most heavy upon me, and I hope to find death the same.

It is of great advantage to think of death beforehand.

Let us but observe in the ordinary changes and declinations our constitutions daily suffer, how nature deprives us of all sight and sense of our bodily decay. What remains to an old man of the vigour of his youth and better days?

> Heu! senibus vitæ portio quanta manet![3]
>
> "Alas! how small a part of life's short stage
> Remains to travellers advanced in age!"

Cæsar, to an old weather-beaten soldier of his guards, who came to ask him leave that he might kill himself, taking notice of his withered body and decrepid motion, pleasantly answered, "Thou fanciest, then, that thou art yet alive!"[4] Should a man fall into the aches and impotencies of age from a sprightly and vigorous youth, on the sudden, I do not think humanity capable of enduring such a change. But nature leading us by the hand an easy, and, as it were, an insensible pace, little by little, step by step, conducts us gently to that miserable condition, and by that means makes it familiar to us, so that we perceive not, nor are sensible of the stroke then, when our youth dies in us, though it be really a harder death than the final dissolution of a languishing body, which is only the death of old age; forasmuch as the fall is not so great from an uneasy being to none at all, as it is from a sprightly and florid being to one that is unwieldy and painful. The body, when bowed beyond its natural spring of strength, has less force either to rise with, or support, a burthen; and it is with the soul the same, and therefore it is that we are to raise her up firm and erect against the power of this adversary. For as it is impossible she should ever be at rest or at peace within herself whilst she stands in fear of it, so if she once can assure herself, she may boast (which is a thing, as it were, above human condition) that it is impossible that disquiet, anxiety, or fear, or any other disturbance, should inhabit or have any place in her.

> Non vultus instantis tyranni
> Mente quatit solidâ: neque Auster
> Dux inquieti turbidus Adriæ,
> Nec fulminantis magna Jovis manus.[5]
>
> "A soul well settled is not to be shook
> With an incensed tyrant's threat'ning look;
> Nor can loud Auster once that heart dismay,
> The ruffling Prince of stormy Adria;
> Nor yet th' uplifted hand of mighty Jove,
> Though charg'd with thunder, such a temper move."

She is then become sovereign of all her lusts and passions, mistress of necessity, shame, poverty, and all the other injuries of fortune. Let us therefore, as many of us as can, get this advantage, which is the true and sovereign liberty here on earth, and that fortifies us wherewithal to defy violence and injustice, and to contemn prisons and chains.

> —— in manicis et
> Compedibus, sævo te sub custode tenebo.
> Ipse Deus, simul atque volam, me solvet. Opinor,
> Hoc sentit: moriar; Mors ultima linea rerum est.[6]
>
> "'With bolts and chains I'll load thy hands and feet,
> And to a surly keeper thee commit.'—
> But let him show his worst of cruelty,
> The gods propitious soon will set me free;
> By death release me, that full comfort brings,
> For death 's the utmost term of human things."

Our very religion itself has no surer human foundation than the contempt of death. Not only the argument of reason invites us to it,—for why should we fear to lose a thing which, being lost, can never be missed or lamented?—but, also, seeing that we are

The contempt of death a certain foundation of religion.

[1] Cicero, *de Offic.* ii. 5.
[2] *De Bello Gallico*, vii. 89.
[3] Maximian, *Eleg.* i. 16; *Ex. Pseudo-Gallus.*
[4] Seneca, *Epist.* 77.
[5] Horat. *Od.* iii. 3. 3.
[6] Horace, *Epist.* i. 16. 76.

threatened by so many sorts of deaths, is it not infinitely worse eternally to fear them all than once to undergo one of them? And what matter is it when it shall happen, since it is inevitable once? To him that told Socrates, "The thirty tyrants have sentenced thee to death"—"And nature them," said he.[1] What a ridiculous thing it is to trouble and afflict ourselves about taking the only step that is to deliver us from all misery and trouble! As our birth brought us the birth of all things, so in our death is the death of all things included. And therefore to lament and take on that we shall not be alive a hundred years hence is the same folly as to be sorry we were not alive a hundred years ago. Death is the beginning of another life. So did we weep, and so much it cost us to enter into this, and so did we put off our former veil in entering into it. Nothing can be grievous that is but once; and is it reasonable so long to fear a thing that will so soon be dispatched? A long life and a short are by death made all one; for there is no long nor short to things that are no more. Aristotle tells us that there are certain little beasts upon the banks of the river Hypanis that never live above a day: they which die at eight of the clock in the *morning* die in their youth, and those that die at five in the evening in their extremest age.[2] Which of us would not laugh to see this moment of continuance put into the consideration of weal or woe? Yet the most, and the least of ours, in comparison of eternity, or even to the duration of mountains, rivers, stars, trees, nay, of some animals, is no less ridiculous.[3]

Death a part of the order of the universe.

But Nature compels us to it: "Go out of this world," says she, "as you entered it; the same passage you made from death to life, without passion or fear, the same, after the same manner, repeat from life to death. Your death is a part of the order of the universe, 'tis a part of the life of the world.

* * * * Inter se mortales mutua vivant;
Et, quasi cursores, vitæ lampada tradunt.[4]

"Among themselves mankind alternate live,
And life's bright torch to the next runner give."

"Shall I change, to please you, so admirable a system? 'Tis the condition of your creation; death is a part of you, and whilst you endeavour to evade it, you avoid yourselves. This very being of yours, that you now enjoy, is equally divided betwixt life and death. The day of your birth is one day's advance towards the grave.

Prima, quæ vitam dedit, hora carpsit.[5]

"The hour that first gave life its breath,
Was a whole hour's advance to death."

Nascentes morimur; finisque ab origine pendet.[6]

"As we are born, we die; and our life's end
Upon our life's beginning doth depend."

"Every day that you live you purloin from life, you live at the expensé of life itself: the perpetual work of your whole life is but to lay the foundation of death; you are in death whilst you live, because you still are after death when you are no more alive. Or if you had rather have it so, you are dead after life, but dying all the while you live; and death handles the dying more rudely, and more feelingly, and essentially than the dead. If you have made your profit of life you have had enough of it, go your way satisfied.

Cur non ut plenus vitæ convivia recedis?[7]

"Why should'st not go, like a full gorged guest,
Sated with life, as he is with a feast?"

If you have not known how to make the best use of it, and if it was unprofitable to you, what need you care to lose it? to what end would you desire longer to keep it?

——— cur amplius addere quæris (omne)
Rursum quod pereat male et ingratum occidat.[8]

"Why wouldst renew thy time? to what intent
Live o'er again a life that was ill spent?"

"Life in itself is neither good nor evil: it is the scene of good or evil, as you make it; and if you have lived a long day you have seen all. One day is equal and like to all other days; there is no other light, no other night. This very sun, this moon, these very stars, this very order and revolution of things, are all the same your ancestors enjoyed, and that shall also entertain your posterity.

Non alium videre patres, aliumve nepotes
Aspicient.[9]

"Your grandsires saw no other things of old,
Nor shall your grandsons other things behold."

"And come the worst that can come, the distribution and variety of all the acts of my comedy is performed in a year. If you have observed the revolution of four seasons, they comprehend the infancy, the youth, the virility, and the old age of the world. The year has played his part, and knows no other trick than to begin and repeat the same again: it will always be the same thing.

Versamur ibidem, atque insumus usque.[10]

"We yearly tread but one perpetual round,
We ne'er strike out, but beat the former ground."

Atque in se sua per vestigia volvitur annus.[11]

"The year rolls on within itself again."

"I have no mind to create you any new recreations.

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[1] Diog. Laert. *in vitâ*. Cicero, *Tusc. Quæs.* i. 40.

[2] Cicero, *Tusc. Quæs.* i. 39.

[3] Seneca, *Consol. ad Marc.* c. 20.

[4] Lucretius, ii. 75. Alluding to the Athenian games, wherein those that ran a race carried torches in their hands; and their race being done, delivered them into the hands of those that ran next.

[5] Seneca, *Hercul. fur.* act iii. chor. verse 874.

[6] Manilius, *Astronom.* iv. 16.

[7] Lucret. iii. 951. [8] Id. ib. 945.

[9] Manilius, i. 530.

[10] Lucret. iii. 1093. [11] Virg. *Georg.* ii. 402.

Nam tibi præterea quod machiner, inveniamque
Quod placeat nihil est; eadem sunt omnia *semper*.[1]

"More pleasures than are made time will not frame,
For to all times all things shall be the same."

"Give place to others, as others have given place to you. Equality is the soul of equity.[2] Who can complain of being comprehended in the same destiny wherein all are involved? Besides, live as long as you can, you shall by that nothing shorten the time that you are to lie dead: 'tis all to no purpose; you shall be every whit as long in the condition you so much fear, as though you had died at nurse.

Licet quot vis vivendo vincere secla,
Mors æterna tamen nihilominus illa manebit.[3]

"And, live as many ages as you will,
Death ne'ertheless shall be eternal still."

"And yet I will place you in such a condition as you shall have no reason to be displeased:

In verâ nescis nullum fore morte alium te,
Qui possit vivus tibi te lugere peremptum,
Stansque jacentem.[4]

"When dead, a living self thou canst not have,
Or to lament or trample on thy grave."

"Nor shall you so much as wish for the life you are so concerned about.

Nec sibi *enim quisquam tum se vitamque requirit.*
* * * *
Nec desiderium nostri nos afficit ullum.[5]

"Life nor ourselves we wish in that estate,
Nor thoughts of what we were at first create."

"Death were less to be feared than nothing, if there could be anything less than nothing.

—— multo mortem minus ad nos esse putandum,
Si minùs esse potest quàm quod nihil esse videmus.[6]

"If less than nothing anything can show,
Death then would both appear and would be so."

"Neither can it any way concern you whether you are living or dead: living, by reason that you are still in being; dead, because you are no more. Moreover no one dies before his hour; and the time you leave behind was no more yours than that was lapsed and gone before you came into the world; nor does it any more concern you.

Respice enim quàm nil ad nos ante acta vetustas
Temporis æterni fuerit.[7]

"Look back, and tho' times past eternal were,
In those before us, yet had we no share."

"Wherever your life ends, it is all there; neither does the utility of living consist in the length of days, but in the well husbanding and improving of time; and a man may have continued in the world longer than the ordinary age of man that has yet lived but a little while. Make use of time while it is present with you. It depends upon your will, and not upon the number of days, to have a sufficient length of life. Is it possible you can ever imagine you will not arrive at the place towards which you are continually going? and yet there is no journey but hath its end. And, if company will make it more pleasant or more easy to you, does not all the world go the self-same way?

—— omnia te vita perfuncta sequentur.[8]

"When thou dost die, let this thy comfort be,
That all the world, by turn, must follow thee."

"Does not all the world dance the same dance that you do? Is there anything that does not grow old as well as you? A thousand men, a thousand animals, and a thousand other creatures, die at the same moment that you expire.

Nam nox nulla diem, neque noctem aurora secuta est,
Quæ non audierit mistos vagitibus ægris
Ploratus mortis comites, et funeris atri.[9]

"No night succeeds the day, nor morning's light
Rises to chase the sullen shades of night;
Wherein there is not heard the dismal groans
Of dying men mix'd with the woful moans
Of living friends, and with the mournful cries
And dirges fitting fun'ral obsequies."

"To what end should you recoil, since you cannot go back? You have seen examples enough of those who have been glad to die, thereby being manifestly delivered from intolerable miseries; but have you talked with any of those who found a disadvantage by it? It must therefore needs be very foolish to condemn a thing you have neither experienced in your own person, nor by that of any other. Why dost thou complain of me and destiny? Do we do thee any wrong? Is it for thee to govern us, or for us to dispose of thee? Though peradventure thy age may not be accomplished, yet thy life is. A man of low stature is a whole man as well as a giant; neither men nor their lives are measured by the ell. Chiron refused to be immortal, when he was acquainted with the conditions under which he was to enjoy it, by the god of time itself and its duration, his father Saturn. Do but seriously consider how much more insupportable an immortal and painful life would be to man than what I have already designed him.[10] If you had not death to ease you of your pains and cares, you would eternally curse me for having deprived you of the benefit of dying. I have, 'tis true, mixed a little bitterness in it, to the end that, seeing of what conveniency and use it is, you might not too greedily and indiscreetly seek and embrace it: and that you might be so established in this moderation, as neither to nauseate life, nor have any antipathy for dying, which I have decreed you shall once do, I have tempered the one and the other betwixt pleasure and pain. 'Twas I that first taught Thales,

[1] Lucret. iii. 957.
[2] Senec. *Epist.* 30.
[3] Id. ib. 1103.
[4] Id. ib. 898.
[5] Id. ib. 932.
[6] Id. ib. 939.
[7] Id. ib. 985.
[8] Id. ib. 98.
[9] Id. ii. 579.

[10] "Si nous etions immortels, nous serions des êtres très misérables. Si l'on nous offrait l'immortalité sur la terre, qui est-ce qui voudrait accepter ce triste présent?"—Rousseau, *Emile*, liv. ii.

the most eminent of all your sages, that to live and die were indifferent; which made him very wisely answer him who asked him, "Why then did he not die?" "Because," said he, "it is indifferent."[1] The elements of water, earth, fire, and air, and the other parts of this creation of mine, are no more the instruments of thy life than they are of thy death. Why dost thou fear thy last day? it contributes no more to thy dissolution than every one of the rest. The last step is not the cause of lassitude; it does but confess it. Every day travels towards death; the last only arrives at it."[2] These are the good lessons our Mother Nature teaches.

Why death appears less dreadful on the field of battle than at home.

I have often considered with myself whence it should proceed that in war the image of death, whether we look upon it as to our own particular danger or that of another, should without comparison appear less dreadful than at home in our own houses (for if it were not so, it would be an army of whining milksops); and that being still in all places the same, there should be, notwithstanding, much more assurance in peasants and the meaner sort of people than in others of better quality and education; and I do verily believe that it is those terrible ceremonies and preparations wherewith we set it out that more terrify us than the thing itself. An entirely new way of living, the cries of mothers, wives, and children, the visits of astonished and afflicted friends, the attendance of pale and blubbering servants, a dark room set round with burning tapers, our beds environed with physicians and divines; in short, nothing but ghostliness and horror round about us, render it so formidable that a man almost fancies himself dead and buried already. Children are afraid even of those they love best, and are best acquainted with, when disguised in a vizor, and so are we: the vizor must be removed as well from things as persons;[3] which being taken away, we shall find nothing underneath but the very same death that a mean servant or a poor chamber-maid died a day or two ago, without any manner of apprehension or concern. Happy therefore is the death that deprives us of the leisure for such grand preparations!

CHAPTER XX.

OF THE FORCE OF IMAGINATION.

Fortis imaginatio generat casum. "A strong imagination creates what it imagines," say the schoolmen. I am one of those who are most sensible of the power of imagination: every one is jostled, but some are quite overthrown by it. It has a very great impression upon me; and I make it my business to avoid, wanting force to resist it. I could live by the sole help of healthful and jolly company. The very sight of another's pain greatly pains me; and I often go entirely into the feelings of a third person, and share with him in his torment. A perpetual cough in another tickles my lungs and throat. I more unwillingly visit the sick, in whom I am by duty interested, than those I care not for, and to whom I am less bound. I take possession of the disease I look at, and do not at all wonder that fancy should give fevers, and sometimes kill such as allow of too much scope and are too willing to entertain it. Simon Thomas was a great physician of his time; and I remember that, happening one day at Thoulouse to meet him at a rich old fellow's house, who was troubled with bad lungs, and discoursing with his patient about the method of his cure, he told him that one thing which would be very conducing to it was to give me such occasion to be pleased with his company that I might come often to see him, by which means, and by fixing his eyes upon the freshness of my complexion, and his imagination upon the sprightliness and vigour that glowed in my youth, and possessing all his senses with the flourishing state wherein I then was, his habit of body might, peradventure, be amended; but he forgot to say that mine at the same time might be made worse. Gallus Vibius so long cudgelled his brains to find out the essence and motions of madness that in the end he went quite out of his wits, and to such a degree that he could never after recover his judgment; and he might brag that he was become mad by too much wisdom.[4] Some there are who through fear anticipate the hangman; like him whose eyes being unbound to have his pardon read to him, was found dead upon the scaffold by the stroke of imagination. We start, tremble, turn pale, and blush, as we are variously moved by imagination; and being covered over head and ears in bed, feel our bodies so agitated with its power as even sometimes to expire. And boiling youth, when fast asleep, grows so warm with fancy, as in a dream to satisfy its amorous desires:

Imagination occasions diseases and death.

> Ut, quasi transactis sæpè omnibus rebus, profundant
> Fluminis ingentes fluctus, vestemque cruentent.[5]

And although it be no new thing to see horns grown in a night on the forehead of one

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[1] Diog. Laertius, *in vitâ*.

[2] Lucretius, iii. 945, &c. Seneca, *Epist.* 12. Id. *on the Shortness of Life.* [3] Senec. *Epist.* 24.

[4] Seneca, the Rhetorician, from whom Montaigne must have taken this story, does not say that Gallus Vibius lost his reason by endeavouring to comprehend the essence of madness, but by too studious an application to imitate its motions. As this Gallus was a rhetorician by profession, he imagined that the transports of madness, well represented in dialogue, would charm his audience; and took so much pains to play the madman in jest, that he became so in earnest. He is the only man I ever knew (says Seneca) that became mad, not by accident, but by an act of judgment.—*Controvers.* ix. 2.

[5] Lucretius, iv. 1029. Montaigne has rendered the meaning of the passage in the preceding sentence.

that had none when he went to bed, yet what befel Cippus, King of Italy, is very memorable; who having one day been a very delighted spectator of a bull-baiting, and having all the night dreamt that he had horns on his head, did, by the force of imagination, really cause them to grow there.[1] Passion made the son of Crœsus to speak, who was born dumb, thus supplying him with that which Nature had denied him.[2] And Antiochus fell into a fever, inflamed with the beauty of Stratonice, too deeply imprinted in his soul.[3] Pliny pretends to have seen Lucius Cossitius, who from a woman was turned into a man upon her very wedding-day.[4] Pontanus and others report the like metamorphoses to have happened in these later days in Italy; and through the vehement desire of him and his mother,

The story of the goddess Lyra, in Lucian.

Vota puer solvit, quæ fœmina voverat Iphis.[5]

"Iphis, a boy, the vow defray'd
That he had promis'd when a maid."

Myself passing by Vitry le Francois,[6] a town in Champagne, saw a man the Bishop of Soissons had in confirmation, called Germain, whom all the inhabitants of the place had known and seen to be a girl till two and twenty years of age, by the name of Mary. He was, at the time of my being there, very full of beard, old, and not married, and told us that, in straining himself in a leap, his virile appurtenances came out; and the maids of that place have to this day a song wherein they advise one another not to take too great strides for fear of being turned into men, as Mary Germain was. It were no great wonder if this sort of accident frequently happened; for if imagination have any power in such things, it is so continually and vigorously bent upon this subject that, to the end it may not so often relapse into the same thought and violence of desire, it were better, once for all, to give the wenches the thing they long for.

Some stick not to attribute the scars of King Dagobert and St. Francis to the force of imagination; and it is said, that by it bodies will sometimes be moved from their places; and Celsus tells us of a priest whose soul would sometimes be ravished into such an ecstacy that the body would, for a long time, remain without sense or respiration. St. Augustine makes mention of another,[7] who, upon the hearing of any lamentable or doleful cries, would presently fall into a swoon, and be so far out of himself that it was in vain to call, halloo in his ears, pinch, or burn him, till he voluntarily came to himself; and then he would say that he had heard voices but, as it were, afar off, and felt when they pinched and burned him. And that this was no obstinate dissimulation, in defiance of his sense of feeling, was manifest from this, that all the while he had neither pulse nor breathing.

'Tis very probable that visions, enchantments, and all extraordinary effects of that nature, derive their credit principally from the power of imagination, working as they do, and making their chiefest impression upon vulgar and easy souls, whose belief is so full as to think they see what they do not.

Why such credit is given to visions, enchantments, &c.

I am not satisfied, and make a very great question, whether those pleasant marriage locks or impediments, with which this age of ours is so fettered that there is hardly anything else talked of, are not merely the impressions of apprehension and fear; for I know, by experience, in the case of a particular friend of mine, one for whom I can answer as for myself, and a man that cannot possibly fall under any manner of suspicion of insufficiency, and as little of being enchanted, who having heard a companion of his make a relation of an unusual disability that surprised him at a very unseasonable time, being afterwards himself engaged upon the same occasion, the horror of that story on a sudden so strangely possessed his imagination that he ran the same fortune the other had done; and from that time forward (the scurvy remembrance of his disaster running in his mind, and tyrannizing over him,) was extremely subject to relapse into the same misfortune He found some remedy, however, for this inconvenience, by himself frankly confessing and declaring before-hand to the lady with whom he was to have to do, the subjection he lay under, and the infirmity he was victim to, by which means the agitation of his soul was in some sort appeased; and knowing that now some such misbehaviour was expected from him, the obligation he felt under grew less, and weighed less upon his imagination; and when he had an opportunity at his leisure, at such times as he could be in no such apprehension (his thoughts being then disengaged and free, and his body being in its true and natural estate,) by causing this to be communicated to the knowledge of others, he was at last totally freed from that vexatious infirmity. After a man has once done a woman right, he is never

Whence it is that lovers sometimes find themselves unable to perform their pleasant labours.

[1] Pliny, xi. 45, who, however, puts this story in the same class with that of Actæon, and supposes both to be fabulous. Valerius Maximus, v. 6, gives this Cyppus, or Cippus, the title of Prætor, and says that as he departed from Rome, in the habit of a general, the accident which Montaigne speaks of here happening to him, the diviners declared that Cyppus would be king if he returned to Rome; whereupon he voluntarily condemned himself to perpetual exile, in order to prevent it. This explains why Montaigne calls him King of Italy.

[2] Herod. i. 85.

[3] Lucian, *on the Syrian Goddess*.

[4] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* vii. 4.

[5] Ovid, *Met.* ix. 793.

[6] September, 1580. The circumstance is further referred to in our author's *Journey through Germany and Italy*.

[7] *Restitutus*. See St. Aug. *de Civit. Dei*, xiv. 24.

after in danger of misbehaving himself with that person, unless upon the account of some physical weakness. Neither is this disaster to be feared, but in adventures where the soul is extended beyond measure with desire or respect, and especially where one's opportunity happens in a sudden and pressing manner; in those cases, there is no means for a man always to keep himself from a scrape of this sort. And yet I have known some, to whom it has been of service to come to their mistress, with their heat half sated elsewhere, and having abated thus the ardour of their fury; and others, who when old, find themselves less impotent by being less able; and again, I knew one, who found an advantage in being assured by a friend of his that he had a counter battery of charms that would defend him from this disgrace. The story itself is not much amiss, and therefore you shall have it.

A curious remedy for imaginary insufficiency in love.

A Count of a very great family, and with whom I was very familiarly intimate, married a very fair lady, who had formerly been pretended to and importunately courted by one who was present at the wedding: all his friends, especially an old lady, his kinswoman, who had the ordering of the solemnity, and in whose house it was kept, were in great fear lest his rival should in revenge, offer foul play, and procure some of these kind of sorceries, to put a trick upon him; which fear the old lady communicated to me, who, to comfort her, bid her not trouble herself, but rely upon my care to prevent or frustrate any such designs. Now I had by chance about me a certain flat plate of gold, whereon were graven some cœlestial figures, supposed to be good against head-ache, when applied to the suture; and which, that it might the better remain firm on its place, was sowed to a ribbon, to be tied under the chin. A piece of quackery, a thing cousin-german to that of which I am speaking, and which was by Jaques Pelletier, who lived in my house, presented to me for a singular rarity, and a thing of sovereign virtue. I had a fancy to make some use of this knack, and therefore privately told the Count that he might possibly run the same fortune other bridegrooms had sometimes done; especially some persons being in the house who no doubt would be glad to play him such a trick, but let him boldly go to bed, for I would do him the office of a friend, and if need were, would not spare a miracle that it was in my power to do, provided he would engage to me, upon his honour, to keep it to himself, and only when they came to bring him his caudle in the night,[1] if matters had not gone well with him, to give me such a sign, and leave the rest to me. Well, he had had his ears so battered, and his mind so prepossessed with the eternal tattle of this business that, when he came to it, he did really find himself tied with the trouble of his imagination, and accordingly at the time appointed gave me the sign: whereupon I whispered him in the ear that he should rise, under pretence of putting us out of the room, and after a jesting manner pull my night-gown from my shoulders, (we were nearly of a height) throw it over his own, and there keep it till he had performed what I appointed him to do, which was that when we were all gone out of the chamber he should withdraw to make water, should three times repeat such and such words, and as often do such and such actions: that at every of the three times he should tie the ribband I put into his hand about his middle, and be sure to place the medal that was fastened to it, the figures in such a posture, exactly upon his reins, which being done, and having, the last of the three times, so well girt and fast tied the ribband that it could neither untie nor slip from its place, let him confidently return to his business, and withal not forget to spread my gown upon the bed, so that it might be sure to cover them both. These apes' tricks are the main of the effect, our fancy being so far seduced as to believe that such strange and uncouth formalities must of necessity proceed from some abstruse science. Their very inanity gives them reverence and weight. However, certain it is that my figures proved themselves more venerean than solar, more in action than in prohibition, and the fair bride had no reason to complain. Now I must tell you, it was a sudden whimsey, mixed with a little curiosity, that made me do a thing so contrary to my nature; for I am an enemy to all tricks and counterfeits, and abominate all manner of finesse, though it be in sport, and of advantage; for though the action may not be wicked in itself, yet 'tis done after a wicked manner.

Amasis, king of Ægypt, having married Laodicea, a marvellously beautiful Greek virgin, though famous for his abilities elsewhere, found himself quite another man with his wife, and could by no means enjoy her; at which he was so enraged that he threatened to kill her, suspecting her to be a witch. As 'tis usually in things that consist in fancy, she put him upon devotion, and, having accordingly made his vows to Venus, he found himself divinely restored the very first night after his oblations and sacrifices.[2] Women are to blame, to entertain us with that disdainful, coy, and angry countenance they commonly do, which extinguishes our vigour, as it kindles our desire. The daughter-in-law of Pythagoras said that the woman who goes to bed to a man must put

[1] It was formerly a custom in France to bring the bridegroom a candle in the middle of his wedding-night.

[2] Herod, ii. 181, who, however, says that, not Amasis, but Laodicea, or Ladice, faithfully performed a vow she had made to Venus, by erecting a statue; "which," the author adds, "was still standing in my time."

off her modesty with her petticoat, and put it on again with the same.[1] The soul of the assailant being disturbed with a variety of alarms, is easily dispirited, and soon loses the power of performance; and whoever the imagination has once put this shame upon (and she never does it but at the first acquaintance, by reason men are then more ardent and eager, and that at this first account a man gives of himself he is much more timorous of miscarrying,) having made an ill-beginning, he becomes peevish at the accident, which will on following occasions be apt to stick to him.

As to married people, whose time is all before them, they ought never to compel, or so much as to offer at the affair, if they do not find themselves quite ready: and it is better to fail in the decorum of handselling the nuptial sheets, when a man perceives himself full of agitation and trembling, and to wait for another opportunity at a better and more private juncture, when his fancy shall be better composed, than to make himself perpetually miserable, for having misbehaved himself, and been baffled at the first assault. Till possession be taken, a man that knows himself subject to this infirmity, should leisurely and at intervals make several little trials and light offers, without obstinately attempting at once to force an absolute conquest over his own mutinous and indisposed faculties. Such as know their members to be naturally obedient to their desires, need to take no other care but only to counterplot their fancy.

The indocility of this member is sufficiently remarkable; importunate, unruly, and impatient, at such times as we have nothing for it to do, and unseasonably stupid and disobedient when we stand most in need of his vigour, so imperiously contesting the authority of the will, and with so much obstinacy denying all solicitation both of hand and fancy. And yet, though his rebellion is so universally complained of, and that proofs are not wanting to condemn him, if he had nevertheless fee'd me to plead his cause, I should peradventure bring the rest of his fellow members into suspicion of complotting this mischief against him, out of pure envy at the importance and pleasure particular to his employment, so as to have, by this confederacy of theirs, armed the whole world against him, by malevolently charging him alone with their common offence. For let any one consider whether there is any one part of our bodies that does not often refuse to perform its office at the precept of the will, and that does not often exercise its function in defiance of her command. They have every one of them proper passions of their own, that rouse and awake, stupify and benumb them, without our leave or consent. How often do the involuntary motions of the countenance discover our inward thoughts, and betray our most private secrets to the knowledge of the standers-by? The same cause that animates this member, does also, without our knowledge, animate the lungs, the pulse, the heart; the sight of a pleasing object imperceptibly diffusing a flame through all our parts with a feverish motion. Is there nothing but these veins and muscles that swell and flag without the consent, not only of the will, but even of our knowledge also? We do not command our hairs to stand on end, nor our skin to shiver either with fear or desire. The hands often convey themselves to parts to which we do not direct them. The tongue will be interdict, and the voice as it were suffocated, without the intervention of the will. When we have nothing to eat, and would willingly forbid it, the appetite of eating and drinking does not for all that forbear to stir up the parts that are subjected to it, no more nor less than the other appetite we were speaking of, and in like manner does as unseasonably leave us. The vessels that serve to discharge the belly have their proper dilatations and compressions, without and beyond our intelligence, as well as those which are destined to purge the reins. And that which, to justify the prerogative of the will, St. Augustine urges, of having seen a man who could command his back trumpet to sound as often as he pleased, and which Vives, his commentator, fortifies with another example in his time of one that could do this in tune,[2] does not any the more attribute pure obedience to that part; for is any thing commonly more tumultuary or indiscreet? To which let me add that I myself knew one so rude and ungoverned as for forty years kept its master at work with one continued and unintermitted hurricane, and 'tis like will do so till he expire that way. And I could heartily wish that I only knew, by reading, how oft a man's belly, by the denial of one single puff, brings him to the very door of an exceeding painful death; and that the emperor, who gave liberty to let fly in all places, had at the same time given us power to do so.[3] But for our will, in whose behalf we have preferred this accusation, with how much greater similitude of truth may we reproach even her herself with mutiny and sedition for her irregularity and disobedience? Does she always will what we would have her to do? Does she not often will what we forbid her to will, and that to our manifest prejudice? Does she suffer herself, any more than any of the others, to be governed and directed by the results of our reason? To conclude, I should

All our members are occasionally disobedient.

[1] Montaigne here speaks of Theano, the famous Pythagorean woman, who was the wife, and not the daughter-in-law, of Pythagoras. See Diogenes Laertius in the Life of Pythagoras, viii. 42. It is M. Menage who has taken notice of this small mistake of Montaigne.

[2] August. *de Civit. Dei*, xiv. 24., and the Comment. of Vives, *in loco*.

[3] Suetonius, *Life of Claudius*, c. 32, who, however, merely mentions that this emperor had it in contemplation to authorize this freedom.

urge in the behalf of the gentleman, my client, it might be considered that in this matter his cause being inseparably conjoined with an accessary, whose share is not distinctly marked, yet he only is called in question, and that by arguments and accusations, that cannot be charged nor reflect upon his said accomplice, for the latter, though he sometimes inopportunely invites, never refuses, and allures after a tacit and clandestine manner: and herein, therefore, is the malice and injustice of his accusers most manifestly apparent. But, be it as it may, let the advocates and judges pass what sentence they please, nature will, in the mean time, proceed after her own way; who had done but well, if she had endowed this member with some particular privilege; the author, as he is, of the sole immortal work of mortals, a divine work according to Socrates; of love, desire of immortality; and himself an immortal Dæmon.

Confidence in one's physician a great step towards one's cure.

One person, perhaps, by such an effect of imagination, may have had the good luck to leave that disease behind him here in France which his companion carries back with him into Spain. And that you may see why men in such cases require a mind prepared for the thing they are to do, why do the physicians tamper with, and prepossess before hand their patients' credulity with so many false promises of cure, if not to the end, that the effect of imagination may supply the defect of their decoctions? They know, very well, that a great master of their trade has given it under his hand, that he has known some with whom the very sight of a potion would do the work. And this conceit comes now into my head, by the remembrance of a story was told me by an apothecary of my late father's, a blunt honest Swiss (a nation not much addicted to vanity or lying), of a merchant he had long known at Thoulouse, who being a valetudinarian, and much afflicted with fits of the stone, had often occasion to take clysters, of which he caused several sorts to be prescribed him by the physicians, according to the circumstances of his attack: one of which being one time brought in, and none of the usual forms, as feeling if it were not too hot, and the like, being omitted, he was laid down on his bed, the syringe applied, and all ceremonies performed, injection excepted; after which, the apothecary being gone, and the patient accommodated as if he had really received a clyster, he found the same operation and effect that those do who have taken one indeed; and if at any time the physician did not find the operation sufficient, he would usually give him two or three more after the same manner. And the fellow moreover swore to me that, to save charges (for he paid as if he had really taken them), this sick man's wife having sometimes made trial of warm water only, the effect discovered the cheat; and finding these would not do, she was fain to return to the old way. A woman fancying she had swallowed a pin in a piece of bread, complained of an intolerable pain in her throat, where she thought she felt it stick; but an ingenious fellow that was brought to her, seeing no outward tumour nor alteration, supposing it only to be a fancy taken at some crust of bread that had pricked her as it went down, caused her to vomit, and unseen threw a crooked pin into the bason, which the woman no sooner saw, but, believing she had cast it up, she presently found herself eased of her pain. I myself knew of a gentleman, who having treated a great deal of good company at his house, three or four days after said, in jest (for there was no such thing), that he had made them eat of a cat-pie; at which, a young gentlewoman, who had been at the feast, took such a horror that, falling into a violent vomiting and a fever, there was no possible means to save her. Even brute beasts are also subject to the force of imagination as well as we; as is observed in dogs who die of grief for the loss of their masters, and are seen to bark, tremble, and start, as horses will kick and neigh in their sleep.

A distemper contracted by mere power of imagination.

Animals subject to the effects of imagination.

Now all this may be attributed to the affinity and relation betwixt the souls and the bodies of brutes, mutually communicating their feelings; but 'tis quite another thing when the imagination works upon the souls of rational men, and not only to the prejudice of their own particular bodies, but of others also. And as an infected body communicates its malady to those that approach or live near it, as we see in the plague, the small-pox, and sore eyes, that run through whole families and cities:

Dum spectant oculi læsos, læduntur et ipsi;
Multaque corporibus transitione nocent.[1]

"Viewing sore eyes, eyes to be sore are brought,
And many ills are by transition caught."

so the imagination, being vehemently agitated, darts out infection capable of hurting a foreign object. The ancients had an opinion of certain women of Scythia, that, being animated and enraged against any one, they killed them only with a look. Tortoises and ostriches hatch their eggs with only looking on them, which infers that their eyes have in them some ejaculative virtue. And the eyes of witches are said to be dangerous and hurtful;

Nescio quis teneros oculus mihi fascinat agnos.[2]

"Some eye unknown hath witched my tender lambs."

though magicians are no very good authority with me. We see, however, by constant experience, that women impart the marks of their fancy to the unborn children within them:

[1] Ovid. *Remed. Amor.* 615.

[2] Virg. *Eclog.* iii. 103.

witness her that was brought to bed of a moor. And there was presented to Charles, King of Bohemia and Emperor, a girl from about Pisa, all over rough and covered with hair, whom her mother said had been conceived by reason of a picture of St. John the Baptist, that hung in her bed.

Its effect on women with child;

It is the same with beasts, witness Jacob's sheep, and the hares and partridges that the snow turns white upon the mountains. There was at my house a little while ago a cat seen watching a bird upon the top of a tree, who for some time mutually fixing their eyes upon one another, the bird at last let herself fall as dead into the cat's claws, either dazzled and astonished by the force of her own imagination, or drawn by some attractive power in the cat. Such as are addicted to hawking have heard the story of the falconer, who having earnestly fixed his eyes upon a kite in the air, laid a wager that he would bring her down with the sole power of his gaze, and did so, as it was said; for the tales I borrow I charge upon the consciences of those from whom I have them. The arguments are my own, and found themselves upon the proofs of reason, not of experience, to which every one has liberty to add his own examples; and he who has none (the numbers and varieties of accident considered), let him not forbear to believe that these I set down are enough; and if I do not apply them well, let some other do it for me. So in the subjects of which I treat, our manners and motions, the testimonies and instances I produce, how fabulous soever, provided they are possible, serve as well as true ones; whether it has really happened or no, at Rome, or at Paris, to Peter or John, 'tis still within the verge of possibility and human capacity, which serves me to good use in the things I write. I see and make my advantage of it as well in shadow as in substance; and amongst the various examples I everywhere meet with in history, I cull out the most rare and memorable to fit my own turn. There are some authors whose only end and design it is to give an account of things that have happened; mine, if I could arrive unto it, should be to talk of what may come to pass. There is a just liberty allowed in the schools, of supposing and contriving similes, when they are at a loss for them in their own reading; I do not, however, make any use of that privilege, and in this respect in superstitious religion surpass all historical authority. In the examples which I here bring in of what I have heard, read, done, or said, I have forbid myself to dare to alter even the most light and indifferent circumstances; my conscience does not falsify one tittle, what my ignorance may do I cannot say.

and animals.

Montaigne's use of illustrations.

And this it is that makes me sometimes doubt whether a divine or a philosopher, men of so exquisite and exact wisdom and conscience, ought to write history; for how can they stake their reputation upon a popular belief? how be responsible for the opinions of men they do not know? or with what assurance deliver their conjectures as ready money? Of actions performed before their own eyes, wherein several persons were actors, they would be unwilling to give evidence upon oath before a judge; nor is there any man with whose heart they are so familiarly and thoroughly acquainted that they would become absolute surety for his intentions. For my part, I think it less hazardous to write things past than present, by how much the writer is only to give an account of things every one knows he must of necessity borrow upon trust.

A doubt whether either divines or philosophers should write history.

I am solicited to write the affairs of my own time, by some who fancy I look upon them with an eye less blinded with prejudice or partiality than another, and have a clearer insight into them, by reason of the free access fortune has given me to the heads of both factions; but they do not consider that to purchase the glory of Sallust I would not give myself the trouble, sworn enemy as I am to all obligation, assiduity, and perseverance: besides that, there is nothing so contrary to my style as a continued and extended narrative, I so often interrupt and cut myself short in my writing, only for want of breath. I am good at neither composition nor *comment*, and am ignorant beyond a child of the phrases, and even the very words, proper to express the most common things; and for that reason it is that I have undertaken to say only what I can say, and have accommodated my subjects to my force. Should I take one to be my guide, peradventure I should not be able to keep pace with him, and in the precipitancy of my career might deliver judgments which, even in my own thought, and according to reason, would be criminal in the highest degree.

Montaigne solicited to write the history of his time; and why he would not.

Plutarch would readily tell us of what he has delivered to the light, that it is the work of others; that his examples are all and everywhere true; that they are useful to posterity, and are presented with a lustre that will light us the way to virtue, which was his design. But it matters not, as in a medicinal drug, whether an old story ran so or so.

CHAPTER XXI.[1]

THAT THE PROFIT OF ONE MAN IS THE INCONVENIENCE OF ANOTHER.

DEMADES the Athenian condemned one of his city, whose trade it was to sell the necessaries for funeral ceremonies, upon pretence that he demanded unreasonable profit, and that this profit could not accrue to him but by the death of a great number of people. A judgment that appears to be ill grounded, forasmuch as no profit whatever can be made but at the expense of another, and that by the same rule he should condemn all manner of gain of what kind soever. The tradesman thrives and grows rich by the pride and wastefulness of youth; the husbandman by the dearness of grain; the architect by the ruin of buildings; the lawyers and officers of justice by suits and contentions of men; nay, even the honour and office of divines are derived from our death and vices. A physician takes no pleasure in the health even of his friends, says the ancient comedian; nor a soldier in the peace of his country; and so of the rest.[2] And, which is yet worse, let every one but dive into his own bosom, and he will find his private wishes spring, and his secret hopes grow up, at another's expense. Upon which consideration it comes into my head that Nature does not in this swerve from her general polity; for physicians hold that the birth, nourishment, and increase, of everything, is the dissolution and corruption of another.

> Nam quodcunque suis mutatum finibus exit,
> Continuò hoc mors est illius quod fuit ante.[3]
>
> "For what from its own confines chang'd doth pass,
> Is straight the death of what before it was."

CHAPTER XXII.

OF CUSTOM, AND THAT WE SHOULD NOT EASILY CHANGE A LAW RECEIVED.

The force of custom.

HE seems to me to have had a right and true apprehension of the power of custom who first invented the story of a country-woman, who having accustomed herself to play with, and carry from the hour of its birth, a calf in her arms, and daily continuing to do so as it grew up, obtained this by custom, that when grown to be a great ox, she was still able to bear it.[4] For, in truth, custom is a violent and treacherous school-mistress. She, by little and little, slily and unperceived, slips in the foot of her authority, but having by this gentle and humble beginning, with the aid of time, fixed and established it, she then unmasks a furious and tyrannic countenance, against which we have no more the courage nor the power so much as to lift up our eyes. We see it at every turn forcing and violating the rules of nature: *usus efficacissimus rerum omnium magister*,[5] "Custom is the greatest master of all things." I believe in Plato's cave in his Republic,[6] and the physicians, who so often submit the reasons of their art to the authority of habit: as also the story of that king who by custom brought his stomach to that pass as to live on poison; and the girl that Albertus reports to have lived upon spiders; and in that new world of the Indies, there were found great nations, and in very different climates, who lived upon the same diet, made provision of them, and fed them for their tables; as well as grasshoppers, mice, bats, and lizards: and in a time of a scarcity, a toad was sold for six crowns; all which they cook, and dish up with several sauces. There were also others found to whom our food and the flesh we eat were venomous and mortal. *Consuetudinis magna vis est: pernoctant venatores in nive; in montibus uri se patiuntur: pugiles cæstibus contusi, ne ingeniscunt quidem.*[7] "The power of custom is very great: huntsmen will one while lie out all night in the snow, and another suffer themselves to be parched with heat on the mountains; and prize-fighters, though beaten almost to a jelly with the cæstus, utter not a groan." These examples will not appear so strange, if we consider what we have ordinary experience of, how much custom dulls our senses. We need not go to be satisfied of this to what is reported of the cataracts of the Nile; and to what philosophers believe of the music of the spheres, that the bodies of those circles being solid and smooth, and coming to touch, and rub upon one another, cannot fail of creating a wonderful harmony, the changes and cadences of which cause the revolutions and dances of the stars; but that the hearing sense of all creatures here below, being universally, like that of the Egyptians, deafened and stupified with the continual noise, cannot distinguish it, how great soever it be.

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[1] This chapter, which is itself principally taken from Seneca, *on Benefits*, vi. 38, &c. contains (remarks Mr. Hazlitt) the whole substance of Mandeville's *Fable of the Bees*; with this difference, however, that Mandeville pre-supposes a vicious state of society, and says that man, if he will have great overgrown cities, and false luxuries, must have what they produce; which is a fine useful moral.

[2] "Le precepte de ne jamais nuire à autrui emporte celui de toute a societé humaine le moins qu'il est possible; car dans l'etat social le bien de l'un fait necessairement le mal de l'autre."—Rousseau, *Emile*, iii.

[3] Lucretius, ii. 752.

[4] Stobæus, *Serm.* xxix, who takes it from Favorinus. See also Quintilian, i. 9. It is become a kind of proverb, which Petronius has thus expressed,

> —— Tollere taurum
> Quæ tulerit vitulum illa potest.

You will also find it among the adages of Erasmus, *Chil.* 1. *Cent.* 2. *Ad.* 51.

[5] Pliny, *Nat. His.* xxvi. 2.

[6] Cicero, *Tusc. Quæs.* ii. 17.

[7] Plato, *Repub.* vii.

[8] Cicero, *Somn. Scip.*

Smiths, millers, and armourers, could never be able to live in the perpetual noise of their own trades did it strike their ears as it does ours.

My perfumed doublet gratifies my own nose at first, as well as that of others, but after I have worn it three or four days together, I myself no more perceive it; but it is yet more strange that custom, notwithstanding long intermissions and intervals, should yet have the power to unite, and establish the effect of its impressions upon our senses, as is manifest to such as live near belfries. I myself lie at home in a tower, where every morning and evening a very great bell rings out the Ave Maria, the noise of which shakes my very tower, and at first seemed insupportable to me; but in a little while I got so used to it that I hear it without any manner of offence, and often without awaking at it.

Plato reprehending a boy for playing at some childish game—"Thou reprovest me," said the boy, "for a very little thing." "Custom," replied Plato, "is no little thing."[1] Our greatest vices derive their first propension from our most tender infancy; our principal education depends upon the nurse. Mothers are mightily amused to see a child twist off the neck of a chicken, or divert itself with hurting a dog or a cat; and such wise fathers there are in the world who look upon it as a notable presage of a martial spirit when he hears his son miscall or domineer over a poor peasant or lacquey, that dares not reply or turn again; and a great sign of wit when he sees him cheat and overreach his play-fellow by some sly trick; yet these are the true seeds and roots of cruelty, tyranny, and treason. They bud and put out there, and afterwards shoot up vigorously in the hands of custom: and it is a very dangerous mistake to excuse these vile inclinations upon account of the tenderness of their age, and the trivialty of the subject; first, it is nature that speaks, whose voice is then more sincere, and whose inward thoughts are more undisguised, as it is younger and more shrill; secondly, the deformity of cozenage does not consist in, nor depend upon, the difference betwixt crowns and pins; but merely upon itself, for a cheat is a cheat, be it more or less; which makes me think it more just to conclude thus, "why should he not cozen in crowns since he does it in pins?" than as they do, who say, "they only play for pins, he would not do it if it were for crowns." Children should carefully be instructed to abhor vices for themselves, and the natural deformity of those vices ought so to be represented to them that they may not only avoid them in their actions, but so abominate them in their hearts that the very thought should be *hateful to them*, with what mask soever they may be palliated or disguised.

Vices take root in the most tender years, and ought therefore to be corrected instantly.

Children should be taught to abhor vice for itself.

I know very well, for what concerns myself, that from having been brought up in my childhood to a plain and sincere way of dealing, and from then having had an aversion to all manner of juggling and tricking in my childish sports and recreations (and indeed it is to be noted that the play of children is not really play, but must be judged of as their most serious actions,) there is no game so small, wherein from my own bosom naturally, and without study or endeavour, I have not an extreme aversion for deceit. I shuffle and cut, and make as much ado with the cards, and keep as strict account for farthings, as if it were for doubloons; when winning or losing against my wife and daughter, it is indifferent to me, as when I play in good earnest with others for round sums. At all times, and in all things, my own eyes are sufficient to look to my fingers; I am not so narrowly watched by any other, neither is there any I more fear to be discovered by, or to offend, than myself.

I saw the other day at my own house, a little fellow, a native of Nantes, born without arms, who has so well taught his feet to perform the services his hands should have done him that indeed they have half forgot their natural office, and the use for which they were designed; the fellow, indeed, calls them his hands, and we may allow him so to do, for with them he cuts any thing, charges and discharges a pistol, threads a needle, sows, writes, and puts off his hat, combs his head, plays at cards and dice, and all this with the utmost dexterity; and the money I gave him (for he gets his living by exhibiting himself,) he carried away in his foot, as we do in our hand. I have seen another who, though a mere boy, flourished a two-handed sword, and (if I may so say) handled a halbert with the mere motions and writhing of his neck and shoulders for want of hands, tost them into the air, and caught them again, darted a dagger, and cracked a whip as well as any carter in France.

Curious instance of the feet, and neck, doing the office of the hands.

But the effects of custom are much more manifest in the strange impressions she makes in our minds, where she meets with less resistance. What has she not the power to impose upon our judgments and belief? Is there any so fantastic opinion (omitting the gross impostures in religion, with which we see so many populous nations and so many understanding men so strangely besotted; for this being beyond the reach of human reason, any error is the more excusable in such as, through the divine bounty, are not endued with an extraordinary illumination from above), but in other matters, are there any so senseless and extravagant that

[1] Diog. Laert. in *vitâ*. But Laertius does not say that the person whom Plato reprehended was a boy, or that he was playing at some childish game; but that it was a man playing at dice, which makes Plato's rejoinder far more effective.

she has not planted and established for laws in those parts of the world upon which she has been pleased to exercise her power? And therefore that ancient exclamation was exceeding just—*Non pudet physicum, id est, speculatorem venatoremque naturæ, ab animis consuetudine imbutis quærere testimonium veritatis?*[1] "Is it not a shame for a natural philosopher, that is, for an observer and hunter of nature, to seek testimony from minds prepossessed with custom?" I do believe that no so absurd or ridiculous fancy can enter into human imagination that does not meet with some example of public practice, and that, consequently, our reason does not ground and support itself upon. There are people amongst whom it is the fashion to turn their backs upon him they salute, and never look upon the man they wish to honour. There is a court where, whenever the king spits, the favourite lady puts out her hand to receive it; and another nation where the most eminent persons about him stoop to take up his ordure in a linen cloth. Let us here steal room to insert a story.

A French gentleman of my acquaintance, who was always wont to blow his nose with his fingers—a thing very much against our fashion—would justify himself for so doing, and was a man very famous for pleasant repartees, as thus:—Upon such an occasion he asked me what privilege this filthy excrement had, that we must carry about with us a fine handkerchief to receive it, and, which was more, afterwards to lap it carefully up, and carry it all day about in our pockets, which, he said, could not be much more nauseous and offensive than to see it thrown away, as we did all other evacuations. It seemed to me that what he said was not altogether without reason, and, being frequently in his company, that slovenly action of his at last grew familiar to me; which, nevertheless, we make a face at when we hear it reported of another country.

Miracles appear to be so, according to our ignorance of nature, and not according to the essence of nature. The continually being accustomed to any thing blinds the eye of our judgment. Barbarians are no more a wonder to us than we are to them; nor with any more reason, as every one would confess if, after having considered those remote examples, men would reflect upon their own, and rightly compare them together. Human reason is a tincture pretty equally infused into all our opinions and manners, of what form soever they are; infinite in matter, infinite in diversity. But I return to my subject.

The odd customs of divers nations.

There are people where, his wife and children excepted, no one speaks to the king but through a trumpet. In one and the same nation the virgins discover those parts that modesty should persuade them to hide, and the married women carefully cover and conceal them. To which this custom, in another place, has some relation, where chastity, except in marriage, is of no esteem, for unmarried women may prostitute themselves to as many as they please, and, being with child, may lawfully take physic, in the sight of every one, to procure abortion. And, in another place, when a tradesman marries, all of the same condition who are invited to the wedding, lie with the bride before him; and the greater number of them there is, the greater is her honour, and the opinion of her ability and strength; if an officer marry, 'tis the same, the same with a nobleman, and so of the rest; except it be a labourer, or one of mean condition, for then it belongs to the lord of the place to perform that office; and yet a strict fidelity during marriage is afterward enjoined. There is a place where brothels of young men are kept for the pleasure of women, as with us there are of women for men: where the wives go to war as well as their husbands, and not only share in the dangers of battle, but, moreover, in the honours of command. Others where they wear rings not only through their noses, lips, cheeks, and on their toes, but also heavy wedges of gold thrust through their breasts and buttocks: where, in eating, they wipe their fingers upon their thighs, genitories, and the soles of their feet: where children are excluded, and brothers and nephews only inherit; and, elsewhere, nephews only, saving in the succession of the crown: where, for the regulation of community in goods and estates observed in the country, certain sovereign magistrates have committed to them the universal charge of cultivating the lands, and distributing the produce according to the necessity of every one: where they lament the death of children, and feast at the decease of old men:[2] where they lie ten or twelve in a bed, men and their wives together: where women whose husbands come to violent ends may marry again, and others not: where women are looked upon with such contempt that they kill all the native females, and buy wives of their neighbours to supply their use: where husbands may repudiate their wives without shewing any cause, but wives cannot part from their husbands for what cause soever: where husbands may sell their wives in case of sterility: where they boil the bodies of their dead, and afterwards pound them to a pulp, which they mix with their wine, and drink it: where the favourite mode of burial is to be eaten by dogs;[3] and elsewhere, by birds: where they believe the souls of the happy live in all manner of liberty, in delightful fields, furnished with all sorts of delicacies, and that it is those souls repeating the words we utter, which we call echo: where they fight in the water, and shoot their arrows with the most mortal aim, swimming: where, for a sign of subjection, they lift

[1] Cicero de Nat. Deor. i. 30. The text has *petere*, not *quærere*.

[2] In Thrace. See Herod. v.

[3] Sextus Empiricus. *Pyrrh. Hypot.* iii. 24.

up their shoulders and hang down their heads, and put off their shoes, when they enter the king's palace: where the eunuchs who have charge of the religious women have, moreover, their lips and noses cut off, that they may not be loved; and the priests put out their own eyes to get acquainted with their demons and receive their oracles: where every one creates to himself a deity of what he likes best, according to his own fancy— the hunter, of a lion or a fox; the fisher, of some fish, and idols of every human action or passion; where the sun, the moon, and the earth, are the principal deities, and the form of taking an oath is to touch the earth, looking up to heaven, and where both flesh and fish are eaten raw: where the greatest oath they take is to swear by the name of some dead person of reputation, laying their hand upon his tomb:[1] where the new-year's gift the king sends every year to the princes, his subjects, is fire, which, being brought, all the old fire is put out, and the neighbouring people are bound to fetch of the new, every one for themselves, upon pain of treason: where, when the king, to betake himself wholly to devotion, retires from his administration (which often falls out), his next successor is obliged to do the same; by which means the crown devolves to the third in succession: where they vary the form of government according to the seeming necessity of affairs; depose the king when they think good, substituting ancient men to govern in his stead, and sometimes transferring it into the hands of the common people: where men and women are both circumcised and baptized: where the soldier who, in one or several engagements, has been so fortunate as to present seven of the enemies' heads to the king, is made noble: where they live in that singular and unsociable opinion of the mortality of the soul: where the women are delivered without pain or fear: where the women wear copper boots upon both their legs, and, if a louse bites them, are bound, in magnanimity, to bite it again, and dare not marry until first they have made their king a tender of their virginity: where the ordinary mode of salutation is by putting a finger down to the earth, and then pointing up towards heaven: where men carry burthens upon their heads, and women on their shoulders: where the women make water standing, and the men squatting down: where they send some of their blood in token of friendship, and offer incense to the men they would honour, like gods: where not only to the fourth, but to more remote degrees, kindred are not permitted to marry: where the children are four years at nurse, and often twelve; and where it is accounted mortal to give the child suck the first day after it is born: where the correction of the male children is assigned to the fathers, and that of the females to the mothers; the punishment being to hang them by the heels in the smoke: where they eat all sorts of herbs, excepting only those that have an ill smell: where all things are open, the finest furnished houses being without doors, windows, or chests to lock, a thief being there punished double to what they are in other places: where they crack lice with their teeth, like monkies, and abhor to see them killed with one's nails: where in all their lives they neither cut their hair nor pare their nails; and in another place pare those of the right hand only, letting the left grow for ornament: where they suffer the hair on the right side to grow as long as it will, and shave the other; and in the neighbouring provinces some let their hair grow long before and some behind, shaving close the rest:[2] where parents let out their children, and husbands their wives, to their guests to hire: where a man may get his own mother with child, and fathers make use of their own daughters, or their sons, without scandal or offence: where, at their solemn feasts, they lend their children to one another, without any consideration of nearness of blood. In one place men feed upon human flesh, in another 'tis reputed a pious office for a man to kill his father at a certain age;[3] and elsewhere the fathers dispose of their children whilst yet unborn,—some to be preserved and carefully brought up, and others to be made away with. Elsewhere the old husbands lend their wives to young men, and in another place they are in common without offence; nay, in one place the women wear, as marks of honour, as many gay fringed tassels at the bottom of their petticoats as they have lain with men.[4] Moreover, has not custom made a republic of women separate by themselves? Has it not put arms into their hands, made them to raise armies, and fight battles? And does she not by mere precept instruct the most ignorant vulgar, and make them perfect in things which all the philosophy in the world could never beat into the heads of the wisest men? For we know entire nations, where death was not only despised, but entertained with the greatest triumph; where children of seven years old suffered themselves to be whipped to death without changing their countenance;[5] where riches were in such contempt that the poorest citizen would not have deigned to stoop to take up a purse of crowns; and we know regions, very fruitful in all manner of provisions, where, notwithstanding, the most ordinary diet, and that they are most pleased with, is only bread, cresses, and water.[6] Did not custom moreover work that miracle in Chios, that in seven hundred years it was never

[1] Herod. iv. 318. Nymphadorus, *Rerum Barbaricarum*, xiii

[2] Herod. iv.

[3] Sextus Empiricus, *Pyrrh. Hypot.* iii. 24.

[4] Herod. iv.

[5] At Lacedæmon.

[6] *Persia.* See Xenophon, *Cyrop.* i. 3.

known that ever maid or wife committed any act to the prejudice of her honour?[1]

In short, there is nothing, in my opinion, that she does not or may not do; and therefore with very good reason it is that Pindar, as I am told, calls her "the queen and empress of the world."[2] He that was seen to beat his father, and reproved for so doing, made answer, That it was the custom of their family; that in like manner his father had beaten his grandfather, his grandfather his great-grandfather. "And this," says he, pointing to his son, "when he comes to my age, will beat me." And the father, whose son was dragging and hauling him along the streets, commanded him to stop at a certain door; for he himself, he said, had dragged his father no further, that being the utmost limit of the hereditary insolence the sons used to practise upon the fathers in their family. "It is as much by custom as disorder," says Aristotle, "that women tear their hair, bite their nails, and eat charcoal and earth, and more by custom than nature that men abuse themselves with one another."

Custom the parent of the laws of conscience.

The laws of conscience, which we pretend to be derived from nature, proceed from custom; every one having an inward veneration for the opinions and manners approved and received amongst his own people, cannot without very great reluctance depart from them, nor apply himself to them without applause. In times past, when those of Crete would curse any one, they prayed the gods to engage them in some ill custom.[3] But the principal effect of the power of custom is so to seize and ensnare us that it is hardly in our power to disengage ourselves from its gripe; or so to come to ourselves as to consider of and weigh the things it enjoins. To say the truth, by reason that we suck it in with our mother's milk, and that the face of the world presents itself in this posture to our first sight, it seems as if we were born upon condition to pursue this practice; and the common fancies that we find in repute everywhere about us, and infused into our minds with the seed of our fathers, appear to be universal and genuine. From whence it comes to pass that whatever is off the hinges of custom is believed to be also off the hinges of reason; though how unreasonably for the most part, God knows.

If, as we who study ourselves have learned to do, every one who hears a good sentence would immediately consider how it does any way touch his own private concerns, every one would find that it was not so much a good saying as a sound lash to the ordinary stupidity of his own judgment. But men receive the precepts and admonitions of truth as directed to the common sort only, and not to themselves; and instead of applying them to their own manners, do only very ignorantly and unprofitably commit them to memory, without suffering themselves to be at all instructed or converted by them. But let us return to the empire of custom.

Nations attached to the form of government which they have been used to.

Such people as have been bred up to liberty, and subject to none but themselves, look upon all other forms of government as monstrous and contrary to nature. Those who are used to monarchy do the same; and what opportunity soever fortune presents them with to change, even then, when with the greatest difficulties they have disengaged themselves from one master, that was troublesome and grievous to them, they presently run with the same difficulties to create another; not being able, how roughly dealt with soever, to hate the government they were born under, and the obedience they have so long been accustomed to. 'Tis by the mediation and persuasion of custom that every one is content with the place where he is planted by nature; and the highlanders of Scotland no more pant after the air of Touraine, than the Scythians after the fields of Thessaly. Darius asking certain Greeks what they would take to assume the custom of the Indians, of eating the dead bodies of their fathers (for that was their practice, believing they could not give them a better or more noble sepulchre than to bury them in their own bodies), they made answer, That nothing in the world should hire them to do it; but having also tried to persuade the Indians to leave their barbarous custom, and, after the Greek manner, to burn the bodies of their fathers, they conceived a still greater horror at the proposition; and 'tis the same with us all, forasmuch as use veils from us the true aspect of things.

> Nil adeò magnum, nec tam mirabile quicquam
> Principio, quod non minuant mirariez omnes
> Paulatim.[4]
>
> "Nothing at first so great or strange appears
> But grows familiar in succeeding years."

Taking upon me once to justify something in use amongst us, and that was received with absolute authority for a great many leagues round about us, and not content to establish it, as men commonly are, only by force of law and example, but by enquiring into its original, I found the foundation so weak that I, who had made it my business to confirm others, was very near being dissatisfied myself. 'Tis by this recipe that Plato undertakes to cure the unnatural and preposterous amours of his time—the recipe which he esteems of sovereign virtue; namely, that the public opinion condemns them; that the poets, and all other writers, relate horrible stories of them. A recipe by virtue of which the most beautiful daughters do not allure their

1 Plutarch, in his treatise *on the Virtuous behaviour of Women*, c. 5.
2 Herod. iii.
3 Valer. Max. vii. in ext. sec. 15.
4 Lucret. ii. 1027

fathers' lust, nor brothers of the finest shape and beauty their sisters' desire. The very fables of Thyestes, Œdipus, and Macareus, having, with the harmony of their song, infused this wholesome opinion and belief into the tender brains of infants.[1] Chastity is, in truth, a great and shining virtue, and of which the utility is sufficiently known; but to govern, and prevail with it according to nature, is as hard as 'tis easy to do it according to custom and the laws and precepts of sober practice. The original and universal reasons are of very difficult search, and our masters either lightly pass them over, or, not daring so much as to touch them, precipitate themselves at once into the liberty of custom, in which they pride themselves, and triumph as much as you please. Such as will not suffer themselves to be withdrawn from this original source do yet commit a greater error, and submit themselves to wild opinions. Witness Chrysippus,[2] who, in so many of his writings, has shewn the little account he made of incestuous conjunction committed with how near relations soever.

Custom the only foundation of many things authorised in the world.

Whoever would disengage himself from this violent prejudice of custom would find several things received with absolute and undoubting opinion that have no other support than the hoary beard and wrinkled face of ancient use; but this mask torn away, and things being referred to the decision of truth and reason, he will find his judgment convinced and overthrown, and yet restored to a much more sure state. For example, I will ask him what can be more strange than to see a people obliged to obey and pay a reverence to laws they never heard of, and to be bound in all their affairs, both private and public, as marriages, donations, wills, sales, and purchases, to rules they cannot possibly know, being neither writ nor published in their own language, and of which they have, of necessity, to purchase both the interpretation and the use? Not according to the ingenious opinion of Isocrates, who counselled his king to make the traffics and negociations of his subjects free, open, and of profit to them, and their quarrels and disputes burdensome, and laden with heavy penalties; but, by a monstrous notion, to make sale of reason itself, and to allow the law to be made a matter of traffic. I think myself obliged to fortune that, as our historians report, it was a Gascon gentleman, a countryman of mine, who first opposed Charlemagne when he attempted to impose upon us Latin and imperial laws.

The office of Judge a matter of purchase.

What can be more outrageous than to see a nation where, by lawful custom, the office of a Judge is to be bought and sold, where judgments are paid for with ready money, and where justice may legally be denied to him that has not wherewithal to pay;[3] where this merchandize is in so great repute, as in our government, to furnish a fourth estate of wrangling lawyers, to add to the three ancient ones of the church, nobility, and people; which fourth estate, having the laws in their hands, and sovereign power over men's lives and fortunes, make a body separate from the nobility. From whence it comes to pass that there are double laws, those of honour, and those of justice, in many things positively opposite to one another; the nobles as rigorously condemning a lie taken, as the others do a lie revenged. By the law of arms he shall be degraded from all nobility and honour who puts up with an affront; and, by the civil law, he who vindicates his reputation incurs a capital punishment; he who applies himself to the law for reparation of an offence done to his honour is disgraced; and he who does not is punished by the law. Yet, of these two so different parties, both of them referring to one head, the one has the charge of peace, the other of war; those have the profit, these the honour; those the wisdom, these the virtue; those the word, these the action; those justice, these valour; those reason, these force; those the long robe, these the short, divided betwixt them.

For what concerns indifferent things, as clothes, who is there that would think of bringing them back to their true and real use, the body's service and convenience, and upon which their original grace and decency depend; yet what more fantastic than our fashions? I will instance, amongst others, our square caps, that long tail of velvet that hangs down from our women's heads with its whimsical trinkets, and that idle and absurd model of a member we cannot, in modesty, so much as name, which, nevertheless, we make a parade of in public. These considerations, notwithstanding, will not prevail upon any understanding man to decline the common mode; but, on the contrary, methinks all singular and particular fashions are rather marks of folly and vain affectation than of sound reason; and a wise man ought within to withdraw and retire his soul from the crowd, and there keep it at liberty, and in power to judge freely of things; but, as to this outward garb and appearance, absolutely follow and conform himself to the fashion of the time. Public society has nothing to do with our thoughts, but for the rest, as our actions, our labours, our fortunes, and our lives, we should lend and abandon them to the common opinion and public service, as did that good and great Socrates, who refused to preserve his life by a disobedience to the magistrate, though a very wicked and unjust one: for it is the rule of rules, and

Men of sense should conform to the fashion of their time as to externals.

[1] Plato, *Laws*, viii. 6.
[2] Sextus Empiricus, i. 14.
[3] France, where this custom was introduced by the Chancellor du Prat, under Francis I.

the general law of laws, that every one observe those of the place wherein he lives.

Νόμους ἔπεσθαι τοῖσιν ἐγχωρίοις καλόν.[1]

"The country's custom to observe,
Is proper, and doth praise deserve."

Whether the actual inconvenience of changing received laws is not greater than the possible advantage.

Let us take another view of the subject: it is a very great doubt whether any so manifest an advantage can accrue from the alteration of a law or custom received, let it be what it will, as there is danger and inconvenience in doing it; forasmuch as government is a structure composed of several parts and members joined and united together, with so strict affinity and union that it is impossible to stir so much as one brick or stone but the whole body will be sensible of it. The legislator of the Thurians[2] ordained that whosoever proposed either to abolish old laws, or to establish new, should present himself, with a halter about his neck, to the people; to the end that, if the innovation he would introduce should not be approved by every one, he might immediately be hanged; and that of the Lacedemonians[3] made it the business of his whole life to obtain from his citizens a faithful promise that none of his laws should be violated. The Ephorus, who so rudely cut the two strings that Phrynis had added to music,[4] never stood to examine whether that addition made better harmony, or that by that means the instrument was more full and complete; it was enough for him to condemn the invention, that it was a novelty, and an alteration of the old fashion. Which also is the meaning of the old rusty sword carried before the magistracy of Marseilles.

For my own part I have myself a very great aversion for novelty, what face, or what pretence soever it may carry along with it, and have reason, having been an eye-witness of the great mischiefs produced. One cannot, I confess, exactly say that the miseries which, for so many years,[5] have lain so heavy upon the kingdom of France, are wholly occasioned by it; but one may say, and with colour enough, that it has accidentally produced and begot the mischief and ruin that have since continued both without and against it, and it is principally what we have to accuse for these disorders.

Heu patior telis vulnera facta meis.[6]

"Alas! the wounds I now endure
Which my own weapons did procure."

They who give the first shock to a state are voluntarily the first overwhelmed in its ruin; the fruits of public commotion are seldom enjoyed by him who was the first mover, as only beats the water for another's net. The unity and contexture of this monarchy, this great structure, having been, in her old age, broken and torn by this thing, called innovation, has laid open a breach, and given sufficient admittance to the like injuries in these latter times. The regal majesty falls less easily from the summit to the middle, than from the middle to the base. But, if the inventors did the greater mischief, the imitators are more vicious, to follow examples of which they have felt and punished both the horror and the offence. And if there can be any degree of horror in ill-doing, these last are indebted to the other for the glory of contriving, and the courage of making the first attempt. All sorts of new disorders easily draw, from this primitive and overflowing fountain, examples and precedents to trouble and discompose our government. We read in our very laws, made for the remedy of this first evil, the beginning and pretences of all sorts of bad enterprises; and what Thucydides says[7] of the civil wars of his time is applicable to us, that, to smooth over public vices, we give them new and more plausible names, sweetening and disguising their true titles: all that is done is done, forsooth, to reform and improve our faith! *Honesta oratio est*,[8] but the best pretence for innovation is of very dangerous consequence; *Adeò nihil motum ex antiquo probabile est*.[9] And, freely to speak my thoughts, it argues, methinks, a strange self-love and great presumption in a man to set so much value on his own opinions that public peace must be overthrown to establish them, and so many inevitable mischiefs introduced into his own country, and so dreadful a corruption of manners, as a civil war, and the mutations of state consequent to it, always brings in its train. Can there be worse management than to set up so many certain and palpable vices, against errors that are only contested, and disputable, whether they be such or no? And are there any worse sort of vices than those which shock a man's own conscience, and the natural light of his own reason? The senate, upon the dispute betwixt it and the people about the administration of their religion, was bold enough to return this evasion for current pay: *Ad Deos id magis quàm ad se, pertinere; ipsos visuros, ne sacra sua polluantur*.[10] "That it more belonged to the gods to determine than to them; let them, therefore, have a care their sacred mysteries were not profaned." As the oracle answered those of Delphos, who, fearing to be invaded by the Persians, in the Median war, enquired of Apollo how they should dis-

[1] *Excerpta ex trag. Græc. Hugo Grot. interp.* p. 937.
[2] *Charondas.* See Diod. Sic. xii. 24.
[3] *Lycurgus.* See his Life by Plutarch, c. 21.
[4] Plutarch, in his *Apotheghms of the Lacedemonians*, calls this Ephorus, *Emerepes.* See also Val. Max. ii. 6.
[5] The edition of 1588 reads "which for twenty-five or thirty years."
[6] Ovid. *Epis. Phillis. Demop.* 48.
[7] Thucyd. iii. 52.
[8] Terence, *And.* i. 114.
[9] Livy, xxxiv. 54.
[10] Livy, x. 6. whose words, however, do not at all bear out the application that Montaigne here makes of them.

pose of the holy treasure of his temple, whether they should hide, or remove it to some other place? He returned them answer, that they should stir nothing thence, but only take care of themselves, for he himself was sufficient to look to what belonged to him.[1] The Christian religion has all the marks of the utmost utility and justice: but none more manifest than the severe injunction it lays indifferently upon all to yield absolute obedience to the civil magistrate, and to maintain and defend the laws: of which what a wonderful example has the divine wisdom left us, who, to work and establish the salvation of mankind, and to conduct his glorious victory over death and sin, would do it after no other way but at the mercy of our ordinary forms of justice, submitting the progress and issue of so high and so salutiferous an effect to the blindness and injustice of our customs and observances, suffering the innocent blood of so many of his elect, and so long a loss of years to the maturing of this inestimable fruit! There is a vast difference betwixt the case of one that follows the forms and laws of his country, and another that will undertake to regulate and change them; the first pleads simplicity, obedience, and precedent, for his excuse; whatever he may do cannot be imputed to malice, 'tis at the worst but misfortune. *Quis est enim, quem non moveat clarissimis monumentis testata, consignataque antiquitas?*[2] "For who is it that antiquity, sealed and attested with so many glorious monuments, cannot move?" Besides what Isocrates says, that defect is nearer allied to moderation than excess. The other is a much more ruffling gamester:[3] for whosoever shall take upon him to choose and alter, usurps the authority of judging, and ought to look well about him, and make it his business to discover the defect of what he would abolish, and the virtue of what he is about to introduce.

This vulgar consideration is that which settled me in my station, and kept even my most ungoverned youth under the rein, so as not to burthen my shoulders with so great a weight as to render myself responsible for a science of that importance; or in this to dare, what in my better and more mature judgment I durst not do in the most easy and indifferent things I had learned, and wherein temerity of judging is of no consequence; it seeming to me very wrong to wish to subject public and established customs and institutions to the weakness and instability of a private and particular fancy (for private reason is but a private jurisdiction,) and to attempt that upon the divine, which no government will endure a man should do upon the civil, laws. With which, though human reason has much more commerce than with the other, yet are they sovereignly judged by their own proper judges, and the utmost sufficiency serves only to expound and set forth the law and custom received, but neither to divest it, nor to introduce any thing of innovation. And if sometimes the divine providence has gone beyond the rules to which it has necessarily bound and obliged us, it is not to give us any dispensation to do the same; those are only master-strokes of the divine hand, which we are not to imitate, but only admire; and extraordinary examples purposed, and particular testimonies of the nature of miracles, presented before us for manifestations of its almighty power, equally above both our rules and our strength, which it would be folly and impiety to attempt to represent and imitate; and which we ought not to follow, but to contemplate with the greatest reverence and astonishment, as arts peculiar to his person and not to us. Cotta very opportunely declares, *Quàm de religione agitur, Ti. Coruncanium, P. Scipionem, P. Scævolam, pontifices maximos, non Zenonem, aut Cleanthem, aut Chrysippum sequor.*[4] "When matters of religion are in question, I will be governed by T. Coruncanus, P. Scipio, P. Scævola, the High-Priests, and not by Zeno, Cleanthes, or Chrysippus." God knows, in our present quarrel, where there are a hundred articles to dash out and put in, and those of great consideration, too, how many there are who can truly boast they have exactly and perfectly weighed and understood the grounds and reasons of the one and the other party. 'Tis a number, if it make any number, that would give us very little disturbance; but what becomes of all the rest? Under what ensigns do they march? In what quarter do they lie? Theirs have the same effect with other weak and ill-applied medicines, they have only set the humours they would purge more violently working, stirred and exasperated them by the conflict, and left them still behind. The decoction was too weak to purge, but strong enough to weaken us; so that it does not leave us, but we keep it still in our bodies, and reap nothing from the operation but intestine gripes and long enduring pain. Yet fortune still reserving her authority above and beyond our reason, does sometimes present us with a necessity so urgent that 'tis requisite the laws should a little yield and give way; and when one opposes the encrease of an innovation that thus intrudes itself by violence, to keep a man's self in so doing in all places, and in all things, within bounds and rules, against those who have the power, and to whom all things are lawful that may any way serve to advance their design, who have no other law nor rule but what serves best to their own purpose, is a dangerous obligation, and an intolerable inequality.

Old laws, however, must in some cases yield to new.

[1] Herod. viii. 36.

[2] *Cicer. de Divin.* i. 40.

[3] All that follows from the words, "for whosoever," to the passage from Cicero inclusively, ending thus, "not by Zeno, Cleanthes, or Chrysippus," is not to be found in the folio edition by Abel Angelier, printed at Paris in 1595, three years after the death of our author; nor in another folio edition printed at Paris, by Michael Blageant, in 1640.

[4] Cic. *de Nat. Deor.* iii. 2.

"Auditum nocendi perfido præstat fides.[1]

"So simple truth doth her fair breast disarm,
And gives to treachery a power to harm."

The ordinary discipline of a healthful state does not provide against these extraordinary accidents, pre-supposing a body that supports itself in its principal members and offices, and a common consent to its obedience and observation. To act in conformity with the laws is a cold, heavy, and constrained affair, and not fit to make way against a headstrong and unbridled will. 'Tis to this day a reproach against those two great men, Octavius and Cato, in the two civil wars of Sylla and Cæsar, that they would rather suffer their country to undergo the last extremities than to relieve their fellow citizens at the expense of its laws, or to be guilty of any innovation; for, in truth, in these last necessities, where there is no other remedy, it would peradventure be more discreet to stoop, and yield a little before the blow, than by mere wilful opposition, without possibility of doing any good, to give occasion to violence to trample all under foot; 'tis better to make the laws do what they can, when they cannot do what they would. After this manner did he who suspended them for four and twenty hours,[2] and he who for once shifted a day in the calendar, and that other who of the month of June made a second May.[3] The Lacedæmonians, themselves, who were such religious observers of the laws of their country, being straitened by one of their own edicts, by which it was expressly forbidden to choose the same man to be admiral twice; and on the other hand, their affairs necessarily requiring that Lysander should again take upon him that command, they made one Aracus admiral, 'tis true, but Lysander superintendant of the navy.[4] And, by the same subtilty and equivocation, one of their ambassadors being sent to the Athenians to obtain the revocation of some decree, and Pericles remonstrating to him that it was forbidden to take away the tablet wherein a law had once been engrossed, he advised him to turn it, that not being prohibited;[5] and Plutarch[6] commends Philopœmon, that, being born to command, he knew how to do it, not only according to the laws, but also to over-rule even the laws themselves, when the public necessity so required.

CHAPTER XXIII.

VARIOUS EVENTS FROM THE SAME COUNSEL.

JAQUES AMIOT,[7] Grand Almoner of France, one day related to me this story, much to the honour of a prince of ours (and ours he was upon several very good accounts, though originally of foreign extraction,[8] that in the time of our first commotions, at the siege of Rouen,[9] this prince, having been advertised by the queen-mother of a conspiracy against his life, and in her letters particular information being given him of the person who was to execute the business, who was a gentleman of Anjou, or of Mayne, and who for this purpose frequented this prince's house, discovered not the least syllable of this intelligence to any one whatever, but going the next day to St. Katherine's Mount, from whence our battery played against the town (for it was during the siege) and having in company with him the said Lord Grand Almoner, and another bishop, he was presently aware of this gentleman, who had been denoted to him, and presently caused him to be called into his presence; to whom, being come before him, seeing him pale, and trembling with the conscience of his guilt, he thus said: "Monsieur such a one, you already guess what I have to say to you; your countenance discovers it; you have nothing hidden from me; I am so well informed of your business that it will but make worse for you to attempt to deny it; you know very well such and such things (the most secret circumstances of his conspiracy), and therefore be sure, as you value your life, to confess to me the whole of your design." The poor man, seeing himself thus detected (for the whole business had been discovered to the queen by one of the accomplices), was in so great a confusion he knew not what to do; but joining his hands to beg for mercy, he was about to throw himself at the prince's feet, but he, taking him up, proceeded to say: "Come, sir, tell me, have I at any time heretofore done you any injury? or have I, through any private difference, offended any kinsman or friend of yours? It is not above three weeks that I have known you; what then could move you to attempt my death?" To which the gentleman, with a trembling voice, replied, "that it was no particular grudge he had to his person, but the general interest and concern of his party, and that he had been put upon it by some who had persuaded him it would be a meritorious act, by any means to extirpate so great and so powerful an enemy of their religion." "Well," said the prince, "I will now let you see how much more charitable the religion is that I hold, than that which you profess; yours has counselled you to kill me, without a hearing, and without my ever having given you any cause of offence; and mine commands me to forgive you, convicted, as you are, by your own confession,

The clemency of the Duke of Guise.

[1] Seneca, *Œdip.* iii. 1. 686.
[2] *Agesilaus.* Plutarch, *in Vitâ.*
[3] *Alexander the Great.* Plutarch, *in Vitâ*, c. 5.
[4] Plutarch, *in Vitâ Lysand.* c. 4.
[5] Plutarch, *in Vitâ Pericl.* c. 18.

[6] In the *Parallel between T. Q. Flaminius and Philopœmen*, towards the end.
[7] The celebrated translator of Plutarch.
[8] The Duke of Guise, surnamed *Le Balafré*, of the house of Lorraine.
[9] In 1562. to Dampmartin, *La Fortune de la Cur*, II.

of a design to murder me without reason. Get you gone, and let me see you no more; and if you are wise, choose henceforward honest men for your counsellors in your designs."[1]

The clemency of Augustus.

The Emperor Augustus, being in Gaul, had certain information of a conspiracy L. Cinna was contriving against him, and thereupon resolved to make him an example; to that end he sent to summon his friends to meet the next morning in council; but the night between he passed in great disquiet of mind, considering that he was going to put to death a young man, of an illustrious family, and nephew to the great Pompey, which made him break out into various ejaculations: "What then," said he, "shall I live in perpetual anxiety and alarm, and suffer my assassin in the mean time to walk abroad at his ease? Shall he go unpunished, after having conspired against my life, a life I have hitherto preserved in so many civil wars, and so many battles, both by land and sea? And after I have settled the universal peace of the world, shall this man be pardoned, who has conspired not only to murder, but to sacrifice me?" For the conspiracy was to kill him at sacrifice. After which, remaining for some time silent, he began again louder, and exclaiming against himself, said, "Why livest thou, if it be for the good of many that thou shouldst die? Must there be no end of thy revenge and cruelty? Is thy life of so great value that so many mischiefs must be done to preserve it?" His wife Livia, seeing him in this perplexity, "Will you take a woman's counsel?" said she. "Do as the physicians do, who, when the ordinary recipes will do no good, make trial of the contrary. By severity you have hitherto prevailed nothing; Lepidus has followed Salvidienus; Murena, Lepidus; Cæpio, Murena; and Egnatius, Cæpio. Begin now and try how gentleness and clemency will succeed. Cinna is guilty, forgive him; he will never henceforth have the heart to hurt thee, and it will add to thy glory." Augustus was glad that he had met with an advocate of his own humour; wherefore having thanked his wife, and in the morning countermanded the friends he had summoned to council, he commanded Cinna all alone to be brought to him; who, being come, and a chair by his appointment set him,[2] and having commanded every one else out of the room, he spoke to him after this manner: "In the first place, Cinna, I demand of thee patient audience; do not interrupt me in what I am about to say, and I will afterwards give thee full time and leisure to answer. Thou knowest, Cinna, that having taken thee prisoner in the enemy's camp, and though then wert thyself mine enemy, and born so, I gave thee thy life, restored thee thy estate, and by degrees put thee in so good a position that the victorious envied the conquered. The sacerdotal office, which thou madest suit to me for, I conferred upon thee, after having denied it to others, whose fathers have ever borne arms in my service. Having done all this for thee, thou hast undertaken to kill me." At which Cinna crying out that he was far from entertaining so wicked a thought: "Thou dost not keep thy promise, Cinna," continued Augustus, "that thou wouldst not interrupt me. Yes, thou hast undertaken to murder me in such a place, such a day, in such and such company, and in such a manner." At which words seeing Cinna astonished and silent, not upon the account of his promise so to be, but interdict with the conscience of his crime: "Why," proceeded Augustus, "to what end wouldst thou do it? Is it to be emperor? Believe me the republic is in a very bad condition, if I am the only man betwixt thee and the empire. Thou art not able so much as to defend thy own house, and but the other day wast baffled in a suit by the opposed interest of a manumitted slave. What, hast thou neither means nor power in any other thing, but only to attempt against Cæsar? I will resign the empire, if there is no other but I to obstruct thy hopes: but can'st thou believe that Paulus, that Fabius, that the Cassii and the Servilii, and so many noble Romans, not only so in title, but who by their virtue honour their nobility, would endure thee?" After this, and a great deal more that he said to him (for he was more than two hours speaking), "Go, Cinna, go thy way," said he, "I again give thee that life as a traitor and a parricide which I once before gave thee as an enemy. Let friendship from this time forward begin betwixt us, and let us try to make it appear whether I have given, or thou hast received, thy life with the better faith;" and so departed from him. Some time after he raised him to the consular dignity, complaining that he had not had the confidence to demand it; had him ever after for his very great friend, and was at last made by him sole heir to his estates.[3] Now from the time of this affair, which befel Augustus in the fortieth year of his age, he never had any conspiracy or attempt against him, and therein reaped the due reward of this his exemplary clemency. But it did not so well succeed with our prince;[4] his lenity did not secure him from afterwards falling into the toils of the like treason: so vain and frivolous a thing is human prudence; and, in spite of all our projects, counsels, and precautions, fortune will still be mistress of events. We repute physicians for-

[1] Dampmartin, *La Fortune de la Cour*, ii.

[2] This circumstance, expressly noted by Seneca, is not immaterial, because it shews us the manners of that age; and therefore I think that the celebrated Corneille did well to make use of it in his tragedy of Cinna. A king who should think it derogatory to his royalty ever to see his subjects sitting in his presence would have but a very diminutive idea of grandeur, which does not depend on distinctions of this kind. A king, truly respectable, may freely dispense with this liberty, without risking the loss of any thing, any more than Augustus, Trajan, or Marcus Aurelius. *Coste.*

[3] Seneca *de Clementiâ*, I. 9.

[4] The Duke of Guise, before mentioned. He was assassinated at the siege of Orleans, in 1563, by a gentleman of Angoumois, named Poltrot.

tunate when they hit upon a lucky cure, as if there was no other art but theirs that could not stand upon its own legs, and whose foundations are too weak to support itself upon its basis, and as if no other art stood in need of fortune's hand to assist in its operations. For my part, I think of physic as much good or ill as any one would have me: for, thanks be to God, we have no traffic together. I am of a quite contrary humour to other men, for I always despise it; and when I am sick, instead of recanting, or entering into composition with it, I begin yet more to hate and fear it, telling those who importune me to take physic that they must at least give me time to recover my strength and health, that I may be the better able to support and encounter the violence and danger of the potion. I let nature work, supposing her to be sufficiently armed with teeth and claws to defend herself when attacked, and to uphold that contexture, the dissolution of which she flies and abhors. For I am afraid lest, instead of assisting her when grappled and struggling with the disease, I should assist her adversary, and give her more work to do.

Montaigne's opinion of physic.

Now, I say, that not in physic only, but in several other more certain arts, fortune has a great share. The poetic sallies that ravish and transport the author out of himself, why should we not attribute them to his good fortune, since the poet himself confesses they exceed his capacity, and acknowledges them to proceed from something else than himself, and that he has them no more in his power than the orators say they have those extraordinary motions and agitations that sometimes push them beyond their design. It is the same in painting, where touches shall sometimes slip from the hand of the painter, so surpassing both his fancy and his art as to beget his own admiration and astonishment. Fortune does yet more clearly manifest the share she has in all things of this kind, in the graces and elegances which are found in them, not only beyond the intention, but even without the knowledge of the artist. An intelligent reader does often find out in other men's writings other perfections, and invest them with a better sense and higher construction, and more quaint expression, than the author himself either intended or perceived.

Fortune, or chance, has sometimes much to do in successful sallies of poetry;

and of painting.

And, as to military enterprizes, every one sees how great a hand fortune has in them all. Even in our counsels and deliberations there must certainly be something of chance and good luck mixed with human prudence, for all that our wisdom can do alone is no great matter; the more piercing, quick, and apprehensive it is, the weaker it finds itself, and is by so much more apt to mistrust its own virtue. I am of Sylla's opinion,[1] and when I more strictly and nearer hand examine the most glorious exploits of war, I perceive, methinks, that those who carry them on make use of counsel and debate only for custom's sake, and leave the best part of the enterprize to fortune; and, relying upon her favour and assistance, transgress at every turn the bounds of military conduct, and the rules of war. There happen sometimes accidental alacrities and strange furies in their deliberations, that for the most part prompt them to follow the worst and worst grounded counsels, and that swell their courage beyond the limits of reason: whence it has fallen out that many great captains of antiquity, to justify their rash determinations, have been forced to tell their soldiers that they were by some inspiration and good omen encouraged and invited to such attempts.[2]

Wherefore, in this doubt and uncertainty that the short-sightedness of human wisdom to see and chuse the best (by reason of the difficulties that the various accidents and circumstances of things bring along with them), does perplex us withal, the surest way, in my opinion, even did no other consideration invite us to it, were to pitch upon that course wherein is the greatest appearance of honesty and justice, and, not being certain which is the shortest, to go the straightest and most direct way; as in the two examples I have just mentioned, there is no question but that it was more noble and generous in him who had received the offence to pardon it than to do otherwise; and if the former miscarried in it, it was not the fault of his good intention: neither does any one know if he had proceeded otherwise, whether by that means he had avoided the end his destiny had appointed for him; and he had only lost the glory of so generous an act.

The course which must be taken in cases the event of which is uncertain.

You will find in history many who have been under this fear, and who for the most part have taken the course to meet and prevent conspiracies by punishment and vengeance: but I find very few who have reaped any advantage by this proceeding; witness so many Roman emperors. Whoever finds himself in this danger, need not expect much, either from his vigilance or his power; for how hard a thing is it for a man to secure himself from an enemy who lies concealed under the countenance of the most officious friend we have, and to discover the secret designs and inward thoughts of those who are continually doing us service? It is to no purpose to have a guard of foreigners about a man's person, or to be always fenced about with a pale of armed men; whosoever despises his own life is always master of that of another man.[3] And, moreover, this continual suspicion, that makes a prince jealous of every

Whether it is of advantage to seek to prevent conspiracies by sanguinary measures.

[1] Plutarch, "*How far a Man may praise himself.*"

[2] Montluc, *Commentaries.*

[3] Senec. *Epist.* 4.

body, must, of necessity, be a marvellous torment to him. And, therefore, it was that Dion, being advertised that Callippus watched an opportunity to take away his life, had never the heart to enquire more particularly into it, saying that he had rather die than live in that misery that he must continually stand upon his guard, not only against his enemies but his friends also;[1] which Alexander much more spiritedly and effectively manifested when, having notice by a letter from Parmenio, that Philip, his most beloved physician, was, by Darius's money, corrupted to poison him, at the same time that he gave the letter to Philip to read, drank off the potion he had brought him.[2] Was not this resolution to express that if his friends had a mind to dispatch him out of the world he was willing to give them opportunity to do it? This prince is indeed the sovereign precedent of all daring actions; but I do not know whether there is another passage in his life wherein there is so much firmness as in this, nor so illustrious an image of greatness of mind.

Mistrust a sad condition.

Those who preach to princes so circumspect and vigilant a jealousy and distrust, under colour of security, preach to them ruin and dishonour. Nothing noble can ever be effected without danger. I know a person, naturally of great daring and courage, whose good fortune is continually marred by such persuasions as these, "that he must keep close amongst his own people, and keep those he knows are his friends continually about him; that he must not hearken to any reconciliation with his old enemies, that he must stand clear off, and not trust his person in hands stronger than his own, what promises or offers soever they make him, or what advantages soever he may see before him." And I know another who has unexpectedly secured his fortune by following quite the contrary advice.

Courage, the reputation and glory of which men seek with so greedy an appetite, represents and sets itself out, when need requires, as magnificently in a doublet as in a coat of mail; in a closet as well as in a camp; with the arm pendent as with the arm upraised: this over-circumspect and wary prudence is a mortal enemy to all high and generous exploits. Scipio, to sound the intentions of Syphax, leaving his army and abandoning Spain, not yet secure nor well settled in his new conquest, passed over into Africa, in two small vessels, to commit himself, in an enemy's country, to the power of a Barbarian King, to a faith untried and unknown, without obligation, without hostage, under the sole security of the greatness of his courage, his good fortune, and the promise of his high hopes.[3] *Habita fides ipsam plerumque fidem obligat.*[4] "Confidence generally inspires confidence."

Instances of the good effects of shewing confidence in disaffected troops.

In a life of ambition and eclât 'tis necessary to keep suspicion in check. Fear and diffidence invite and attract injury and offence. The most mistrustful of all our kings[5] established his affairs principally by voluntarily trusting his life and liberty into his enemy's hands, seeming to have an absolute confidence in them, to the end they might repose as great an assurance in him. Cæsar only opposed the authority of his countenance and the sharpness of his rebukes to his mutinous legions, armed against him, having that implicit confidence in himself and his fortune, that he feared not to commit and abandon himself to a seditious and rebellious army.

Stetit aggere fultus
Cespitis, intrepidus vultu; meruitque timeri,
Nil metuens.[6]

"Upon a parapet of turf he stood;
His manly face with resolution shone;
And froze the mutineers' rebellious blood,
Challenging fear from all, by fearing none."

But it is true, withal, that this undaunted assurance is not to be represented in its perfect and genuine form but by those whom the imagination of death, and the worst that can happen, does not affright; for to present it a pretended resolution, with a pale and doubtful countenance, doubting, uncertain, and trembling, for the service of an important reconciliation, will effect nothing to the purpose. 'Tis an excellent way to gain the heart and good-will of another to intrust one's self frankly to him, provided it be done without the constraint of necessity, and in such a way that one manifestly does it out of a pure and entire confidence in the party, at least, with a countenance clear from any cloud of suspicion. When I was a boy I saw a gentleman, who was governor of a great town, upon occasion of a popular commotion, not knowing what other course to take, go out of a place of very great strength and security, and commit himself to the mercy of a seditious rabble, in hopes, by that means, to appease the tumult before it grew to a head: but it was ill for him that he did so, for he was there miserably slain. But, nevertheless, I am not of opinion that he committed so great an error in going out as men commonly reproach his memory with, as he did in choosing a gentle and submissive way for effecting his purpose, and in endeavouring to quiet the storm, rather by obeying than commanding, and by entreaty rather than remonstrance. I am rather inclined to believe that a gracious severity, with a soldier-like way of commanding, full of security, and confidence suitable to the quality of his person and the dignity of his charge, would have succeeded better with him; at least, he had perished with greater decency and reputation. There is nothing so little to be hoped for from that

Confidence must be in reality, or appearance, void of fear.

[1] Plutarch, *Apoth. of the Ancient Kings.*
[2] Quint. Curt. iii. 6.
[3] Livy, xxviii. 17.
[4] Livy, xxii. 12.
[5] Louis XI. See *Mem. of Comines.* 11.
[6] Lucan, v. 316.

many-headed monster, the mob, when stirred up, as humanity and good nature; it is much more capable of reverence and fear. I should also reproach him that, having taken a resolution which, in my judgment, was rather brave than rash, to expose himself, weak and defenceless, in this tempestuous sea of men; he ought to have carried out bolder, what he had begun, to the last; whereas, coming to discover his danger nearer hand, and his nose happening to bleed, the submissive and fawning countenance he had at first put on changed into another of fear and amazement, and shewing, both by his voice and eyes, his alarm and agitation, and endeavouring to withdraw and secure his person, this deportment more enflamed their fury, and soon brought the effects of it upon him.

Upon a certain occasion, I remember, it was determined there should be a general muster of several bodies of troops in arms (a very proper scene of secret revenge, for there is no place where such can be executed with greater safety), and there were public and manifest appearances that there was no safe coming for some, whose principal and necessary office it was to review the troops. Whereupon a consultation was called, and several counsels were proposed, as in a case that was not very nice and of important consequence. Mine was that they should, by all means, avoid giving any sign of suspicion, but that the officers who were most in danger should boldly go, and, with open and erect countenances, ride boldly and confidently through the files and divisions, and that instead of sparing fire (which the advice of the major part tended to), they should desire the captains to command the soldiers to give round and full volleys in honour of the spectators and not to save their powder. Which was accordingly done, and had so good an effect as to please and gratify the suspected troops, and thenceforth to beget a mutual and salutary confidence and intelligence amongst them.

I look upon Julius Cæsar's way of gaining men's affections to him as the best that can possibly be put in practice. First, he tried by clemency to make himself beloved even by his enemies, contenting himself, in detected conspiracies, only publicly to declare that he was acquainted with them; which being done, he took a noble resolution to await, without solicitude or fear, whatever might be the event, wholly resigning himself up to the protection of the gods and fortune; and, questionless, this was the state he was in at the time when he was killed.

Advice to a tyrant how to proceed against plots.

A stranger having publicly said that he could teach Dionysius, the tyrant of Syracuse, an infallible way to find out and discover all the conspiracies his subjects should contrive against him, if he would give him a good sum of money for his pains; Dionysius, hearing of it, caused the man to be brought to him that he might learn an art so necessary to his preservation; and, having asked him by what art he might make such discoveries, the fellow made answer that all the art he knew was that he should give him a talent, and afterwards boast that he had obtained a singular secret from him. Dionysius liked the idea, and accordingly caused six hundred crowns to be counted out to him.[1] It was not likely he should give so great a sum to a person unknown, but as a reward for some extraordinary and very useful discovery, and the belief of this served to keep his enemies in awe. Princes, however, do very wisely to publish the informations they receive of all the practices against their lives, to possess men with an opinion that they have such good intelligence, and so many spies abroad, that nothing can be plotted against them but they have immediate notice of it. The Duke of Athens did a great many ridiculous things in establishing his new tyranny over Florence; but this, especially, was remarkable, that, having received the first intimation of the conspiracies the people were hatching against him, from Matteo di Moroso, one of the conspirators, he presently put him to death to stifle that rumour, that it might not be thought any of the city disliked his government.

I remember to have read a story of some Roman, of great quality, who, flying the tyranny of the triumvirate, had a thousand times, by the subtilty of as many inventions, escaped from falling into the hands of those that pursued him. It happened one day that a troop of horse, which was sent out to take him, passed close by a brake where he lay hid, and missed very narrowly of spying him; but he considering, upon the instant, the pains and difficulties wherein he had so long continued, to evade the strict and continual searches which were every day made for him, the little pleasure he could hope for in such a kind of life, and how much better it was for him to die once for all, than to be perpetually at this pass, he himself called them back, shewed them his hiding place, and voluntarily delivered himself up to their cruelty, in order to free both himself and them from farther trouble.[2] To invite a man's enemies to come and cut his throat was a resolution that appears a little extravagant and odd; and yet I think he did better to take that course than to live in a constant fever and apprehension of that for which there was no cure. But seeing all the precautions a man can take full of unquietness and uncertainty, 'tis better with a manly courage to prepare one's self for the worst that can happen, and to extract some consolation from this, that we are not certain the thing we fear will ever come to pass.

[1] Plutarch, *Apothegms.*

[2] Appian, *H. of the Civil Wars*, iv.

CHAPTER XXIV.

OF PEDANTRY.

Pedants obnoxious to men of mind.

I WAS often, when a boy, wonderfully concerned to see in the Italian farces, a pedant always brought in for the fool of the play, and that the title of *Magister* was in no greater reverence amongst us; for, being delivered up to their tuition, what could I do less than to be jealous of their honour and reputation? I sought, I confess, to excuse them by the natural incompatibility betwixt the vulgar sort and men of a finer thread, both in judgment and knowledge, forasmuch as they go quite a contrary way to one another: but in this the thing I most stumbled at was that the bravest men were those who most despised them; witness our famous Du Bellay,

Mais je hay par sur tout un sçavoir pedantesque.[1]

And they used to do so in former times; for Plutarch says that *Græcian* and *Scholar* were names of reproach and contempt among the Romans.[2] And since, with the better experience of age, I find they were much in the right on't, and that *magis magnos clericos non sunt magis magnos sapientes*.[3] "The greatest clerks are not the wisest men." But whence it should come to pass that a mind enriched with the knowledge of so many things should not become more quick and sprightly, and that a gross and vulgar understanding should yet inhabit there without correcting and improving itself, where all the reasoning and judgments of the greatest minds the world ever had are collected and stored up, I am yet to seek. To admit into one's own brain such large portions of the brains of others, such great and high fancies (a young lady, one of our greatest princesses, said once to me, speaking of a certain person), one's own must necessarily be crowded and squeezed together into a less compass to make room for the others. I should be apt to conclude that as plants are suffocated and drowned with too much moisture, and lamps with too much oil, so is the active part of the understanding with too much study and matter, which, being embarrassed and confounded with the diversity of things, is deprived of the force and power to disengage itself; and by the pressure of this weight is bowed, subjected, and rendered of no use. But it is quite otherwise, for a soul stretches and dilates itself the more it fills. And thus, in the examples of elder times, we see men excellent at public business, great captains, and great statesmen, very learned withal; whereas the mere philosophers, a sort of men retired from all public affairs, have been often laughed at by the comic writers of their own times; their opinions and singularity of manners making them appear, to men of another method of living, ridiculous and absurd.

Mere philosophers ridiculed by the comic writers.

And, in truth, would you make them judges of a law-suit, or of the actions of a man, they are ready to take it upon them; and straight begin to examine if he has life, if he has motion, if man be any other than an ox: what it is to do and to suffer, and what animals law and justice are? Do they speak of the magistrate or to him? 'Tis with a rude, irreverent, and indecent liberty. Do they hear a prince or a king commended for his virtue? They make no more of him than of a shepherd or neatherd, a lazy Corydon, that busies himself only about milking and shearing his herds and flocks; and this after a ruder manner than even the shepherd himself would. Do you repute any man the greater for being lord of two thousand acres of land? They laugh at such a pitiful pittance, laying claim themselves to the whole world for their possession. Do you boast of your nobility and blood, being descended from seven rich successive ancestors? They will look upon you with an eye of contempt, as men who have not a right idea of the universal image of Nature, and that do not consider how many predecessors every one of us has had, rich, poor, kings, slaves, Greeks, and barbarians. And though you were the fiftieth descent from Hercules, they look upon it as a great vanity so highly to value this, which is only a gift of fortune. And therefore did the vulgar sort nauseate them, as men ignorant of first principles, as presumptuous and insolent.[4]

But this Platonic picture is far different from that these pedants are presented by: for those were envied for raising themselves above the common sort of men, for despising the ordinary actions and offices of life, for having assumed a particular and inimitable way of living, and for using a certain bombast and obsolete language quite different from the ordinary way of speaking. But these are contemned for being as much below the usual form, as incapable of public employment; for leading the life, and conforming themselves to the mean and vile manners, of the vulgar. *Odi homines ignava opera, philosophica sententia*.[5] "I hate men who talk like philosophers, but do nothing."

The distinction between the old philosophers and the modern pedants.

The true philosophers, if they were great in

[1] "But of all sorts of learning, I most hate that of the pedant."

[2] Plutarch, *Life of Cicero*, c 2.

[3] Rabelais, i. 39.

[4] Plato, *Theætetes*. Montaigne, however, has greatly mistaken Plato's sentiment, who says here no more than this: that the philosopher is so ignorant of what his neighbour does that he scarce knows whether he is a man or some other animal: τὸν τοιοῦτον ὁ μὲν πλησίον καὶ ὁ γείτων λέληθεν, ἡμιόνου ὅτι πεύσεται, ἀλλὰ λίγου καὶ εἰ ἀνθρώπος ἐστιν, ἢ τι ἄλλο θρέμμα.

[5] Pacuvius *apud* Aulum Gellium, xiii. 8.

science, were yet much greater in action. And, as it is said of the geometrician of Syracuse,[1] who having been disturbed from his contemplation, to put some of his skill in practice for the defence of his country, that he suddenly set on foot dreadful and prodigious engines, that wrought effects beyond all human expectation; himself notwithstanding disdained all this mechanical work, thinking in this he had violated the dignity of his art, of which these performances of his he accounted but trivial experiments;—so they, whenever they have been put upon the proof of action, have been seen to fly to so high a pitch as made it very well appear their souls were strangely elevated and enriched with the knowledge of things. But some of them, seeing the reins of government in the hands of ignorant and unskilful men, have avoided all places and interest in the management of affairs; and he who demanded of Crates, how long it was necessary to philosophise, received this answer: "Till our armies are no more commanded by fools."[2] Heraclitus resigned the royalty[3] to his brother; and to the Ephesians, who reproached him that he spent his time in playing with children before the temple: "Is it not better," said he, "to do so than to sit at the helm of affairs in your company?" Others, having their imagination advanced above the thoughts of the world and fortune, have looked upon the tribunals of justice, and even the thrones of kings, with an eye of contempt and scorn; insomuch that Empedocles refused the royalty that the Agrigentines offered him.[4] Thales, once inveighing against the pains men put themselves to to become rich, was answered by one in the company that he did like the fox, who found fault with what he could not obtain. Whereupon he had a mind, for the jest's sake, to shew them the contrary; and having, upon this occasion, for once made a muster of all his learning and capacity, wholly to employ them in the service of profit, he set a traffic on foot which in one year brought him as great riches as the most experienced in that trade could, with all their industry, have raked together in the whole course of their lives.[5] That which Aristotle reports of some who said of him, of Anaxagoras, and others of their profession, that they were wise, but not prudent, in not applying their study to more profitable things, besides that I do not well digest this nice distinction, will not serve to excuse my pedants; for to see the low and necessitous fortune wherewith they are content, we have rather reason to pronounce that they are neither wise nor prudent.

But, letting this first reason alone, I think it better to say that this inconvenience proceeds from their applying themselves the wrong way to the study of sciences; and that, after the manner we are instructed, it is no wonder if neither the scholars nor the masters become, though more learned, ever the wiser or more fit for business. In plain truth, the cares and expense our parents are at in our education point at nothing but to furnish our heads with knowledge; but not a word of judgment and virtue. Cry out to the people of one that passes by, "O! what a learned!" and of another, "O! what a good man goes there," they will not fail to turn their eyes, and address their respect to the former.[6] There should then be a third crier, "O the blockheads!" Men are apt to enquire, "Does such a one understand Greek and Latin? Is he a poet? or does he write prose?" But whether he be better or more discreet, which ought to be the main point, is enquired into last; we should rather examine who is better learned, than who is more learned.

A pedantic mode of learning objected to.

We only toil and labour to stuff the memory, and in the mean time leave the conscience and the understanding unfurnished and void. And, like birds who fly abroad to forage for grain, and bring it home in their beak, without tasting it themselves, to feed their young; so our pedants go picking knowledge here and there out of several authors, and hold it at the tongue's end, only to distribute it amongst their pupils. And here I cannot but smile to think how I have paid off myself in showing the foppery of this kind of learning, who myself am so manifest an example; for do I not the same thing throughout almost this whole book? I go here and there, culling out of several books the sentences that best please me, not to keep them (for I have no memory to retain them in), but to transplant them into this; where, to say the truth, they are no more mine than in their first places. We are, I conceive, knowing only in present knowledge, and not at all in what is past, no more than in that which is to come. But the worst of it is, their scholars and pupils are no better nourished by it than themselves: it makes no deeper impression upon them than on the other, but passes from hand to hand, only to make a show, to be tolerable company, and to tell pretty stories; like a counterfeit coin, of no other use or value but as counters to reckon with, or set up at cards. *Apud alios loqui didicerunt, non ipsi*

Pedants only aim at making a vain display of their learning.

[1] *Archimedes.* Plutarch, *Life of Marcellus*, c. 6.

[2] Diog. Laert. *in vitâ.*

[3] Diogenes Laertius, in the *Life of Heraclitus*, lib. ix. sect. 6. By βασιλεια is to be understood, according to Menage, not royalty in the proper sense of the word, but a particular office which was so styled at Ephesus, as well as at Athens and Rome, after their renunciation of a monarchical government.

[4] Diogenes Laertius, *in vitâ.*

[5] Id. *in vitâ.* Cicero, *de Divinatione*, i. 49; who mentions that the speculation by which our philosopher got so much money was buying up all the olive trees in the Milesian field before they were in bloom.

[6] Seneca, *Epist.* 88.

aliorum.[1] "They have learned to speak from others, not with themselves." *Non est loquendum, sed gubernandum*.[2] "The thing is not to talk, but to govern." Nature, to shew that there is nothing barbarous where she has the sole command, does oftentimes, in nations where art has the least to do, cause productions of wit, such as may rival the greatest effects of art whatever. In relation to what I am now speaking of, the Gascon proverb, derived from a reed-pipe, is very quaint and subtle: *Bouha prou bouha, mas à remuda lous dits qu'em.* "You may blow till your eyes start out; but if once you offer to stir your fingers, you will be at the end of your lesson." We can say, Cicero says thus; These were the manners of Plato; These are the very words of Aristotle. But what do we say ourselves that is our own? What do we do?—what do we judge? A parrot could say as much as that.

The stupidity of a Roman, who fancied himself a man of learning, because he had learned men in his pay.

This kind of talking puts me in mind of that rich gentleman of Rome, who had been solicitous, with very great expense, to procure men that were excellent in all sorts of science, whom he had always attending his person, to the end that when, amongst his friends, any occasion fell out of speaking on any subject whatsoever, they might supply his place, and be ready to prompt him, one with a sentence of Seneca, another with a verse of Homer, and so forth, every one according to his talent; and he fancied this knowledge to be his own, because 'twas in the heads of those who lived upon his bounty.[3] As they also do whose learning consists in having noble libraries. I know one who, when I question him about his learning, he presently calls for a book to shew me, and would not venture to tell me so much as that he had the piles in his posteriors, till first he had consulted his dictionary what piles and posteriors are.

No learning of use but that which we make our own.

We take other men's knowledge and opinions upon truth, and that's all, wherein we should make them our own. We are in this very like him who, having need of fire, went to a neighbour's house to fetch it; and, finding a very good one there, sat down to warm himself, without remembering to carry any with him home.[4] What good does it do us to have the stomach full of meat, if it does not digest and be incorporated with us; if it does not nourish and support us? Can we imagine that Lucullus, whom letters, without any experience,[5] made so great a leader, learned to be so after this perfunctory manner? We suffer ourselves to lean and rely so very strongly upon the arm of another, that we prejudice our own strength and vigour. Would I fortify myself against the fear of death? It must be at the expense of Seneca. Would I extract consolation for myself or my friend? I borrow it from Cicero; whereas I might have found it in myself, had I been trained up to make use of my own reason. I have no taste for this relative and mendicant understanding; for though we could become learned by other men's reading, a man can never be wise but by his own wisdom.

Μισῶ σοφιστὴν ὅστις οὐχ αὑτῷ σοφός.[6]

"Who in his own concern's not wise,
I that man's wisdom do despise."

From whence Ennius, *Nequidquam sapere sapientem, qui ipse sibi prodesse non quiret.*[7] "That wise man knows nothing who cannot profit himself by his wisdom." *Non enim paranda nobis solum, sed fruenda sapientia est.*[8] "For wisdom is not only to be acquired, but to be made use of."

Si cupidus, si
Vanus, et luganca quantumvis mollior agna.[9]
"If he be greedy, lying, or effeminate."

Dionysius laughed at the grammarians, who cudgelled their brains to enquire into the miseries of Ulysses, and were ignorant of their own; at musicians, who were so exact in tuning their instruments, and never tuned their manners; and at orators, who studied to declare what was justice, but never took care to do it.[10] If the mind be not better disposed, if the judgment be no better settled, I had much rather my scholar had spent his time at tennis, for at least his body would by that means be in better exercise and breath. Do but observe him when he comes back from school, after fifteen or sixteen years that he has been there: there is nothing so awkward and maladroit, so unfit for company or employment; and all that you shall find he has got is that his Latin and Greek have only made him a greater and more conceited blockhead than when he went from home. He should bring back his mind replete with sound literature, and he brings it only swelled and puffed up with vain and empty shreds and snatches of learning, and really nothing more in him than he had before.

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[1] Cicero, *Tuscul. Quæs.* v. 36.

[2] Seneca, *Epist.* 108.

[3] *Clavisens Sabinus.* He lived in the time of Seneca, who, besides what Montaigne here says of him, reports stories that are even more ridiculous of this rich impertinent. His memory was so bad that he every now and then forgot the names of Ulysses, Achilles, and Priam, though he had known them as well as we knew our pedagogues; yet he had a mind to be thought learned, and invented this compendious method, viz. he bought slaves at a great price, one who was master of Homer, another of Hesiod, and nine of lyric poetry, to whom he every now and then had recourse for verses, which in rehearsing he often stopped in the middle of a verse, yet he thought he knew as much as any one in the house did.—Seneca, *Epis.* 27.

[4] Plutarch, *on Hearing.*

[5] Cicero, *Acad.* ii.

[6] Euripides, *apud* Cicer. *Epist. ad Famil.* xiii. 15.

[7] *Apud* Cicer. *Offic.* iii. 15.

[8] Cic. *de Finib.* i. 1.

[9] Juvenal, viii. 14.

[10] In all the editions of Montaigne, except that of Coste, Dionysius is mentioned; yet the wise reflections which Montaigne here ascribes to Dionysius were made by Diogenes the Cynic, as may be seen in that philosopher's life, written by Diogenes Laertius.

The character of pretenders to learning.

These pedants of ours, as Plato says of the Sophists, their cousin-germans, are, of all men living they who most pretend to be useful to mankind, and who alone of all men not only do not better and improve what is committed to them, as a carpenter or a mason would do, but make them much worse, and make them pay for being made so, to boot. If the rule which Protagoras proposed to his pupils were followed, either that they should give him his own demand, or declare upon oath in the temple how much they valued the profit they had received under his tuition, and satisfy him accordingly;[1] our pedagogues would find themselves sadly gravelled, especially if they were to be judged by the testimony of my experience. Our vulgar Perigordian patois does pleasantly call these pretenders to learning "lettre-ferits," letter-marked, men on whom letters have stamped and stunned by the blow of a mallet, as 'twere; and, in truth, for the most part they appear to have a soft place in their sculls, and to be deprived even of common sense. For you see the husbandman and the cobler go simply and plainly about their business, speaking only of what they know and understand; whereas these fellows, in seeking to make a parade and a flourish with this ridiculous knowledge of theirs, that swims and floats in the superficies of the brain, are perpetually perplexing and entangling themselves in their own nonsense. They speak fine words sometimes, 'tis true, but leave somebody that is wiser to apply them. They are wonderfully well acquainted with Galen, but not at all with the disease of the patient: they stun you with a long ribble-row of laws, but understand nothing of the case in hand; they have the theories of all things, but 'tis some one else must put them in practice.

I have sat by when a friend of mine, in my own house, for sport's sake, has with one of these fellows run on a heap of nonsensical galimatias, patched up of all sorts of disjointed pieces, without head or tail, saving that he now and then interlarded here and there some terms that had relation to their dispute, and held the blockhead in play a whole afternoon together, who all the while thought he had answered pertinently and learnedly to all his objections. And yet this was a man of letters and reputation, and nothing less than one of the long robe.

Vos O patricius sanguis, quos vivere fas est
Occipiti cæco, posticæ occurrite sannæ.[2]

"But you, patrician youths! whose sculls are blind,
Watch well your jeering friends, and look behind."

Whosoever shall narrowly pry into and thoroughly sift this sort of people wherewith the world is so pestered, will, as I have done, find that, for the most part, they neither understand others nor themselves; and that their memories are full enough 'tis true, but the judgment totally void and empty; some excepted, whose own nature has of itself formed them into better fashion. As I have observed, for example, in Adrian Turnebus, who having never made other profession than that of mere learning only, in which he was, in my opinion, the greatest man that has been these thousand years, had nothing at all in him of the pedant, but the wearing of his gown, and a little exterior behaviour, that could not be civilised to the garb, which are nothing; and I hate our people, who can worse endure an ill-cut robe than an ill-fashioned mind, and by the bow a man makes, by his behaviour, and even by the shape of his boots, will pretend to tell what sort of man he is. For within all this there was not a more refined and polished soul living upon earth. I have often purposely put him upon arguments quite wide of his profession, wherein I found he had so clear an insight, so quick an apprehension, and so solid a judgment, that a man would have thought he had never practised any other thing but arms, or been all his life employed in affairs of state. 'Tis these are great and vigorous natures;

Testimony of Adrianus Turnebus.

Queis arte benigna,
Et melior luto finxit præcordia Titan;[3]

"Formed of superior clay,
And animated by a purer ray;"

that can keep themselves upright in spite of a pedantic education. But it is not enough that our education does not spoil us; it should alter us for the better.

Some of our parliaments when they are to admit officers, examine them only as to their learning, to which some others also add a trial of their understanding, by asking their judgment of some case in law, of which the latter, methinks, proceeds with the better method: for although both are necessary, and that it is very requisite the men should be defective in neither; yet, in truth, knowledge is not so absolutely necessary as judgment, and the last may make *shift* without the *other*, but the other never without this. For as the Greek verse says,

Knowledge of no avail without judgment.

Ὡς οὐδὲν ἡ μάθησις ἦν μὴ νοῦς παρῇ.[4]

"*To what use serves learning, if the understanding be away?*" Would to God that, for the sake of justice, our courts of judicature were as well furnished with understanding and conscience as they are with knowledge. *Non vitæ, sed scholæ discimus.*[5] "We do not study how to live, but how to dispute." Whereas we are not to tie learning to the soul, but to work and incorporate them together; not to tincture it therewith only, but to give it a thorough and perfect dye; and if it will not take colour, and meliorate its imperfect state, it

[1] Plato, *Protagoras.*
[2] Persius, i. 65.
[3] Juvenal, xiv. 34.
[4] Apud Stobæum, *litt.* iii. 37.
[5] Senec. *Epist.* 106.

were, without doubt, much better to let it alone. It is a dangerous weapon, and very likely to wound its master, if put into an awkward and unskilful hand. *Ut fuerit melius non didicisse.*[1] "So that it were better never to have learned at all."

And this, perhaps, is the reason why neither we, nor indeed the christian religion, require much learning in women; and that Francis, Duke of Brittany, son of John the Fifth, to one that was talking with him about his marriage with Isabella, the daughter of Scotland, and added that she was homely bred, and without any manner of learning, made answer, "That he liked her the better, and that a woman was wise enough if she could distinguish between her husband's shirt and his doublet."

Whether learning be absolutely necessary.

So that it is no so great a wonder, as they make of it, that our ancestors had letters in no greater esteem, and that even to this day they are but rarely met with in the privy-councils of our princes: and if this end and design of acquiring riches, which is the only thing we propose to ourselves, by the means of law, physic, pedantry, and even divinity itself, did not uphold and keep them in credit, you would, without doubt, see them as poor and unregarded as ever. And what loss either, if they neither instruct us to think well, nor to do well! *Postquam docti prodierunt, boni desunt.*[2] "After once they become learned, they cease to be good." All other knowledge is hurtful to him who has not the science of honesty and goodness.

Letters in France but little studied, except by those who sought to live by them.

But the reason I glanced upon but now, may it not also proceed hence, that our studies in France having almost no other aim but profit, few of those who by nature would seem born to offices and employments, rather of glory than gain, addicting themselves to letters; or for so little a while, being taken from their studies before they can come to have any taste of them, to a profession that has nothing to do with books, that there commonly remain no other to apply themselves wholly to learning but people of mean condition, who seek a livelihood thereby; and by such people whose souls are, both by nature and education, and domestic example, of the basest metal, the fruits of knowledge are immaturely gathered, and ill digested. For it is not the proper business of knowledge to enlighten a soul that is dark of itself; nor to make a blind man to see. Her business is not to find a man eyes, but to guide, govern, and direct his steps, provided he has sound feet and straight legs to go upon. Knowledge is an excellent drug, but no drug has virtue enough to preserve itself from corruption and decay, if the vessel be tainted and impure wherein it is put to keep. Such a one may have a sight clear and good enough, who yet looks asquint, and consequently sees what is good, but does not follow it, and sees knowledge, but makes no use of it. Plato's principal institution, in his Republic, is to fit his citizens with employments suitable to their nature. Nature can do all, and does all. Cripples are very unfit for exercises of the body, and lame souls for exercises of the mind. Degenerate and vulgar souls are unworthy of philosophy. If we see a shoemaker with his shoes out at the toes, we say, "It is no wonder; for, commonly, none go worse shod than they." In like manner, experience doth often present us a physician worse physicked, a divine worse reformed, and most frequently a scholar of less sufficiency, than another.

Aristo of Chios had reason to say that philosophers did their auditors harm, forasmuch as most of those that heard them were not capable of making any benefit of their instructions, and if they did not apply them to good, would certainly apply them to ill: *ἀσώτους ex Aristippi, acerbos ex Zenonis schola exire.*[3] "They proceeded debauchees from the school of Aristippus, and sour churls from that of Zeno."

Education of the Persians;

In that excellent institution that Xenophon attributes to the Persians, we find that they taught their children virtue, as other nations do letters. Plato tells us[4] that the eldest son in their royal succession was thus brought up; as soon as he was born he was delivered, not to women, but to eunuchs of the greatest authority about their kings for their virtue, whose charge it was to keep his body healthful and in good plight; and after he came to seven years of age, to teach him to ride, and to go a hunting; when he arrived at fourteen, he was transferred into the hands of four men, the most noted in the kingdom for wisdom, justice, temperance, and valour; of whom the first was to instruct him in religion, the second to be always upright and sincere, the third to subdue his appetites and desires, and the fourth to despise all danger. It is a thing worthy of very great consideration that, in that excellent, and, in truth, for its perfection, prodigious form of civil government set down by Lycurgus, though solicitous of the education of children, as a thing of the greatest concern, and even in the very seat of the Muses, he should make so little mention of learning; as if their generous youths disdaining all other subjection, but that of virtue only, ought to be supplied, instead of tutors to read to them arts and sciences, with such masters only as should instruct them in valour, prudence, and justice; an example that Plato has followed in his laws. The manner of their discipline was to propound to them questions upon their judgment of men, and of their actions; and if they commended or condemned this or that person, or fact, they were to give a reason for so doing. By which

and of the Lacedemonians.

[1] Cicero, *Tusc. Quæs.* ii. 4.
[2] Senec. *Epist.* 95.
[3] Cicero, *de Nat. Deor.* iii. 31.
[4] In the first Alcibiades.

means they at once sharpened their understanding, and learned what was right and lawful. Astyages, in Xenophon, asking her son Cyrus to give her an account of his last lesson, he made answer thus: "A great boy in the school, having a short cassock, by force took a longer from another that was not so tall as he, and gave him his own in exchange; whereupon I being appointed judge of the controversy, gave judgment that I thought it best each should keep the coat he had, for that they were both better fitted now than they were before. Upon which my master told me I had done ill, in that I had only considered the fitness of the garments, whereas I ought to have considered the justice of the thing, which required that no one should have any thing forcibly taken from him that is his own."[1] And Cyrus added that he was whipped for his pains, as we are in our villages for forgetting the first Aorist of τυπτω. My pedant must make me a very learned oration, indeed, *in genere demonstrativo*, before he can persuade me that his school is as good as that. They knew how to go the readiest way to work: and seeing that the sciences, when most rightly applied and best understood, can but teach us prudence, moral honesty, and resolution, they thought fit to initiate their children at once with the knowledge of effects, and to instruct them, not by hear-say and by rote, but by the experiment of action, in forming and moulding them; not only by words and precepts, but chiefly by works and examples; to the end it might not be a knowledge of the mind only, but a complexion and a habit; not an acquisition, but a natural possession. One asking, to this purpose, Agesilaus, what he thought most proper for boys to learn? "What they ought to do when they come to be men," said he.[2] It is no wonder if such an institution produced such admirable effects.

The difference betwixt the instruction given to the children of Sparta, and to those of Athens.

They used to go, it is said, to the other cities of Greece for rhetoricians, painters, and music-masters; but to Lacedæmon for legislators, magistrates, and generals of armies. At Athens they learned to speak well, and here to do well; there to disengage themselves from a sophistical argument, and to unravel ensnaring syllogisms; here to evade the baits and allurements of pleasure, and with a noble courage and resolution to confute and conquer the menaces of fortune and death; those cudgelled their brains about words, these made it their business to enquire into things; there was an eternal babble of the tongue, here a continual exercise of the soul. And therefore it is nothing strange if, when Antipater demanded of them fifty children for hostages, they made answer, quite contrary to what we should do, that they would rather give him twice as many full grown men, so much did they value the loss of their country's education.[3] When Agesilaus invited Xenophon to send his children to Sparta to be bred, "It is not," said he, "there to learn logic or rhetoric, but to be instructed in the noblest of all sciences, namely, the science to obey and to command."[4] It is very pleasant to see Socrates, after his manner, rallying Hippias, who recounts to him what a world of money he had got, especially in certain little villages of Sicily, by teaching school, while he got never a penny at Sparta: "What a sottish and stupid people," says Socrates, "are they, without sense or understanding, who know neither mensuration nor numeration, and make no account either of grammar or poetry, and only busy themselves in studying the genealogies and successions of their kings, the foundation, rise, and declension of states, and such old wives' tales."[5] After which, having made Hippias acknowledge the excellency of their form of public administration, and the felicity and virtue of their private life, he leaves him to guess at the conclusion he makes of the inutility of his pedantic arts.

How Socrates bantered a sophist who had got nothing at Sparta.

Examples have demonstrated unto us that, both in that military government, and all others of the like nature, the study of the sciences does more soften and enervate the courage of men than fortify and incite it. The most potent empire that at this day appears to be in the whole world, is that of the Turks, a people equally remarkable for their estimation of arms, and the contempt of letters. Rome was more valiant before she grew so learned; and the most warlike nations of our time are the most ignorant; of which the Scythians, Parthians, and the great Tamerlane may serve for sufficient proof. When the Goths over-ran Greece, the only thing that preserved all the libraries from the fire was that some one possessed them with an opinion that they should do well to leave this kind of furniture entire to the enemy, as being most proper to divert them from the exercise of arms, and to fix them to a lazy and sedentary life.[6] When our King Charles the Eighth, almost without striking a blow, saw himself possessed of the kingdom of Naples, and a considerable part of Tuscany, the nobility about him attributed this unexpected facility of conquest to this, that the princes and nobles of Italy more studied to render themselves ingenious and learned, than vigorous and warlike.

The study of the sciences enervates courage.

[1] *Cyrop.* i. 3.
[2] Plutarch, *Apoth. of the Lacedemonians.*
[3] Id. Ib.
[4] Id. *Life of Agesilaus*, c. 7.
[5] Plato, *Hippias Major.*
[6] Philip Camerarius, *Medit. Hist.* Cent. iii. 21.

CHAPTER XXV.

OF THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN.

To Madame Diana de Foix, Countess of Gurson.

Montaigne's account of what he knew.

I NEVER yet saw that father who, let his son be never so decrepid or scald-pated, would not own him: not but that, unless he were totally besotted and blinded with his paternal affection, he does not well enough discern his defects; but because, notwithstanding all faults, he is still his. Just so it is with me. I see better than any other that these things I write are but the idle whimsies of a man that has only nibbled upon the outward crust of learning in his nonage, and only retained a general and formless image of it, a little snatch of every thing, and nothing of the whole *à la Françoise;* for I know, in general, that there is a science of physic, a science of law, four parts in mathematics, and I have a general notion what all these aim at; and, peradventure, I know too what the sciences in general pretend unto, in order to the service of human life; but to dive farther than that, and to have cudgelled my brains in the study of Aristotle, the monarch of all our modern learning, or particularly addicted myself to any one science, I have never done it: neither is there any one art of which I am able to draw the first lineaments; insomuch that there is not a boy of the lowest form in a school that may not pretend to be wiser than I, who am not able to pose him in his first lesson, which, if I am at any time forced upon, I am necessitated in my own defence to ask him some universal questions, such as may serve to try his natural understanding; a lesson as strange and unknown to him as his is to me.

Plutarch and Seneca the favourite books of Montaigne.

I never seriously settled myself to the reading of any book of solid learning, but Plutarch and Seneca; and there, like the Danaides, I eternally fill, and it as constantly runs out; something of which drops upon this paper, but very little or nothing stays behind with me. History is my delight, as to reading, or else poetry, for which I have, I confess, a particular kindness and esteem: for, as Cleanthes said, as the voice, forced through the narrow passage of a trumpet, comes out more forceable and shrill; so, methinks, a sentence couched in the harmony of verse, darts more briskly upon the understanding, and strikes[1] both my ear and apprehension with a smarter and more pleasing power. As to the natural parts I have, of which this is the specimen, I find them to bow under the burthen; my fancy and judgment do but grope in the dark, tripping and stumbling in their way, and when I have gone as far as I can, I am in no degree satisfied, for I discover still a new and greater extent of land before me, but with troubled and imperfect sight, and wrapt up in clouds that I am not able to penetrate. And taking upon me to write indifferently of whatever comes into my head, and therein making use of nothing but my own proper and natural means, if I happened, as I often do, accidentally to meet in any good author the same heads and common places upon which I have attempted to write, (as I did but lately in Plutarch's Discourse of the Force of the Imagination), to see myself so weak and miserable, so heavy and sleepy, in comparison with those better writers, I at once pity and despise myself. Yet do I flatter and please myself with this, that my opinions have often the honour and good fortune to tally with theirs, and that I follow in the same paths, though at a very great distance, saying, they are quite right; I am farther satisfied to find that I have a quality, which every one is not blest withal, which is to discern the vast difference betwixt them and me; and notwithstanding all that, suffer my own ideas, poor as they are, to run on in their career, without mending or plaistering up the defects that this comparison has laid open to my own view. And in truth a man had need of a good strong back to keep pace with these people. The indiscreet scribblers of our times, who, amongst their laborious nothings, insert whole sections, paragraphs, and pages, out of ancient authors, with a design by that means to do honour to their own writings, do quite contrary; for the infinite dissimilitude of ornaments renders the complexions of their own compositions so pale, sallow, and deformed, that they lose much more than they get.

Modern writers discover the poverty of their genius, by pilfering the ancients.

The philosophers, Chrysippus and Epicurus, were, in this, of two quite contrary humours; for the first did not only in his books mix the passages and sayings of other authors, but entire pieces, and in one, the whole Medea of Euripides; which gave Apollodorus occasion to say "that should a man pick out of his writings all that was none of his, he would leave nothing but blank paper:"[2] whereas, Epicurus, quite contrary, in three hundred volumes that he left behind him, has not so much as one quotation.[3]

A case in point occurred the other day: I was reading a French book, where, after I had a long time been dragging over a great many words, so dull, so insipid, so void of all wit or common sense that, indeed, they were only words, after a long and tedious travel I came, at last, to meet with a piece that was lofty, rich, and elevated to the very clouds. Now

[1] Montaigne's expression is, *me fiert*, and Rousseau, among his other obligations to our author in this and the preceding chapter, owes to the occurrence of this word—from the Latin *ferit*—his discovery of the meaning of the motto of the Solar Family; *tel fiert que ne tue pas.* See the *Confessions*, part i. book 3

[2] Laertius, *Life of Chrysippus.*

[3] Id. *Life of Epicurus.*

had I found either the declivity easy, or the ascent more sloping, there had been some excuse; but it was so perpendicular a precipice, and so wholly cut off from the rest of the work, that by the first words I found myself flying into the other world, and thence discovered the vale whence I came, so deep and low that I had never since the heart to descend into it any more. If I should set out my discourses with such rich spoils as these, the plagiarism would too manifestly discover the imperfection of my own writing. To reprehend the fault in others that I am guilty of myself appears to me no more unreasonable than to condemn, as I often do, those of others in myself. They are to be every where reproved, and ought to have no sanctuary allowed them. I know very well how impudently I myself, at every turn, attempt to equal myself to my thefts, and go hand in hand with them, not without a daring hope of deceiving the eyes of my reader from discerning the difference; but, withal, it is as much by the benefit of my application that I hope to do it as by that of my invention, or any force of my own. Besides, I do not offer to contend with the whole body of these old champions, nor hand to hand with any one of them; 'tis only by flights and little light skirmishes that I engage them; I do not grapple with them, but try their strength only, and never engage so far as I make a shew to do. If I could hold them in play I were a brave fellow; for I never attack them but where they are strongest. To cover a man's self, as I have seen some do, with another man's armour, so as not to discover so much as their fingers' ends; to carry on his design, as it is not hard for a man that has any thing of a scholar in him, in an ordinary subject, to do, under old inventions, patched up here and there; and then to endeavour to conceal the theft, and to make it pass for his own is, first, injustice and meanness of spirit in whoever does it; who, having nothing in them of their own fit to procure them a reputation, endeavour to do it by attempting to impose things upon the world in their own name, which they have really no manner of title to; and then a ridiculous folly to content themselves with acquiring the ignorant approbation of the vulgar by such a pitiful cheat, at the price, at the same time, of discovering their insufficiency to men of understanding, the only persons whose praise is worth any thing, who will soon smell out and trace them under their borrowed crust. For my own part there is nothing I would not sooner do than that; I quote others only in order the better to express myself. In this I do not, in the least, glance at the composers of centos, who declare themselves for such; of which sort of writers I have, in my time, seen many very ingenious, particularly one, under the name of Capilupus,[1] besides the ancients.[2] These are really men of wit, and that make it appear they are so, both by that and other ways of writing; as for example, Lipsius, in that learned and laborious contexture of his politics.

But be this how it will, and how inconsiderable soever these essays of mine may be, I will ingenuously confess I never intended to conceal them, any more than my old, bald, grizzled portrait before them, where the painter has presented you not with a perfect face, but with the resemblance of mine. For these are my own particular opinions and fancies, and I deliver them for no other but only what I myself believe, and not what others are to believe, neither have I any other end in this writing but only to discover myself, who shall, peradventure, be another thing to-morrow, if I chance to meet any book or friend to convince me in the mean time. I have no authority to be believed, neither do I desire it, being too conscious of my own inerudition to be able to instruct others.

Montaigne's opinion as to his Essays.

A friend of mine then, having read the preceding chapter, the other day, told me that I should have enlarged a little more upon the education of children. Now, madam, were my abilities equal to the subject, I could not possibly employ them better than in presenting them to the little gentleman that threatens you shortly with a happy birth, and your friends are in daily hopes of (you are too generous to begin otherwise than with a male); for having had so great a hand in your marriage, I have a sort of right and interest in the greatness and prosperity of all that shall proceed from it; besides, as you have been so long in possession of a title to the best of my services, I am obliged to desire the honour and advantage of every thing that concerns you. But, in truth, all I understand, as to this particular, is only this, that the greatest and most important difficulty of human science is the nurture and education of children. For, as in agriculture, all that precedes planting, as also planting itself, is certain, plain, and easy; but, after that which is planted takes life and shoots up, there is a great deal more to be done, and much more difficulty to be got over to cultivate and bring it to perfection; so it is with men; it is no hard matter to plant them, but after they are born then begins the

Montaigne's opinion concerning education.

[1] Lelius Capilupus, a native of Mantua, who flourished in the sixteenth century, was famous for compositions of this kind, as may be seen under his name in Bayle's Dictionary, who says that the Cento, which he wrote against the monks, is inimitable; it is to be found at the end of the Regnum Papisticum of Neogeorgas. He wrote one also against the women, which Mr. Bayle also mentions as a very ingenious piece, but too satirical. It was inserted in a collection, entitled Basdii Amores, printed at Leyden, in 1638. This Lelius had a nephew, named Julius Capilupus, who signalized himself by Centos, and even had a talent for it superior to his uncle, if we may believe Possevin. *Poet. Select. Lib.* xvii. 24.

[2] At the Centos of Ausonius, composed wholly out of the verses of Virgil.

The difficulty of guessing by the first actions of children what they will be hereafter.

trouble, solicitude, and care, to train and bring them up.[1] The symptoms of their inclinations at that tender age are so slight and obscure, and the promises so uncertain and fallacious, that it is very hard to establish any solid judgment or conjecture upon them. Look at Cimon, for example, and Themistocles, and a thousand others, whose manhood has given the lie to the ill-promise of their early youth. Bears' cubs and puppies discover their natural inclination; but men, so soon as they are grown up, immediately applying themselves to certain habits, engaging themselves in certain opinions, and conforming themselves to particular laws and customs, do easily change, or, at least, disguise, their true and real disposition. And yet it is hard to force the propensity of nature; whence it comes to pass that, for not having chosen the right course, a man throws away very great pains, and consumes great part of his time in training up children to things for which, by their natural aversion, they are totally unfit. In this difficulty, nevertheless, I am clearly of opinion that they ought to be elemented in the best and most advantageous studies, without taking too much notice of, or being too superstitious in, those light prognostics we too often conceive of them in their tender years; to which Plato, in his republic, gives, methinks, too much authority.

But, madam, learning is doubtless a very great ornament, and a thing of marvellous use, especially to persons raised to that degree of fortune in which you are placed; and, in truth, in persons of mean and low condition, it cannot perform its true and genuine office, being naturally more prompt to assist in the conduct of war, in the government of a people, and in negociating leagues with princes and foreign nations, than in forming a syllogism in logic, in pleading a process in law, or in prescribing a dose of pills in physic. Wherefore, madam, believing you will not omit this so necessary embellishment in the training of your posterity, yourself having tasted the delights of it, and being of a learned extraction (for we yet have the writings of the ancient Counts of Foix, from whom my lord, your husband, and yourself are both descended, and Monsieur Francis de Candale, your uncle, does, every day, oblige the world with others, which will extend the knowledge of this quality in your family to many succeeding ages), I will, upon this occasion, presume to acquaint you with one particular fancy of my own, contrary to the common method, which is all I am able to contribute to your service in this matter.

The great utility of sound learning.

The charge of the tutor you shall provide for your son, upon the choice of whom depends the whole success of his education, has several other great branches which, however, I shall not touch upon, as being unable to add anything of moment to the common rules; and also in this, wherein I take upon me to advise, he may follow it so far only as it shall appear rational and conducing to the end in view. For a boy of quality then, who pretends to letters, not upon the account of profit (for so mean an object as that is unworthy of the grace and favour of the muses; and, moreover, has reference to others), nor so much for outward ornament, as for his own proper and peculiar use, and to furnish and enrich himself within, having rather a desire to come out an accomplished gentleman than a mere learned man; for such a one, I say, I would have his friends solicitous to find him out a tutor who has rather an elegant than a learned head, though both, if such a person can be found; but, however, to prefer manners and judgment before reading, and that this man should pursue the exercise of his charge after a new method.

How much depends on the choice of a tutor.

'Tis the custom of schoolmasters to be eternally thundering in their pupils' ears, as they were pouring into a funnel, whilst the business of these is only to repeat what the others have said before. Now I would have a tutor to correct this error; and that, at the very first outset, he should, according to the capacity he has to deal with, put it to the test, permitting his pupil himself to taste and relish things, and of himself to choose and discern them, sometimes opening the way to him, and sometimes making him break the ice himself; that is, I would not have him alone to invent and speak, but that he should also hear his pupil speak in turn. Socrates, and, since him, Arcesilaus, made first their scholars speak, and then spoke to them.[2] *Obest plerumque iis qui discere volunt auctoritas eorum qui docent.*[3] "The authority of those who teach is very often an impediment to those who desire to learn." The tutor should make his pupil, like a young horse, trot before him, that he may judge of his going, and how much he is to abate of his own speed to accommodate himself to the vigour and capacity of the other. For want of which due proportion we spoil all; yet to know how to adjust it, and to keep within an exact and due measure, is one of the hardest things I know, and 'tis the effect of a strong and well-tempered mind to know how to condescend to his puerile motions and to govern and direct them. I walk firmer and more secure up hill than down.

The tutor of a lad ought to make him speak, sometimes before, and sometimes after, him.

[1] This sentiment is taken from one of Plato's Dialogues, entitled Theages, where a father applying, with his son, to Socrates, to consult him to whom he should put his son for education, made the very same remark as Montaigne has in this place.

[2] Laertius, *in vitâ.*

[3] Cicero, *de Nat. Deor.* i. 5.

Such as, according to our common way of teaching, undertake, with one and the same lesson, and the same measure of direction, to instruct several boys of so differing and unequal capacities, need not wonder if, in a multitude of scholars, there are not found above two or three who bring away any good account of their time and discipline. Let the master not only examine him about the bare words of his lesson, but also as to the sense and meaning of them, and let him judge of the profit he has made, not by the testimony of his memory, but by that of his understanding. Let him make him put what he hath learned into a hundred several forms, and accommodate it to so many several subjects, to see if he yet rightly comprehend it, and has made it his own; taking instruction by his progress from the institutions of Plato. 'Tis a sign of crudity and indigestion to throw up what we have eaten in the same condition it was swallowed down; the stomach has not performed its office unless it hath altered the form and condition of what was committed to it to concoct. Our minds work only upon trust, being bound and compelled to follow the appetite of another's fancy; enslaved and captive under the authority of another's instruction, we have been so subjected to the trammels that we have no free nor natural pace of our own, our own vigour and liberty is extinct and gone. *Nunquam tutelæ suæ sunt.*[1] "They are never out of wardship."

I was privately at Pisa carried to see a very honest man, but so great an Aristotelian that his invariable dogma was "That the touchstone and square of all solid imagination and all truth was an absolute conformity to Aristotle's doctrine, and that all besides was nothing but inanity and chimera; for that he had seen all and said all." A position that having been a little too broadly and maliciously interpreted, brought him into and long kept him in great trouble in the inquisition at Rome.

Let the tutor make his pupil examine and thoroughly sift every thing he reads, and lodge nothing in his head upon simple authority and upon trust. Let Aristotle's Principles be no more principles to him than those of Epicurus and the Stoics: let the diversity of opinions be propounded to, and laid before, him, he will himself choose, if he be able; if not, he will remain in doubt.

Che non men che saper, dubbiar m' aggrada.[2]

"I love sometimes to doubt as well as know."

For if he embrace the opinions of Xenophon and Plato, by the exercise of his reason they will no more be theirs, but become his own. Who follows another, follows nothing, finds nothing, nay, seeks nothing. *Non sumus sub rege, sibi quisque se vindicet.*[3] "We are not under a king; let every one dispose of himself." Let him, at least, know that he does know.

'Tis for him to imbibe their knowledge, but not to adopt their dogmas; and no matter if he forgets where he had his learning, provided he knows how to apply it to his own use: truth and reason are common to every one, and are no more his who spoke them first than his who spake them after. 'Tis no more according to Plato than according to me, since both he and I equally see and understand in the same manner. Bees cull their several sweets from this flower and that blossom, here and there where they find them, but themselves after make the honey, which is all and purely their own, and no longer thyme and marjoram: so the several fragments the pupil borrows from others he will transform and blend together to compile a work that shall be absolutely his own; that is to say, his judgment, which his instruction, labour, and study should alone tend to form. He is not obliged to discover whence he had his materials, but only to produce what he has done with them. Men that live upon rapine and borrowing readily parade their purchases and buildings to every one, but do not proclaim how they came by the money. We do not see the fees and perquisites of a gentleman of the long robe; but we see the noble alliances wherewith he fortifies himself and his family, and the titles and honours he has obtained for him and his. No man accounts to the public for his revenue; but every one makes a show of his purchases, and is content the world should know his good condition.

What the advantages of study are.

The advantages of our study are to become better and wiser. 'Tis, says Epicharmus, the understanding that sees and hears, the understanding that improves everything, that orders everything, and that acts, rules, and reigns.[4] All other faculties are blind and deaf, and without soul; and certainly we render it timorous and servile in not allowing it the liberty and privilege to do anything of itself. Who ever asked his pupil what he thought of grammar and rhetoric, or of such and such a sentence of Cicero? Our pedagogues stick them full feathered in our memories, and there establish them like oracles, of which the very letters and syllables are the substance of the thing. To know by rote is no knowledge, 'tis no more than only to retain what one has intrusted to his memory. That which a man rightly knows and understands he is the free disposer of at his own full liberty, without any regard to the author from whom he had it, or fumbling over the leaves of his book. A mere bookish learning is a poor stock to go upon: though it may serve for some kind of ornament, there is yet no foundation for any superstructure to be built upon it, according to the opinion of Plato, who says that constancy, faith, and sincerity, are the true philosophy; and the

What true philosophy is, according to Plato.

[1] Seneca, *Epist.* 33.

[2] Dante, *Inferno*, i. 93.

[3] Senec. *Epis.* 33.

[4] Clement. Alex. *Stromat.* ii.

other sciences, that are directed to other ends, are but cozenage. I could wish to know whether Le Paluel or Pompey, famous dancing-masters of my time, could have taught us to cut capers by only seeing them do it, without stirring from our places, as these men pretend to inform our understandings, without ever setting them to work; or whether we could learn to ride, handle a pike, touch a lute, or sing, without practice, as these attempt to make us judge and speak well, without exercising us in judging and speaking. Now while we are in our apprenticeship to learning, whatsoever presents itself before us is a book worth attending to. An arch trick of a page, a blunder of a servant, or a jest at table, are so many new subjects.

And for this very reason acquaintance with the world is of very great use, and travel into foreign countries of singular advantage; not to bring back (as most of our young Monsieurs do) an account only of how many paces Santa Rotonda[1] is in circuit; or of the richness of Signiora Livia's attire; or, as some others, how much Nero's face, in a statue in such an old ruin, is longer and broader than that made for him in such an old medal; but to be able to give an account of the humours, manners, customs, and laws of those nations where he has been. And, that we may whet and sharpen our wits, by rubbing them upon those of others, I would that a boy should be sent abroad very young and, in order to kill two birds with one stone, into those neighbouring nations whose language differs most from our own, and to which, if it be not formed betimes, the tongue will be grown too stiff to bend.

The utility of travelling young.

'Tis the general opinion of all, that children should not be brought up in their parents' lap. Their natural affection is apt to make the most discreet of them all so over-fond that they can neither find in their hearts to give them due correction for the faults they commit, nor suffer them to be brought up in those hardships and hazards they ought to be. They would not endure to see them return all dust and sweat from their exercise, to drink cold water when they are hot, or see them mount an unruly horse, or take a foil in hand against a rough fencer, or so much as to discharge a carbine. And yet there is no remedy; whoever will have a boy to be good for any thing when he comes to be a man, must by no means spare him when young, and must very often transgress the rules of physic:—

Fondness of parents pernicious to education.

> Vitamque sub dio, et trepidis agat
> In rebus.[2]
>
> "He must sharp cold and scorching heat despise,
> And most tempt danger where most danger lies."

It is not enough to fortify his soul, you are also to make his sinews strong; for the soul will be oppressed, if not assisted by the body, and would have too hard a task to discharge two offices alone. I know very well how much mine groans under the disadvantage of a body so tender and delicate that eternally leans and presses upon her; and often in my reading perceive that our masters, in their writings, make examples pass for magnanimity and fortitude of mind, which really have more to do with toughness of skin and hardness of bones.

I have seen men, women, and children, born of so hard and insensible a constitution of body that a sound cudgelling has been less to them than a flirt with a finger would have been to me, and that would neither cry out, nor wince at a good swinging beating; when wrestlers counterfeit the philosophers in patience, it is rather strength of nerves than stoutness of heart. Now to be inured to labour is to be able to endure pain. *Labor callum obducit dolori.*[3] "Labour supplies pain with a certain callosity that hardens it to the blow." A boy must be broken in by the pain and hardship of severe exercise, to inure him to the pain and hardship of dislocations, colics, cauteries, and even of imprisonment and the rack itself, for he may come, by misfortune, to be reduced to the worst of these, which (as this world goes) sometimes befal the good as well as the bad. As for proof, in our present civil war, whoever draws his sword against the laws threatens all honest men with the whip and the halter.

And, moreover, by living at home, the authority of this tutor, which ought to be sovereign over the boy he has received into his charge, is often checked, interrupted, and hindered by the presence of parents; to which may also be added, that the respect the whole family pay him, as their master's son, and the knowledge he has of the estate and greatness he is heir to, are, in my opinion, no small inconveniences at these tender years.

In one's converse with the world, I have often observed this vice, that instead of gathering observations from others, we make it our whole business to give them our own, and are more concerned how to expose and set out our own commodities than how to acquire new. Silence and modesty are very advantageous qualities in conversation, and one should therefore train up the boy to be sparing, and a good husband of what he knows, when once acquired; and to forbear taking exceptions at, or reproving every idle saying or ridiculous story, spoken or told in his presence; for it is a great rudeness to controvert every thing that is not agreeable to our own palate. Let him be satisfied with correcting himself, and not seem to condemn every thing in another he would not do himself, nor dispute against common customs. *Licet sapere sine pompâ, sine invidiâ.*[4] "Let him be wise

That a retired modesty is greatly desirable in youth.

[1] The Pantheon. [2] Horace, *Od.* ii. 3, 5. [3] Cicero, *Tusc. Quæs* ii. 14. [4] Seneca, *Epist.* 103.

without assumption, without envy." Let him avoid this pedagoguish and uncivil fashion, this childish ambition of coveting to appear something better and greater than other people, proving himself in reality something less; and as though finding fault were a proof of genius, seeking to found a special reputation thereon. For, as it becomes none but great poets to make use of the poetic license, so it is intolerable that any but men of great and illustrious souls should be privileged above the authority of custom. *Si quid Socrates et Aristippus contra morem et consuetudinem fecerunt; idem sibi ne arbitretur licere: magnis enim illi et divinis bonis hanc licentiam assequebantur.*[1] "If Socrates and Aristippus have transgressed the rules of custom, let him not imagine that he is licensed to do the same; for it was by great and sovereign virtues that they obtained this privilege." Let him be instructed not to engage in discourse, or dispute but with a champion worthy of him, and even there, not to make use of all the little subtleties that may serve his purpose; but only such as may best serve him upon that occasion. Let him be taught to be nice in the choice of his reasons, to see they are pertinent, and to affect brevity; above all, let him be lessoned to acquiesce and submit to truth as soon as ever he shall discover it, whether in his opponent's argument, or upon better consideration of his own; for he should never be preferred to the chair for a mere clatter of words and syllogisms, nor be engaged to any argument whatever, than as he shall in his own judgment approve it; nor be bound to that trade, where the liberty of recantation, and getting off upon better thoughts, are to be sold for ready money. *Neque, ut omnia quæ præscripta & imperata sint, defendat, necessitate ullâ cogitur.*[2] "Neither is there any necessity or obligation upon him at all, that he should defend all things that are recommended to and enjoined him."

If his tutor be of my humour, he will form his will to be a very good and loyal subject to his prince, very affectionate to his person, and very stout in his quarrel; but withal, he will cool in him the desire of having any other tie to his service than public duty; because, besides several other inconveniences, that are inconsistent with the liberty every honest man ought to have, a man's judgment being bribed and pre-possessed by these particular obligations and favours, is either blinded and less free to exercise its function, or shall be blemished either with ingratitude or indiscretion.

Dependance upon princes.

A man that is purely a courtier can neither have power nor wit to speak or think otherwise than favourably of a master, who, amongst so many thousands of other subjects, has picked out him with his own hand, to nourish and advance him. This favour, and the profit flowing from it, must needs, and not without some shew of reason, corrupt his freedom of speaking, and dazzle him. And we commonly see these people speak in another kind of phrase than is ordinarily spoken by the rest of the nation, and are not much to be believed in such matters.

Let conscience and virtue be eminently manifest in his speech, and have only reason for their guide. Make him understand that to acknowledge the error he shall discover in his own argument, though only found out by himself, is an effect of judgment and sincerity, which are the principal things he is to seek after. That obstinacy and contention are common qualities, most appearing in and best becoming a mean soul. That to recollect and correct himself, and to forsake a bad argument in the height and heat of dispute, are great and rare philosophical qualities. Let him be directed, being in company, to have his eye and ear in every corner of the room; for I find that the places of greatest honour are commonly possessed by men that have least in them, and that the greatest fortunes are not always accompanied with the ablest parts. I have been present, when, whilst they at the upper end of the table have been only commending the beauty of the Arras, or the flavour of the wine, many fine things have been lost or thrown away at the lower end of the table. Let him examine every man's talent; a peasant, a bricklayer, or any casual passenger, a man may learn something from every one of these in their several capacities, and something will be picked out of their discourse, whereof some use may be made at one time or another; nay, even the folly and weakness of others will contribute to his instruction. By observing the graces and manners of all he sees, he will create to himself an emulation of the good, and a contempt of the bad.

Sincerity to be cultivated.

He must be admonished when in company, to be attentive to every thing said or done.

Let an honest curiosity be planted in him to enquire after every thing, and whatever there is of singular and rare near the place where he shall reside, let him go and see it; a fine house, a fountain, an eminent man, the place where a battle was anciently fought, the passage of Cæsar or of Charlemaigne,

> Quæ Tellus sit lenta gelu, quæ putris ab æstu,
> Ventus in Italiam quis bene vela ferat.[3]
>
> "What lands are frozen, what are parched, explore,
> And what wind bears us to the Italian shore."

Let him enquire into the manners, revenues, and alliances of princes, things in themselves very pleasant to learn and very useful to know. In thus conversing with men, I mean, and principally, those who only live in the records of history; let him, by reading those books, converse with

History a profitable study.

[1] Cic. *de Offic.* i. 41. [2] Cicero, *Acad. Quæs.* iv. 3.

[3] Propertius, iv. 3. 39.

the great and heroic souls of better ages. It is an idle study, I confess, to those who choose to make it so, by doing it after a negligent manner; but to those also who choose to make it so, by care and observation, it is a study of inestimable fruit and value; and the only one, as Plato reports, the Lacedæmonians reserved to themselves.[1] What profit shall he not reap, as to the business of men, by reading the lives of Plutarch? But, withal, let my tutor remember to what end his instructions are principally directed, and that he do not so much imprint in his pupil's memory the date of the ruin of Carthage, as the manners of Hannibal and Scipio; nor so much where Marcellus died as why it was unworthy of his duty that he died there. Let him read history, not as an amusing narrative, but as a discipline of the judgment. 'Tis this study to which, in my opinion, of all others we apply ourselves with the most differing and uncertain measures. I have read an hundred things in Livy, that another has not, or not taken notice of, at least; and Plutarch has read a hundred more than ever I could find, or than peradventure the author ever writ. To some it is merely a grammar-study; to others, the very anatomy of philosophy, by which the most secret and abstruse parts of our human nature are penetrated into. There are in Plutarch many long discourses very worthy to be carefully read and observed, for he is, in my opinion, of all other, the greatest master in that kind of writing; but withal, there are a thousand others which he has only touched and glanced upon, where he only points with his finger to direct us which way we may go if we will, and contents himself sometimes with only giving one brisk hit in the nicest article of the question, whence we are to grope out the rest; as for example, where he says, "That the inhabitants of Asia came to be vassals to one only, for not having been able to pronounce one syllable, which is *no*."[2] Which saying of his gave perhaps matter and occasion to Boetius to write his "Voluntary Servitude."[3] Even this, but to see him pick out a light action in a man's life, or a word that does not seem to be of any such importance, is itself a whole discourse. It is a pity that men of understanding should so immoderately affect brevity; no doubt but their reputation is the better for it: but in the mean time we are the worse. Plutarch had rather we should applaud his judgment than commend his knowledge, and had rather leave us with an appetite to read more, than glutted with that we have already read. He knew very well that a man may say too much even upon the best subjects, and that Alexandrides did justly reproach him who made very elegant, but too long, speeches to the Ephori, when he said, "O stranger! thou speakest the things thou oughtest to speak, but not after the manner thou shouldest speak them."[4] Such as have lean and spare bodies stuff themselves out with clothes; so they who are defective in matter endeavour to make amends with words.

Human understanding is marvellously enlightened by daily conversation with men, for we are otherwise in ourselves stupid and dull, and have our sight limited to the length of our own noses. One asking Socrates of what country he was, he did not make answer, "Of Athens," but, "Of the world;"[5] having an imagination rich and expansive, he embraced the whole world for his country, and extended his society, his friendship, and his knowledge, to all mankind; not as we do, who look no farther than our feet. When the vines of our village are nipped with the frost, the parish-priest presently concludes that the indignation of God is gone out against all the human race, and that the cannibals have already got the pip. Who is it that, seeing these civil wars of ours, does not cry out, That the machine of the whole world is upsetting, and that the day of judgment is at hand! without considering that many worse things have been seen, and that, in the mean time, people are very merry in ten thousand other parts of the earth, notwithstanding. For my part, considering the licence and impunity that always attend such commotions, I wonder they are so moderate, and that there is no more mischief done. To him that feels the hail-stones patter about his ears, the whole hemisphere appears to be in storm and tempest; like the ridiculous Savoyard, who said very gravely, "That if that simple king of France had managed well he might in time have come to be steward of the household to the duke his master." The fellow could not, in his shallow imagination, conceive that there could be any thing greater than a Duke of Savoy. And, in truth, we are all of us insensibly in this error, an error of very pernicious consequence. But whoever shall represent to his fancy, as in a picture, that great image of our mother nature, pourtrayed in her full majesty and lustre; whoever in her face shall read so general and so constant a variety, whoever shall observe himself in that figure, and not himself but a whole kingdom, no bigger than the least touch of a pencil, in comparison of the whole, that man

Conversation with the world greatly assists the understanding.

[1] Plato, *Hippias Major*.

[2] Plutarch, in his Treatise *on False Shame*.

[3] This was Montaigne's friend, of whom I shall have occasion to say more elsewhere. His name was Stephen Boetius, and he composed that book of Voluntary Servitude, which is here mentioned by Montaigne, and of which we shall find him discoursing more particularly in the 27th chap. of this book, under the article of Friendship. One thing very surprising is that, in almost all the editions which I have consulted, instead of Boetius we read Bœotia, a country of Greece, and that in those which have short marginal lemmas of what is contained in the pages, we are told, upon account of this passage in Plutarch, that this country of Greece voluntarily submitted to slavery; a fatal accident, which care has been taken to point out in the margin, by these words, which are by no means equivocal. "The voluntary slavery of the Bœotians." Thus a very material confusion has arisen from a small error in typography.

[4] Id. *Apothegms*.

[5] Id. *On Banishment*. Cicero. *Tusc. Quæs.* v. 37.

alone is able to value things according to their true estimate and grandeur.

The world a mirror in which all should look.

This great world, which some do yet multiply as several species under one genus, is the mirror wherein we are to behold ourselves, to be able to know ourselves as we ought to do. In short, I would have this to be the book my young gentleman should study with the most attention; for so many humours, so many sects, so many judgments, opinions, laws, and customs, teach us to judge aright of our own, and inform our understanding to discover its imperfection and natural infirmity, which is no trivial lesson. So many mutations of states and kingdoms, and so many turns and revolutions of public fortune, will make us wise enough to make no great wonder of our own. So many great names, so many famous victories and conquests drowned and swallowed in oblivion, render our hopes ridiculous of eternizing our names by the taking of half a score light horse, or a paltry turret, which only derives its memory from its ruin. The pride and arrogance of so many foreign pomps and ceremonies, the inflated majesty of so many courts and grandeurs, accustom and fortify our sight, without winking, to behold and endure the lustre of our own. So many millions of men buried before us, encourage us not to fear to go seek such good company in the other world, and so of all the rest. Pythagoras was wont to say, that our life resembled the great and populous assembly of the Olympic Games: some exercise the body for glory, others carry merchandize to sell for profit; there are also some, and those none of the worst sort, who pursue no other advantage than only to look on, and to consider how and why every thing is done, and to be unactive spectators of the lives of other men, thereby the better to judge of and regulate their own.

As examples, all the instruction couched in philosophical discourses may be taken, to which all human actions, as to their best rule, ought to be especially directed: where a man shall be taught to know,

> Quid fas optare; quid asper
> Utile nummus habet; patriæ, carisque propinquis
> Quantum elargiri deceat; quem te Deus esse
> Jussit; et humanâ quâ parte locatus es in re.
> Quid sumus, aut quidnam victuri gignimur.[1]
>
> "Think what we are, and for what ends design'd;
> How we may best through life's long mazes wind;
> What we should wish for—how we may discern
> The bounds of wealth, and its true uses learn;
> How fix the portion which we ought to give
> To friends, relations, country—how to live
> As fits our station; and how best pursue
> What God has placed us in this world to do;"

what it is to know, and what to be ignorant, what ought to be the end and design of study; what valour, temperance, and justice are; the difference betwixt ambition and avarice, servitude and subjection; licentiousness and liberty; by what token a man may know true and solid content; how far death, pain, and disgrace are to be feared,

> Et quo quemque modo fugiatque feratque laborem.[2]
> "And what thou may'st avoid, and what must undergo."

By what secret springs we move, and the reason of our various irresolutions. For, methinks, the first doctrine with which one should season his understanding ought to be that which regulates his manners and his sense; that teaches him to know himself, and how both well to die and well to live. Amongst the liberal sciences, let us begin with that which makes us free;[4] not that they do not all serve, in some measure, to the instruction and use of life, as all other things, in some sort, also do; but let us make choice of that which directly and professedly serves to that end. If we were once able to restrain the offices of human life within their just and natural limits, we should find that most of the sciences in use are of no great use to us, and, even in those that are, that there are many very unnecessary cavities and dilatations which we had better let alone, and, following Socrates' direction, limit the course of our studies to those of real utility:[5]

> Sapere aude:
> Incipe. Vivendi recte qui prorogat horam,
> Rusticus expectat dum defluat amnis; at ille
> Labitur, et labetur in omne volubilis ævum.[6]
>
> "Dare to be wise; and now
> Begin: the man who has it in his power
> To practise virtue, and puts off the hour,
> Waits, like the clown, to see the brook run low
> Which onward flows, and will for ever flow."

'Tis a great foolery to teach our children

> Quid moveant Pisces, animosaque signa Leonis,
> Lotus, et Hesperiâ quid Capricornus aquâ.[7]
>
> "What influence Pisces and fierce Leo have,
> Or Capricornus in the Hesperian wave."

The knowledge of the stars and the motion of the eighth sphere before their own.

> Τί πλειάδεσσι κομοὶ
> Τί δ' ἀσρασιν βοώτεω.[8]
>
> "How swift the seven sisters' motions are,
> Or the dull churls how slow, what need I care."

Anaximenes, writing to Pythagoras, "To what purpose," said he, "should I trouble myself in searching out the secrets of the stars, having death or slavery continually before my eyes?" (For the kings of Persia were at that time preparing to invade his country.) Every one ought to say the same; "Being assailed, as I am, by ambition, avarice, temerity, and superstition, and having within so many other enemies of life, shall I go cudgel my brains about the world's revolutions?"[9]

After having taught our pupil what will

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[1] Persius, iii. 67.
[2] *Æneid*, iii. 459.
[3] Horace, *Epist.* i. 2. 40.
[4] Seneca, *Epist.* 88.
[5] Diogenes Laertius, in the Life of Socrates. *Socrates primus philosophium devocavit é cœlo et coegit de vita et moribus rebusque bonis et malis quærere.* "Socrates first called down philosophy from the heavens, and made life and manners and good and evil, the objects of its enquiry."—Cicero, *Tusc. Quæst* v. 4.
[6] Horace, *Epis* i. 2. 40.
[7] Propert. iv. 1. 85.
[8] Anac. xvii. 10.
[9] Laertius, *in vitâ.*

In what way the sciences should be taught.

make him more wise and good, you may then shew him the elements of logic, physic, geometry, and rhetoric; and the science which he shall then himself most incline to, his judgment being, beforehand, formed and fit to choose, he will quickly make his own. The way of instructing him ought to be, sometimes by discourse, and sometimes by reading; sometimes his governor shall put the author himself, which he shall think most proper for him, into his hands, and sometimes only the marrow and substance of it; and if the governor himself be not conversant enough in books to turn to all the fine discourses the book contains, there may some man of letters be joined to him, that, upon every occasion shall supply him with what he desires and stands in need of, to recommend to his pupil. And who can doubt but that this way of teaching is much more easy and natural than that of Gaza?[1] In which the precepts are so intricate, and so harsh, and the words so vain, empty, and insignificant, that there is no hold on them; nothing that quickens and elevates the wit and fancy; whereas, here the mind has what to feed upon and to digest. This fruit, therefore, is not only, without comparison, much finer, but will also be much more early ripe.

'Tis a thousand pities that matters should be at such a pass, in this age of ours, that philosophy, even with men of understanding, should be looked upon as a vain and fantastic name, a thing of no use, no value, either in opinion or effect; and I think 'tis these miserable ergotisms, by taking possession of the avenues unto it, are the cause. People are much to blame to represent it to children as a thing of so difficult access, and with such a frowning, grim, and formidable aspect. Who is it has disguised it thus with this false, pale, and hideous countenance? There is nothing more airy, more gay, more frolic, I had like to have said, more wanton. She preaches nothing but feasting and jollity; a melancholy, thoughtful, look shews that she does not inhabit there. Demetrius, the grammarian, finding in the Temple of Delphos, a knot of philosophers set chattering together, said to them, "Either I am much deceived, or, by your cheerful and pleasant countenance, you are engaged in no very deep discourse." To which one of them, Heracleon, the Megarean, replied, "'Tis for such as puzzle their brains about enquiring whether the future tense of the verb Βάλλω be spelt with a double λ, or that hunt after the derivation of the comparatives *χείριον*, *βέλτιον*, and the superlatives *Χείριστον*, *Βέλτιστον*, to knit their brows whilst discoursing of their science; but as to philosophical discourses they always amuse and cheer up those that treat of them, and never deject them, or make them sad."[2]

> Deprendas animi formenta latentis in ægro
> Corpore, deprendas et gaudia; sumit utrumque
> Inde habitum facies.[3]
>
> ——— "For still we find
> The face the unerring index of the mind,
> And as this feels or fancies joys or woes,
> That pales with anguish, or with rapture glows."

Philosophy soothes the body as well as the mind.

The soul that entertains philosophy ought, by its necessarily healthy condition, to render the body healthful too; she ought to make her tranquillity and satisfaction shine, so as to appear without, and her contentment ought to fashion the outward behaviour to her own mould, and consequently to fortify it with a graceful confidence, an active and joyous carriage, and a serene and contented countenance. The most certain sign of wisdom is a continual cheerfulness; her state is like that of things in the regions above the moon, always clear and serene. 'Tis

Cheerfulness a sign of wisdom.

Baroco and *Baralipton*[4] that render their disciples so dirty and ill-favoured, and not she; they do not so much as know her but by hearsay. 'Tis she that calms and appeases the storms and tempests of the soul, and who teaches famine and fevers to laugh and sing; and this not by certain imaginary epicycles, but by natural and manifest reasons. She has virtue for her end; which is not, as the schoolmen say, situate upon the summit of a steep, rugged, and inaccessible precipice. Such as have approached her find it, quite the contrary, to be seated in a fair, fruitful, and flourishing plain, whence she easily discovers all things below her; but to which any one may arrive if he know the way, through shady, green, and sweet-scented walks and avenues, by a pleasant, easy, and smooth descent, like that of the celestial arches. 'Tis for not having frequented this supreme, this beautiful, triumphant, and amiable, this equally delicious and courageous virtue, this so professed and implacable enemy to anxiety, sorrow, fear, and constraint, who, having nature for her guide, has fortune and pleasure for her companions, that they have gone according to their own weak imagination, and created this ridiculous, this sorrowful, querulous, despiteful, threatening, terrible image of it, and placed it upon a solitary rock amongst thorns and brambles, and made of it a hobgoblin to frighten people from daring to approach it.

[1] A literary man of the fifteenth century, born at Thessalonica, who took up his residence in Italy. He is the author of an indifferent Greek grammar, very obscure and complicated in its rules.

[2] Plutarch, *Of oracles that have ceased.*

[3] Juvenal, ix. 18.

[4] Two of the terms of ancient scholastic logic. The whole of the nineteen fictitious words which expressed the nineteen forms of syllogism were these:

> Barbara, celarent, darii, ferio, baralipton,
> Celantes, dabitis, fapesmo, frisesomorum,
> Cesare, camestre, festino, baroco, darapti,
> Felapton, disamis, datisi, bocardo, ferison.

But the tutor that I would have, knowing it to be his duty to possess his pupil with as much or more affection, than reverence, to virtue, will be able to inform him that the poets[1] have evermore accommodated themselves to the public humour, and make him sensible that the gods have planted far more toil in the avenues of the cabinets of Venus, than in those of Minerva. And when he shall once find him begin to apprehend he shall represent to him a Bradamante or an Angelica for a mistress;[2] a natural, active, generous, not masculine, but manly beauty, in comparison of soft, delicate, artificial, simpering, and affected charms; the one in the habit of an heroic youth with a glittering helmet on her brow; the other tricked up in curls and ribbons, like a silly minx; he will then judge his love to be brave and manly, if he finds him choose quite contrary to that effeminate shepherd of Phrygia.

Virtue ought to be represented to youth as a thousand times more amiable than vice.

Such a tutor will make a pupil to digest this new lesson, that the height and value of true virtue consists in the facility, utility, and pleasure of its exercise; so far from difficulty that boys as well as men, and the innocent as well as the subtle, may make it their own; and 'tis by order and good conduct, not by force, that it is to be acquired. Socrates, her first favourite, is so averse to all manner of violence as totally to throw it aside, to slip into the more natural facility of her own progress. 'Tis the nursing-mother of all human pleasures, who, in rendering them just, renders them also pure and permanent; in moderating them, keeps them in breath and appetite; in interdicting those which she herself refuses, whets our desire to those which she allows; and, like a kind and liberal mother, abundantly allows all that nature requires, even to satiety, if not to lassitude; unless we choose to say that the regimen that stops the toper's hand before he has drunk himself drunk, the glutton's before he has eaten to a surfeit, and the wencher's career before he needs a surgeon, is an enemy to pleasure. If the ordinary fortune fail her, she does without her, or frames another, wholly her own, not so fickle and unsteady. She can be rich, potent, and wise, and knows how to lie upon a soft and perfumed couch. She loves life, beauty, glory, and health; but her proper and peculiar office is to know how regularly to make use of all these good things, and how to part with them without concern; an office much more noble than troublesome, and without which the whole course of life is unnatural, turbulent, and deformed; and there it is indeed that men may justly represent those monsters upon rocks and precipices. If this pupil shall happen to be of so cross and contrary a disposition that he had rather hear an idle tale than the true narrative of some noble expedition or some wise and learned discourse; who at the beat of a drum, that excites the youthful ardour of his companions, leaves that to follow another that calls to a morrice-dance or the bears; and who would not wish nor find it more delightful to return all over dust victorious from a battle than from tennis or a ball, with the prize of those exercises; I see no other remedy[3] but that he be bound apprentice in some good town to learn to make minced-pies, though he were the son of a duke; according to Plato's precept, "That children are to be placed out in life not according to the condition of the father, but according to their own capacities."

Since philosophy is that which instructs us to live, and that infancy has there its lessons as well as other ages, why is it not communciated to children betimes?

Philosophy ought to be taught to children.

Udum et molle lutum est; nunc, nunc properandus, et acri
Fingendus sine fine rota.[4]

"The clay is moist and soft; now, now make haste,
And form the vessel, for the wheel turns fast."

They begin to teach us to live when we have almost done living A hundred students have got the pox before they have come to read Aristotle's Lecture on Temperance. Cicero said that, though he should live two men's ages, he should never find leisure to study the lyric poets; and I find the Sophists yet more deplorably unprofitable. The boy we would train has a great deal less time to spare; he owes but the first fifteen or sixteen years of his life to his tutor, the remainder is due to action: therefore let us employ that short time in necessary instruction. Away with your crabbed logical subtleties; they are abuses, things by which our lives can never be amended. Take me the plain discourses of philosophy, learn first how rightly to choose, and then rightly to apply them; they are more easy to be understood than one of Boccacio's novels; a child from nurse is much more capable of them than of learning to read or to write. Philosophy has discourses equally proper for childhood as for old age.

I am of Plutarch's mind, that Aristotle did not so much trouble his great disciple with the knack of forming syllogisms, or with the elements of geometry, as with infusing into him good precepts concerning valour, prowess, magnanimity, temperance, and the contempt of fear; and with this ammunition sent him, whilst yet a boy, with no more than 30,000 foot,

Aristotle's method of instructing Alexander the Great.

[1] Hesiod, Εργ. και ημ., 27. [2] Two heroines in Ariosto.
[3] In M. Naigeon's edition the passage stands thus: "That his tutor in good time strangle him, if he is without witnesses; or that he be put," &c. "This *remarkable* passage," observes M. Naigeon, "is not found in any edition of the Essays; but it is in the hand-writing of Montaigne, in the copy which he corrected. The remedy pointed out by this philosopher is one of those acts of rigour which the public interest or reasons of state sometimes command, and always justify." If this passage does not appear in any of the editions of Montaigne, it is doubtless because his enlightened mind recognised, upon reflection, the horrible abuses to which the introduction of such a *remedy* would lead.
[4] Persius, iii. 23.

4,000 horse, and but 42,000 crowns, to subjugate the empire of the whole earth. As for the other arts and sciences, Alexander, he says, highly indeed commended their excellence, and had them in very great honour and esteem, but was not ravished with them to that degree as to be tempted to affect the practice of them in his own person.

> —— Petite hinc, juvenesque senesque,
> Finem animo certum, miserisque viatica canis.[1]
>
> "Seek then, both old and young, from truths like these,
> That certain aim which life's last cares may ease."

Epicurus, in the beginning of his letter to Meniceus, says that neither the youngest should refuse to philosophise, nor the eldest grow weary of it.[2] And who does otherwise seems tacitly to imply that either the time of living happily is not yet come, or that it is already past. Yet, for all that, I would not have this pupil of ours imprisoned and made a slave to his book; nor would I have him given up to the morose and melancholic humour of a sour, ill-natured pedant. I would not have his spirit cowed and subdued by applying him to the rack and tormenting him, as some do, fourteen or fifteen hours a-day, and so make a pack-horse of him. Neither should I think it good when, by reason of a solitary and melancholy complexion, he is discovered to be too much addicted to his book, to nourish that humour in him, for that renders him unfit for civil conversation, and diverts him from better employments. And how many have I seen in my time totally brutified by an immoderate thirst after knowledge! Carneades was so besotted with it that he would not find time so much as to comb his head or pare his nails.[3] Neither would I have his generous temper spoiled and corrupted by the incivility and barbarity of that of another. French wisdom was anciently turned into a proverb, "Early, but of no continuance;" and in truth we yet see that nothing can be more ingenuous and pretty than the children of France; but they ordinarily deceive the hope and expectation that have been conceived of them, and, grown up to be men, have nothing extraordinary or worth taking notice of. I have heard men of good understanding say these colleges of ours, to which we send our young people (and of which we have but too many), make them such animals as they are.

But to our young friend, a closet, a garden, the table, his bed, solitude and company, morning and evening, all hours shall be the same, and all places to him a study; for philosophy, who, as the formatrix of judgment and manners, shall be his principal lesson, has that privilege to have a hand in everything. The orator Isocrates being at a feast intreated to speak of his art, all the company were satisfied with and commended his answer. "It is not now a time," said he, "to do what I can do; and that which it is now time to do I cannot do."[4] For to make orations and rhetorical disputes in a company met together to laugh and make good cheer had been very unseasonable and improper, and as much might be said of all the other sciences. But as to philosophy, that part of it at least that treats of man, and of his offices and duties, it has been the joint opinion of all wise men that, out of respect to the sweetness of her conversation, she is ever to be admitted in all sports and entertainments.[5] And Plato having invited her to his feast, we see after how gentle and obliging a manner, accommodated both to time and place, she entertained the company, though in a discourse of the sublimest and most salutary nature.

Philosophy, the formatrix of manners, is no where inactive.

> Æquè pauperibus prodest, locupletibus æquè,
> Et, neglecta, æquè pueris senibusque nocebit.[6]
>
> "It profits poor and rich alike; and when
> Neglected, t' old and young is hurtful then."

By which method of instruction, my young pupil will be much more and better employed than those of the college are. But as the steps we take in walking to and fro in a gallery, though three times as many, do not tire a man so much as those we employ in a formal journey; so our lesson, occurring as it were accidentally, without any set obligation of time or place, and falling naturally in with every action, will insinuate insensibly itself. Our very exercises and recreations, running, wrestling, music, dancing, hunting, riding, and fencing, will prove to be a good part of our study. I would have his outward behaviour and mien, and the disposition of his limbs, formed at the same time with his mind. It is not a soul, it is not a body, that we are training up; it is a man, and we ought not to divide him into two parts; and, as Plato says, we are not to fashion one without the other, but make them draw together like two horses harnessed to a coach.[7] By which saying of his, does he not seem to allow more time for, and to take more care of, exercises for the body, and to believe that the mind in a good proportion does her business at the same time too?

Severity an enemy to education.

As to the rest, this method of education ought to be carried on with a firm gentleness, quite contrary to the practice of our pedants, who, instead of tempting and alluring children to letters, present nothing before them but rods and ferules, horror and cruelty. Away with this violence! away with this compulsion! than which, I certainly believe nothing more dulls and degenerates a well-born nature. If

[1] Persius, v. 64
[2] Laertius, *in vitâ*.
[3] Laertius, *in vitâ*.
[4] Plutarch, *Table-Talk*.
[5] Plutarch, *Table-Talk*.
[6] Horace, *Epist.* i. 25.
[7] Plutarch, *on the Preservation of Health*.

you would have him fear shame and chastisement, do not harden him to them. Inure him to heat and cold, to wind and sun, and to dangers that he ought to despise. Wean him from all effeminacy in clothes and lodging, eating and drinking; accustom him to every thing, that he may not be a Sir Paris, a carpet-knight, but a sinewy, hardy, and vigorous young man. I have ever, from a child to the age wherein I now am, been of this opinion, and am still constant to it. But, amongst other things, the strict government of most of our colleges has always displeased me, and peradventure they might have erred less perniciously on the indulgent side. They are mere gaols, where imprisoned youths are taught to be debauched, by being punished for it before they are so. Do but come in when they are about their lesson, and you shall hear nothing but the outcries of boys under execution, and the thundering of pedagogues, drunk with fury. A very pretty way this to tempt these tender and timorous souls to love their book! leading them on with a furious countenance, and a rod in hand! a wretched and pernicious way! besides what Quintilian has very well observed, that this insolent authority is often attended by very dangerous consequences, and particularly our way of chastising.[1] How much more decent would it be to see their classes strewed with leaves and flowers, than with bloody stumps of birch! Were it left to my ordering, I should paint the school with pictures of joy and gladness, Flora and the graces, as the philosopher Speusippus did his;[2] that where their profit is they might there have their pleasure too. Such viands as are proper and wholesome for children should be seasoned with sugar, and such as are dangerous to them with gall. It is admirable to see how solicitous Plato is in his laws for the gaity and diversion of the youth of his city, and how he enlarges upon their races, sports, songs, leaps, and dances: of which he says that antiquity has given the ordering and patronage to the gods themselves, to Apollo, Minerva, and the Muses. He insists upon a thousand precepts for exercise; but as to the lettered sciences says very little, and only seems particularly to recommend poetry upon the account of music.

Singularity of manners to be avoided.

All singularity in our manners and condition should be avoided, as obnoxious to society. Who is not astonished at so strange a constitution as that of Demophoon, steward to Alexander the Great, who sweated in the shade, and shivered in the sun?[3] I have seen those who have run from the smell of an apple with greater precipitation than from a harquebuse shot; others are afraid of a mouse; others vomit at the sight of cream; others at seeing a bed shaken; and there was Germanicus, who could neither endure the sight nor the crowing of a cock.[4] There may, peradventure, be some occult cause for these aversions in these cases; but certainly, in my opinion, a man might conquer them, if he took them in time. Precept has in this wrought so effectually upon me, though not without some endeavour on my part, I confess, that, beer excepted, my appetite accommodates itself indifferently to all sorts of diet.

Young men should be habituated to all customs, so as to be able to comply with them to excess, if need be.

Young bodies are supple; one should therefore in that age bend and ply them to all fashions and customs: and, provided a man can restrain the appetite and the will within limits, let a young man be rendered fit for all nations and all companies, even to debauchery and excess, if occasion be; that is, where he shall do it out of complaisance to the customs of a place. Let him be able to do every thing, but love to do nothing but what is good. The philosophers themselves do not justify Calisthenes for forfeiting the favour of his master, Alexander the Great, by refusing to pledge him a cup of wine. Let him laugh, carouse, and debauch with his prince: nay, I would have him, even in his debauches, excel his companions in ability and vigour, so that he may not give over doing it either through defect of power or knowledge how to do it, but for want of will. *Multum interest, utrum peccare aliquis nolit, aut nesciat.*[5] "There is a vast difference betwixt forbearing to sin, and not knowing how to sin." I thought I passed a compliment upon a Lord, as free from these excesses as any man in France, by asking him, before a great deal of good company, how many times in his life he had got drunk in Germany, in the time of his being there about his majesty's affairs; which he also took as it was intended, and made answer, three times; and withal, told us the whole story of his bouts. I know some who, for want of this faculty, have been put to great inconvenience in negotiating with that nation. I have often with great admiration reflected upon the wonderful constitution of Alcibiades, who so easily could transform himself to so various fashions, without any prejudice to his health;[6] one while out-doing the Persian pomp and luxury, and another the Lacedæmonian austerity and frugality; as temperate in Sparta, as voluptuous in Ionia.

Omnis Aristippum decuit color, et status, et res.[7]

"Old Aristippus every dress became,
In every state and circumstance the same."[10]

I would have my pupil to be such a one,

1 *Instit. Orat.* i. 3.
2 Laertius, *in vitâ.*
3 Sextus Empiricus. *Pyrrh. Hypot.* i. 14.
4 Plutarch, *On Tastes and Distastes.*
5 Seneca. *Epist.* 90.
6 Plutarch, *in vitâ.*
7 Horace, *Epist.* i. 17. 23.

— Quem duplici panno patientia velat,
Mirabor, vitæ via si conversa decebit,
Personamque feret non inconcinnus utramque.[1]

"But that a man whom patience taught to wear
A coat that's patched, should ever learn to bear
A changed life with decency and grace,
May justly, I confess, our wonder raise."

These are my lessons, and he who puts them in practice shall reap more advantage than he who has had them read to him only, and only knows them. If you see him, you hear him; if you hear him, you see him. "The gods forbid," says one in Plato, "that to philosophise should be only to read a great many books, and to learn the arts."[2] *Hanc amplissimam omnium artium bene vivendi disciplinam, vita magis quam literis persequuti sunt.*[3] "They have more illustrated and improved this discipline of living well, which of all arts is the greatest, by their lives, than by their reading." Leo, prince of the Phliasians, asking Heraclides Ponticus of what art or science he made profession; "I know," said he, "neither art nor science, but I am a philosopher."[4] One reproaching Diogenes that, being ignorant, he should pretend to philosophy; "I, therefore," answered he, "pretend to it with so much the more reason."[5] Hegesias intreated that he would read a certain book to him. "You are an amusing person," said he, "you who choose those figs that are true and natural, and not those that are painted, why do you not also choose exercises which are natural and true, rather than those written?"[6]

The progress a young man makes ought to be judged of by his actions.

A man should not so much repeat his lesson as practise it: let him repeat it in his actions. We shall discover if there be in him prudence, by his undertakings; if goodness and justice, by his deportment; if grace and judgment, by his speaking; if firmness, by his sickness; if modesty, by his recreations; temperance, by his pleasures; order, by the management of his affairs; and indifference, by his palate, whether what he eats or drinks be flesh or fish, wine or water. *Qui disciplinam suam non ostentationem scientiæ, sed legem vitæ putet, quique obtemperet ipse sibi et decretis pareat.*[7] "Who considers his own discipline, not as a vain ostentation of science, but as a law and rule of life; and who obeys his own decrees, and observes that regimen he has prescribed to himself." The conduct of our lives is the true mirror of our doctrine. Zeuxidamus, to one who asked him why the Lacedæmonians did not commit their constitutions of chivalry to writing, and deliver them to their young men to read, made answer that it was because they would inure them to action and not to words.[8] With such a one compare, after fifteen or sixteen years' study, one of our college Latinists, who has thrown away so much time in nothing but learning to speak. The world is nothing but babble; and I never yet saw that man who did not rather prate too much than speak too little; and yet half of our lives is lost this way. We are kept four or five years to learn words only, and to tack them together into phrases; as many more to put larger masses of these into four or five parts; and other five years, at least, to learn succinctly to mix and interweave them after some subtle and intricate manner. Let us leave such work to those who make it their trade.

The story of two pedagogues going to Bourdeaux.

Going one day to Orleans, I met, in the plain, on this side Clery, two pedants travelling to Bourdeaux, about fifty paces distant from one another; and, a good way farther behind them, I saw a troop of horse with a gentleman at the head of them, the late Monsieur le Compte de la Rochefoucault. One of my people enquired of the foremost of these Domines who that gentleman was that came after him; he, not having seen the train that followed after, and thinking my man meant his companion, pleasantly answered, "He is not a gentleman; he is a grammarian, and I am a logician." Now we, on the contrary, who do not here seek to breed a grammarian or a logician, but a gentleman, let us leave them to their own fancy: our business lies elsewhere. Let but our pupil be well furnished with things, words will follow but too fast; he will pull them after him, if they do not come voluntarily. I have observed some to make excuses that they cannot express themselves, and pretend to have their fancies full of a great many very fine things, which yet, for want of eloquence, they cannot bring out; a mere shift and nothing else. Will you know what I think of it? I think they are nothing but shadows of some imperfect images and conceptions that they know not what to make of within, nor consequently how to bring out: they do not yet themselves understand what they would be at, and if you but observe how they haggle and stammer upon the point of parturition, you will soon conclude that their labour is not in delivery, but in conception, and that they are but licking their formless embryo. For my part I hold, and Socrates is positive in it, that whoever has in his mind a vivid and clear idea, will express it well enough in one way or other; and if he be dumb, by signs.

A youth of a good family ought to be more carefully instructed in the knowledge of things than of words.

[1] Horace, *Epist.* i. 25.
[2] In the *Rivals*.
[3] Cicero, *Tusc. Quæs.* iv. 3.
[4] It was not Heraclides, but Pythagoras, who returned this answer to Leo; but it is from a book of Heraclides, a disciple of Plato, that Cicero quotes this passage, in his *Tusc. Quæst.* v. 3. Plato was not born till above one hundred years after Pythagoras.
[5] Laertius, *in vitâ*.
[6] Id. *ib.*
[7] Cicero, *Tusc. Quæs.* ii. 4.
[8] Plutarch, *Apothegms.*

Verbaque prævisam rem non invita sequentur.[1]

"When once a thing conceiv'd is in the wit,
Words soon present themselves to utter it."

And as another, as poetically, says in prose, *Cum res animum occupavere, verba ambiunt*,[2] "When things are once formed in the fancy, words offer themselves." And this other, *Ipsæ res verba rapiunt*.[3] "The things themselves force words to express them." He knows nothing of ablative, conjunctive, substantive, or grammar, no more than his lacquey or a fish-wife of the Petit-Pont; and these yet will give you your fill of talk, if you will hear them, and, peradventure, shall trip as little in their language as the best masters of art in France. He knows no rhetoric, nor how, in a preface, to bribe the benevolence of the courteous reader; neither does he care, nor is it very necessary he should know it. Indeed all this fine sort of painting is easily obscured by the lustre of a simple truth; these fine ingenious flourishes serve only to amuse the vulgar, of themselves incapable of more solid and nutritive diet, as Aper does very evidently demonstrate in Tacitus.[4] The ambassadors of Samos, prepared with a long elegant oration, came to Cleomenes, King of Sparta, to incite him to the war against the tyrant Polycrates; he, after he had heard their harangue with great gravity and patience, gave them this short answer: "As to the exordium, I remember it not, nor consequently the middle of your speech, and as to your conclusion, I will not do what you desire."[5] A very pretty answer this, methinks, and a pack of learned orators no doubt finely gravelled! And what did this other say? The Athenians were to choose one of two architects for a great building they designed; the first, a pert affected fellow, offered his service in a long premeditated discourse upon the subject, and by his oratory inclined the voices of the people in his favour; but the other had his say in three words, "Lords of Athens, what this man hath said, I will do."[6] When Cicero was in the height and heat of his eloquence, many were struck with admiration; but Cato did only laugh at it, saying, "We have a pleasant Consul."[7] Let it go before, or come after, a good sentence, a thing well said is always in season; if it neither suit well with what went before, nor has any very close coherence with what follows after, it is good in itself. I am none of those who think that good rhyme makes a good poem. Let the writer make short long, and long short, if he will, 'tis no great matter; if there be invention, and that the wit and judgment have well performed their office, I will say, here's a good poet, but an ill rhymer.

Emunctæ naris, durus componere versus.[8]

"He rallied with a gay and easy air,
But rude his numbers, and his style severe."

Let a man, says Horace, divest his work of all measures:

Tempora certa modosque et quod prius ordine verbum est,
Posterius facias, præponens ultima primis * * *
Invenias etiam disjecti membra poetæ.[9]

"Let tense and mood, and words be all misplaced,
Those last that should be first, those first the last;
Though all things be thus shuffled out of frame,
You'll find the poet's fragments not to blame."

He will never the more forfeit his praise; the pieces will be fine by themselves. Menander's answer had this meaning, who, being reproved by a friend, the time drawing on at which he had promised a comedy, that he had not yet put his hand to it, "It is ready," said he, "all but the verses."[10] Having contrived the subject, and disposed the scenes in his head, he took little care for the rest. Since Ronsard and Du Bellay have given reputation to our French poetry, every little dabbler swells his words as high, and makes his cadences very near as harmonious, as they. *Plus sonat, quam valet*.[11] "More sound than sense." There were never so many poetasters as now; but though they find it no hard matter to rhyme nearly as well as their masters, they yet fall altogether short of the rich descriptions of the one, and the delicate invention of the other.

Invention the great test of true poetry.

But what will become of our young gentleman if he be attacked with the sophistic subtilty of some syllogism? "A Westphalia ham makes a man drink, drink quenches thirst, therefore a Westphalia ham quenches thirst." Why, let him laugh at it, and it will be more discretion to do so than to go about to answer it,[12] or let him borrow this pleasant evasion from Aristippus; why should I trouble myself to untie that which, bound as it is, gives me so much trouble? A person offering at this dialectic juggling against Cleanthes, Chrysippus took him short, saying, "Reserve these baubles to play with children, and do not by such fooleries divert the serious thoughts of a man of years."[13] If these ridiculous subtleties

Sophistical subtleties condemned.

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[1] Horace, *de Arte Poet.* 311.

[2] Seneca, *Controv.* iii.

[3] Cicero, *de Finib.* iii 5.

[4] *De causis corruptæ eloquentiæ.*

[5] Plutarch, *Apothegms.*

[6] Plutarch, *Instructions to those who manage state affairs*

[7] Montaigne gives too general a latitude to Cato's reflections, though, perhaps, he did so for the purpose. Cato did not ridicule Cicero's eloquence in the general, but only his abuse of it while he was consul. When he was pleading one day for Murena against Cato, he fell to ridiculing the gravest principles of the stoic philosophy in too comic a manner, and, consequently, not becoming the august station he then was in. This is what drew Cato's answer above mentioned, which was more stinging than all the invectives which Cicero had so lately cast at this great man, who was much more a stoic by his manners than by his discourses. Plutarch, *Life of Cato.*

[8] Horace. *Sat.* i. 4-8.

[9] *Id. Ib* 58.

[10] Plutarch, *Whether the Athenians were more eminent in arms than in letters.*

[11] Seneca, *Epist.* 4.

[12] Seneca, *Epist.* 49.

[13] Laertius, *in vitâ.*

contorta et aculeata sophismata,[1] "Perplexed and crabbed sophisms," are designed to possess him with an untruth, they are then dangerous; but if they remain without effect and only make him laugh, I do not see why a man need to be fortified against them. There are some so ridiculous as to go a mile out of their way to hook in a fine word. *Aut qui non verba rebus aptant, sed res extrinsecas arcessunt, quibus verba conveniant*.[2] "Who do not fit words to the subject, but seek out things quite from the purpose to fit those words they are so enamoured of." And, as another says, *Qui alicujus verbi decore placentis, vocentur ad id quod non proposuerant scribere*.[3] "Who, by their fondness of some fine sounding word, are tempted to something they had no intention to treat of." I, for my part, rather bring in a fine sentence by head and shoulders to fit my purpose than divert my designs to hunt after a sentence. 'Tis for words to serve and to follow us; and let Gascon come in play where French will not do.[4] I would have things so possess the imagination of him that hears that he should have something else to do than to think of words. The way of speaking that I love is natural and plain, as well in writing as speaking, and a sinewy and significant way of expressing one's self, short and pithy, and not so elegant and artificial as prompt and vehement.

Hæc demum sapiet dictio, quæ feriet.[5]

"The language which strikes the mind will please it."

Rather hard than harsh, free from affectation; irregular, incontinuous, and bold, where every piece makes up an entire body: not like a pedant, a preacher, or a pleader, but rather a soldier-like style, as Suetonius calls that of Julius Cæsar; and yet I see no reason why he should call it so.[6]

I have been ready enough to imitate the negligent garb which is observable among the young men of our time, to wear my cloak on one shoulder, my bonnet on one side, and one stocking in something more disorder than the other, which seems to express a kind of manly disdain of those exotic ornaments, and a contempt of art; but I find that negligence of even greater use in the form of speaking. All affectation, particularly in the French gaiety and freedom, is ungraceful in a courtier, and in a monarchy every gentleman ought to be fashioned according to the court model; for which reason an easy and natural negligence does well. I like not a piece of stuff where the knots and seams are to be seen, and as little do I like, in a fine proportioned man, to be able to tell all the bones and veins. *Quæ veritati operam dat oratio, incomposita sit, et simplex. * * * Quis accuratè loquitur, nisi qui vult putidè loqui?* * * * "Let the language that is dedicated to truth be plain and unaffected. For who studies to speak quaintly and accurately that does not, at the same time, design to perplex his auditory?" That eloquence prejudices the subject it would advance which wholly attracts us to itself. And as, in our outward habit, 'tis a ridiculous effeminacy to distinguish ourselves by a particular and unpractised garb or fashion; so, in language, to study new phrases, and to affect words that are not of current use, proceeds from a childish and scholastic ambition. As for me, may I never use any other language than what is understood in the markets of Paris! Aristophanes, the grammarian, was quite out, when he reprehended Epicurus for this plain way of delivering himself, and that the end and design of his oratory was only perspicuity of speech.[8] The imitation of words, by its own facility, immediately disperses itself through a whole people. But the imitation of invention and judgment in applying those words is of a slower progress. The generality of readers, when they find a like robe, very mistakingly imagine they have the same body inside it, but force and sinews are not to be borrowed, though the attire may. Most of those I converse with speak the same language I here write; but whether they think the same thoughts I cannot say. The Athenians, says Plato, study length and elegance of speaking; the Lacedæmonians affect brevity; and those of Crete aim more at fecundity of conception than fertility of speech, and these are the best.[9] Zenon used to say that he had two sorts of disciples, one that he called φιλολόγους, curious to learn things, and these were his favourites; the other, λογοφίλους, that cared for nothing but words.[10] Not but that proper speaking is a very good and commendable quality; but 'tis not so excellent and so necessary as some would make it; and I am scandalized that our whole life should be spent in nothing else. I would first understand my own language and that of my neighbours, with whom most of my business and conversation lies.

Affectation unbecoming a courtier.

No doubt but Greek and Latin are very great ornaments and of great use, but we buy them too dear. I will here mention one way which also has been experimented in my own person, by which they are

The mode in which Montaigne learned Latin;

[1] Cicero, *Acad.* ii. 24.
[2] Quintilian, viii. 3.
[3] Seneca, *Epist.* 59
[4] Rousseau also says, somewhere. "Toutes les fois qu'à l'aide d'un solécisme je pourrai me faire mieux entendre, ne pensez pas que j'hesite" He made himself, however, very well understood without the help of any solecisms, and his declaration, therefore, seems unnecessary; but it shews, at least, that he was as little a slave to purism as our Gascon.
[5] Lucan, *apud* Fabricius, *Bibliot. Lat.* ii. 16
[6] The expression is in Suetonius's *Life of Cæsar*, near the beginning. Montaigne, however, was misled by the common edition, which reads, "Eloquentia militari; qua re aut æquavit." &c.; whereas the later and better editions run thus, "Eloquentia, militarique re, aut æquavit," which removes Montaigne's objection to the passage.
[7] Seneca, *Epist.* 40, 75.
[8] Laertius, *Life of Epicurus.*
[9] *Laws*, I.
[10] Stobæus, *Serm.* 34.

to be had cheaper than in the usual mode, and such may make use of it as will. My late father having made the most precise enquiry that any man can possibly make amongst men of the greatest learning and judgment, of an exact method of education, was by them cautioned of the inconvenience then in use, and informed that the tedious time we applied to the learning of the languages of those people who, themselves, had them for nothing, was the sole cause we could not arrive to the grandeur of soul and perfection of knowledge of the ancient Greeks and Romans: I do not, however, believe that to be the only cause; the expedient my father, however, found out for this was that, in my infancy, and before I began to speak, he committed me to the care of a German (who since died a famous physician in France), totally ignorant of our language, but very fluent and a great critic in Latin. This man, whom he had sent for out of his own country, and whom he entertained, at a very great salary, for this only end, had me continually with him. To whom there were also joined two others of the same nation, but of inferior learning, to attend me, and sometimes to relieve him; who all of them conversed with me in no other language but Latin. As to the rest of his family, it was an inviolable rule that neither himself, nor my mother, nor man, nor maid, should speak any thing, in my company, but such Latin words as every one had learnt to gabble with me. It is not to be imagined how great an advantage this proved to the whole family; my father and my mother, by this means, learning Latin enough to understand it perfectly well, and to speak it to such a degree as was sufficient for any necessary use; as also those of the servants did who were most frequently with me. To be short, we did *Latin* it at such a rate that it overflowed to all the neighbouring villages, where there yet remain, and have established themselves by custom, several Latin appellations of artizans and their tools. As for myself, I was above six years of age before I understood either French or Perigordin any more than Arabic, and without art, book, grammar, or precept, whipping, or the expense of a tear, had by that time learned to speak as pure Latin as my master himself. If, for example, they were to give me a theme after the College fashion, they gave it to others in French, but to me they gave it in the worst Latin, to turn it into that which was pure and good; and Nicholas Grouchy, who wrote a book *de Comitiis Romanorum;* William Guerente, who has written a Commentary upon Aristotle; George Buchanan, that great Scotch Poet, and Marc Antony Muret, whom both France and Italy have acknowledged for the best orator of his time, my domestic tutors, have all of them often told me that I had in my infancy that language so very fluent and ready that they were afraid to enter into discourse with me. Buchanan, whom I since saw attending the late Mareschal de Brissac, then told me that he was about to write a Treatise of Education, the example of which he intended to take from mine, for he was then tutor to that Count de Brissac, who afterwards proved so valiant and so brave a gentleman.

As to Greek, of which I have but little smattering, my father also designed to have taught it me by art, but in a new way, and as a sort of sport; tossing out declensions to and fro, after the manner of those who, by certain games, at tables and chess, learn geometry and arithmetic; for he, amongst other rules, had been advised to make me relish science and duty by an unforced will, and of my own voluntary motion, and to educate my soul in all liberty and delight, without any severity or constraint. Which he was an observer of to such a degree, even of superstition, that some being of opinion it troubles and disturbs the brains of children suddenly to wake them in the morning, and to snatch them violently and over-hastily from sleep (wherein they are much more profoundly involved than we), he only caused me to be waked by the sound of some musical instrument, and was never unprovided of a musician for that purpose. By which example you may judge of the rest, this alone being sufficient to recommend both the prudence and affection of so good a father; who, therefore, is not to be blamed if he did not reap the fruits answerable to so excellent a culture. Of which, two things were the cause: first, a sterile and improper soil; for though I was of a strong and healthful constitution, and of a disposition tolerably gentle and tractable, yet I was, withal, so heavy, idle, and sluggish, that they could not rouse me even to any exercise of recreation, nor get me out to play. What I saw, I saw clear enough, and under this lazy complexion, nourished a bold imagination, and opinions above my age. I had a slothful wit, that would go no faster than it was led, a slow understanding, a languishing invention, and, above all, an incredible defect of memory; so that it is no wonder if, from all these, nothing considerable could be extracted. Secondly, like those who, impatient of a long and steady cure, submit to all sorts of prescriptions and receipts, the good man being extremely timorous of any way *failing* in a thing he had so wholly set his heart upon, suffered himself, at last, to be over-ruled by the common opinion, which always follows the lead of what has gone on before, like cranes; and falling in with the method of the time, having no longer about him those persons he had brought out of Italy, and who had given him his first models of education about him, he sent me, at six years of age, to the College of Guienne, at that time the best and most flourishing in France. And there it was not possible to add anything to the care he had to provide me the most able tutors, with all other circumstances of education, reserving also several particular rules contrary

and Greek.

to the College practice; but so it was that, with all these precautions, it was a College still. My Latin immediately grew corrupt, and, by discontinuance, I have since lost all manner of use of it; and so this new plan of education served me to no other end than only, at my first coming, to prefer me to the first forms: for at thirteen years old, that I left the College, I had gone through my whole course, as they call it, and, in truth, without any manner of improvement, that I can honestly brag of, in all this time.

Montaigne's first taste for reading.

The first thing that gave me any taste of books was the pleasure I took in reading the fables of Ovid's Metamorphoses; and with them I was so taken that, being but seven or eight years old, I would steal from all other diversions to read them, both by reason that this was my own natural language, the easiest book that I was acquainted with, and for the subject the most accommodated to the capacity of my age: for as for Lancelot du Lake, Amadis de Gaul, Huon of Bourdeaux, and such trumpery, which children are most delighted with, I had never so much as heard their names, no more than I yet know what they contain; so exact was the discipline wherein I was brought up. This made me think the less of the other lessons prescribed me; and here it was infinitely to my advantage to have to do with an understanding tutor, who was wise enough to connive at this and other truantries of the same nature; for by this means I ran through Virgil's Æneids, and then Terence, and then Plautus, and some Italian comedies, allured by the pleasure of the subject; whereas had he been so foolish as to have taken me off this diversion, I do really believe I had brought nothing away from the college but a hatred of books, as almost all our young gentlemen do. But he carried himself very discreetly in that business, seeming to take no notice, and heightened my appetite by allowing me only such time for this reading as I could steal from my regular studies. For the chief things my father expected from them to whom he had delivered me for education was affability of manners and good humour; and, to say the truth, my temper had no other vice but sloth and want of mettle. The fear was not that I should do ill, but that I should do nothing. Nobody suspected that I should be wicked, but most thought I should be useless; they foresaw idleness, but no malice in my nature; and I find it falls out accordingly. The complaints I hear of myself are these: "He is idle, cold in the offices of friendship and relationship, and remiss in those of the public: he is too particular, he is too proud." The most injurious do not say, "Why has he taken such a thing?—why has he not paid such a one?" But "Why does he part with nothing? Why does he not give?" And I should take it for a favour that men would expect from me no greater effects of supererogation than these. But they are unjust to exact from me what I do not owe far more rigorously than they exact from others that which they do owe; and in condemning me to it they efface the gratification of the act, and deprive me of the gratitude that would be due to me upon such a bounty; whereas the active benefit ought to be of so much the greater value from my hands, by how much I am not passive that way at all. I can the more freely dispose of my fortune the more it is mine, and of myself the more I am my own. Nevertheless if I were good at setting out my own actions, I could peradventure very well repel these reproaches, and could give some to understand that they are not so much offended that I do not enough, as that I am able to do a great deal more than I do.

Yet for all this heavy disposition of mine, my mind, when retired into itself, was not altogether idle nor wholly deprived of solid inquiry nor of certain and clear judgments about those objects it could comprehend, and could also without any helps digest them; but, amongst other things, I do really believe it had been totally impossible to have made it to submit by violence and force. Shall I here acquaint you with one faculty of my youth? I had great boldness and assurance of countenance, and to that a flexibility of voice and gesture to any part I undertook to act; for before

> Alter ab undecimo tum me vix ceperat annus,[1]
> "I had hardly entered on my twelfth year,"

I played the chief parts in the Latin tragedies of Buchanan, Guerente, and Muret, that were acted in our college of Guienne with very great form; wherein Andreas Goveanus, our principal, as in all other parts of his undertaking, was, without comparison, the best of that employment in France, and I was looked upon as one of his chief actors. 'Tis an exercise that I do not disapprove in young people of condition, and I have since seen our princes, after the example of the ancients, perform such parts in person well and commendably; and it was moreover allowed to persons of the greatest quality to profess and make a trade of it in Greece. *Aristoni tragico actori rem aperet: huic et genus et fortuna honesta erant; nec ars, quia nihil tale apud Græcos pudori est, ea deformabat.*[2] "He imparted this affair to Aristo the tragedian, a man of a good family and fortune, which nevertheless did neither of them receive any blemish by that profession, nothing of that kind being reputed a disparagement in Greece." I have always taxed those with impertinence who condemn these entertainments, and those, with injustice, who refuse to admit such comedians as are worth seeing into our towns, and grudge the people that public diversion. A sensible plan of government takes care to assemble its citizens not only to the solemn duties of devotion, but also to

[1] Virgil, *Eclog.* viii. 39.

[2] Livy, i. 24.

sports and spectacles. They find society and friendship augmented by it; and besides, can there possibly be afforded a more orderly diversion than what is performed in the sight of every one, and very often in the presence of the supreme magistrate himself? I, for my part, think it desirable that the prince should sometimes gratify his people at his own expense, with paternal kindness as it were, and that in great and popular cities there should be theatres erected for such entertainments, if but to divert them from worse and more private actions.

To return to my subject: there is nothing like alluring the appetite and affection, otherwise you make nothing but so many asses laden with books, and by virtue of the lash give them their pocket full of learning to keep; whereas, to do well, you should not only lodge it with them, but make them espouse it.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THAT IT IS FOLLY TO MEASURE TRUTH AND ERROR BY OUR OWN CAPACITY.

'Tis not perhaps without reason that we attribute facility of belief and easiness of persuasion to simplicity and ignorance, for I have heard belief compared to an impression stamped upon the soul, which, by how much softer and of less resistance it is, is the more easily imposed. *Ut necesse est lancem in librâ, ponderibus impositis, deprimi, sic animum perspicuis cedere.*[1] "As the scale of the balance must give way to the weight that presses it down, so the mind must of necessity yield to demonstration." By how much the soul is more empty and without counterpoise, with so much greater facility it yields under the weight of the first persuasion. This is the reason that children, the common people, women, and sick folks, are most apt to be led by the ears. But then, on the other hand, 'tis a very great presumption to slight and condemn all things for false that do not appear to us likely to be true; which is the ordinary vice of such as fancy themselves wiser than their neighbours. I was myself once one of these; and if I heard talk of dead folks walking, of prophecies, enchantments, witchcrafts, or any other story, I had no mind to believe,

> Somnia, terrores magicos, miracula sagas,
> Nocturnos lemures, portentaque Thessala.[2]
>
> "Can you in earnest laugh at all the schemes
> Of magic terrors, visionary dreams,
> Portentous prodigies, and imps of hell,
> The nightly goblins and enchanting spell?"

I presently pitied the poor people that were abused by these follies; whereas I now find that I myself was to be pitied as much at least as they; not that experience has taught me anything to supersede my former opinion, though my curiosity has endeavoured that way; but reason has instructed me that thus resolutely to condemn anything for false and impossible is to circumscribe and limit the will of God and the power of nature within the bounds of my own capacity, than which no folly can be greater. If we give the names of monster and miracle to everything our reason cannot comprehend, how many such are continually presented before our eyes! Let us but consider through what clouds, and as it were groping through what darkness, our teachers lead us to the knowledge of most of the things we apply our studies to, and we shall find that it is rather custom than knowledge that takes away the wonder, and renders them easy and familiar to us.

> —— Jam nemo, fessus saturusque videndi,
> Suspicere in cœli dignatur lucida templa.[3]
>
> "Already glutted with the sight, now none
> Heaven's lucid temples deigns to look upon."

And that if those things were now newly presented to us we should think them as strange and incredible, if not more so, than any others.

> —— Si nunc primum mortalibus adsint
> Ex improviso, ceu sint objecta repentè,
> Nil magis his rebus poterat mirabile dici,
> Aut minus ante quod auderent fore credere gentes.[4]
>
> "Were those things suddenly and by surprise
> Just now presented, new to mortal eyes,
> At nothing could they be astonish'd more,
> Nor could have formed a thought of them before."

He that had never seen a river imagined the first he met with to be the sea; and the greatest things that have fallen within our knowledge we conclude the extremes that nature makes of the kind.

> Scilicet, et fluvius qui non est maximus, ei est
> Qui non ante aliquem majorem vidit; et ingens
> Arbor, homoque videtur; et omnia de genere omni
> Maxima quæ vidit quisque, hæc ingentia fingit.[5]
>
> "A little river unto him does seem,
> That bigger never saw, a mighty stream:
> A tree, a man, all things seem to his view
> O' th' kind the greatest that ne'er greater knew."

Consuetudine oculorum, assuescunt animi, neque admirantur, neque requirunt rationes earum rerum quas semper vident.[6] "Things grow familiar to men's minds by being often seen; so that they neither admire nor are inquisitive into things they daily see." The novelty, rather than the greatness, of things tempts us to inquire into their causes. But we are to judge with more reverence, and with greater acknowledgment of our own ignorance and infirmity, of the infinite power of nature. How many unlikely things are there testified by people of very good repute, which if we cannot persuade ourselves absolutely to believe, we ought at least to leave them in suspense! For to condemn them as impossible is by a

[1] Cicero. *Acad. Quæs.* iv. ii. 12.
[2] Horace. *Epist.* ii. 2, 208.
[3] Lucretius, ii. 1037. The text has *suliate videndi.*
[4] Lucretius, ii. 1034.
[5] Id. vi. 674.
[6] Cicero, *de Naturâ Deor.* ii. 38.

temerarious presumption to pretend to know the utmost bounds of possibility. Did we rightly understand the difference betwixt the impossible and the unusual, and what is contrary to the order and course of nature and against the common opinion of men, in not believing rashly, and on the other hand in being not too incredulous, we should then observe the rule of *Ne quid nimis*, enjoined by Chilo.[1] When we find in Froissard that the Count de Foix knew in Bearn the defeat of John King of Castile at Juberoth the next day after, and the means by which he tells us he came to do so, we may be allowed to be a little merry at it, as also at what our annals report, that Pope Honorius, the same day that King Philip Augustus died at Mante, performed his public obsequies at Rome, and commanded the like throughout Italy; the testimony of these authors not being perhaps of authority enough to restrain us. But if Plutarch, besides several examples that he produces out of antiquity, tells us, of his certain knowledge, that in the time of Domitian the news of the battle lost by Antony in Germany was published at Rome many days' journey thence[2] and dispersed throughout the whole world the same day it was fought: and if Cæsar was of opinion that it has often happened that the report has preceded the event, shall we say that, forsooth, these simple people have suffered themselves to be deceived with the vulgar, not having been so clear-sighted as we? Is there anything more delicate, more clear, more sprightly than Pliny's judgment, when he is pleased to set it to work?—anything more remote from vanity? Setting aside his great learning, of which I make less account, in which of these two do any of us excel him? Yet there is no schoolboy that does not convict him of lying, and that pretends not to instruct him in the progress of the works of nature.

When we read in Bouchet the miracles of St. Hilary's relics, never heed them; his authority is not sufficient to take from us the liberty of contradicting him: but generally to condemn in a lump all such stories seems to me a singular impudence. The great St. Augustine tells us he himself saw a blind child recover sight upon the relic of St. Gervaise and St. Protasius at Milan;[3] a woman at Carthage cured of a cancer by the sign of the cross made upon her by a woman newly baptized; Hesperius, a familiar friend of his, to drive away the spirits that haunted his house with a little earth of the sepulchre of our Lord;[4] and this earth being transported thence into the church, a paralytic to have there been suddenly cured by it; a woman in a procession, having touched St. Stephen's shrine with a nosegay, and after rubbing her eyes with it to have recovered her sight lost many years before; with several other miracles, of which he professes himself to have been an eye-witness. Of what shall we accuse him and the two holy bishops Aurelius and Maximinus, both of whom he attests to the truth of these things? Shall it be of ignorance, simplicity, and facility, or of knavery or imposture? Is any man now living so impudent as to think himself comparable to them either in virtue, piety, learning, judgment, or capacity? *Qui ut rationem nullam afferrent, ipsa auctoritate me frangerent?*[5] "Who, though they should give me no reason for what they affirm, would yet convince me with their authority?" 'Tis a presumption of great danger and consequence, besides the absurd temerity it draws after it, to contemn what we do not comprehend. For after that, according to your fine understanding, you have established the limits of truth and error, and that afterwards there appears a necessity upon you of believing stranger things than those you have contradicted, you are already obliged to quit your hold and to acquiesce. That which seems to me so much to disorder our consciences, in the commotions we are now in concerning religion, is the Catholics dispensing so much with their belief. They fancy they appear moderate and wise when they give up to the Huguenots some of the articles in question; but besides that they do not discern what advantage it is to those with whom we contend for us to begin to give ground and to retire, and how much this animates the enemy to follow up his blow, the articles which they select as the most indifferent are sometimes of very great importance. We are either wholly and absolutely to submit ourselves to the authority of our ecclesiastical polity, or totally throw off all obedience to it; 'tis not for us to determine what and how much obedience we owe to it. And this I can say, having myself made trial of it, and having formerly taken the liberty of my own swing and fancy, and neglected certain of the observations of our church which seemed to me vain and unmeaning, that, coming afterwards to discourse the matter with learned men, I have found those very things to be built upon very good and solid foundation; and that

[1] Μηδὲν ἄγαν, Aristotle in his *Rhetoric*, and Pliny (*Nat. Hist.*, vii. 32), ascribe this maxim to Chilo, as does Diogenes Laertius in the *Life of Thales*; but he afterwards ascribes it to Solon in his Life of Solon. It has been also attributed to others. See Menage's Observations on Diogenes Laertius in the Life of Thales.

[2] Above 840 leagues, says Plutarch, in his *Life of Paulus Æmilius*, but the real distance is only 250 leagues.

[3] *De Civit. Dei*, xxii. 8.

[4] St. Austin, however, does not ascribe this expulsion of the evil spirits to that small quantity of the earth of our Lord's sepulchre which Hesperius had in his house; for, according to St. Austin, one of his priests having, at the entreaty of Hesperius, repaired to his house and offered the sacrifice of the body of Christ, and having prayed earnestly to God to put a stop to this disturbance, God did so at the very instant. As to the earth taken from the holy sepulchre, Hesperius kept it suspended in his own bedchamber, to secure him from the insults of the devils, who had been very mischievous to his slaves and cattle; for though he was protected against the evil spirits of the earth, yet this influence did not extend to the rest of his family.

[5] Cicero, *Tusc. Quæs.* i. 21.

nothing but dulness and ignorance make us receive them with less reverence than the rest. Why do we not consider what contradictions we find in our own judgments, how many things were yesterday articles of our faith that to-day appear mere fables? Glory and curiosity are the scourges of the soul; of which the last prompts us to thrust our noses into everything, and the other forbids us to leave anything doubtful and undecided.

CHAPTER XXVII.

OF FRIENDSHIP.

HAVING observed the method of a painter I have, that serves me, I had a mind to imitate his way. He chooses the best place, the middle of a panel, wherein to draw a picture, which he finishes with his utmost care and art, and the empty space he fills with grotesque, odd, fantastic figures, without any grace but what they derive from their variety and the extravagance of their shapes. And, in truth, what are these things I scribble, other than grotesques, monstrous pieces of patchwork, without any certain figure, or any other than accidental order, coherence, or proportion?

Definit in piscem mulier formosa superne.[1]

"That a fair woman's face above doth show,
But in a fish's tail doth end below."

In this second part I go hand in hand with my painter, but fall very short of him in the first, and the better; my power of handling not being such that I dare to offer at a fine piece richly painted and set off according to art. I have therefore thought best to borrow one of Estienne de la Boetie,[2] and such a one as will honour and adorn all the rest of my work; namely, a discourse that he called Voluntary Servitude, which others have since further baptized Le Contre-Un,[3] a piece written in his younger years, by way of essay, in honour of liberty against tyrants, and which has since been in the hands of several men of great learning and judgment, not without singular and merited commendation, for it is finely written and as full as anything can possibly be. Yet I may confidently say it is far short of what he is able to do; and if in that more mature age wherein I knew him, he had taken a design like this of mine, to commit his thoughts to writing, we should have seen a great many rare things, and such as would have gone very near to have rivalled the best writings of antiquity: for in natural parts, especially, I know no man comparable to him. But he has left nothing behind him save this treatise only (and that too by chance, for I believe he never saw it after it first went out of his hands), and some observations upon that edict of January,[4] made famous by our civil wars, which also shall elsewhere, peradventure, find a place. These were all I could recover of his remains; I, to whom, with so affectionate a remembrance, upon his death-bed, he by his last will bequeathed his library and papers, the little book of his works only excepted, which I committed to the press.[5] And this particular obligation I have to this treatise of his, that it was the occasion of my first coming acquainted with him; for it was showed to me long before I saw him, and gave me the first knowledge of his name; proving so the first cause and foundation of a friendship which we afterwards improved and maintained so long as God was pleased to continue us together, so perfect, inviolate, and entire, that certainly the like is hardly to be found in story, and amongst the men of this age there is no sign nor trace of any such thing. So many concurrents are required to the building of such a one, that 'tis much if fortune bring it but once to pass in three ages.

There is nothing to which nature seems so much to have inclined us as to society; and Aristotle says[6] that good legislators had more respect to friendship than to justice. Now the most supreme point of its perfection is this: for generally all those that pleasure, profit, public or private interest, create and nourish, are so much the less noble and generous, and so much the less friendships, by how much they mix up another cause and design than friendship itself. Neither do the four ancient kinds, natural, sociable, hospitable, and venerean, either separately or jointly make up a true and perfect friendship.

Perfect friendship, what it is.

Friendship does not tally properly with the four sorts of connection distinguished by the ancients.

That of children to parents is rather respect: friendship being nourished by communication, which cannot, by reason of the great disparity, be betwixt them; but would rather perhaps violate the duties of nature; for neither are all the secret thoughts of fathers fit to be communicated to children, lest it beget an indecent familiarity betwixt them; nor can the advices

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[1] Horace, *de Arte Poet.* 4.

[2] Yet it is not here; and why Montaigne has not inserted it he tells us at the end of the chapter.

[3] Meaning a discourse against monarchy, or government by one person alone, agreeably to what Montaigne says at the end of this chapter. "That if Boetius could have made his option, he would rather have been born at Venice than at Sarlac."

[4] Promulgated in 1562, in the reign of Charles IX., then a minor. This edict permitted to the Huguenots the public exercise of their religion. The parliament at first refused to register it, saying, "Nec possumus, nec debemus;" but they consented, after receiving two positive orders from the king on the subject. The edict contains a rule of conduct for the Protestants, which, among other things, directs that "they shall advance nothing against the Council of Nicea, against the symbol, or against the Old and New Testament."

[5] It was published at Paris, in 1574, by Frederic Morel.

[6] *Ethics*, viii. 1.

and reproofs, which is one of the principal offices of friendship, be properly performed by the son to the father. There are some countries where 'tis the custom for children to kill their fathers; and others where the fathers kill their children, to prevent their being sometimes an impediment to one another in their designs; and moreover, the expectation of the one does naturally depend upon the ruin of the other. There have been great philosophers who have made nothing of this tie of nature; as Aristippus for one, who, being pressed home about the affection he owed to his children, as being come from him, presently fell to spit, saying that also came from him, and that we did also breed worms and lice;[1] and that other, that Plutarch endeavoured to reconcile to his brother, "I make never the more account of him," said he, "for coming out of the same place."[2] This name of brother does indeed carry with it an amiable and affectionate sound, and for that reason he and I called one another brothers.[3] But the complication of interests, the division of estates, the raising of the one at the undoing of the other, does strangely weaken and slacken the fraternal *tie*: and brothers pursuing their fortune and advancement by the same path, 'tis hardly possible but they must of necessity often jostle and hinder one another. Besides, why should the correspondence of manners, parts, and inclinations, which beget true and perfect friendships, always meet and concur in these relations? The father and the son may be of quite contrary humours, and brothers be without any manner of sympathy in their natures. He is my son, he is my father; but he is passionate, ill-natured, or a fool. And moreover, by how much these are friendships that the law and natural obligation impose upon us, so much less is there of our own choice and free will, which free will of ours has no creation properly its own than through affection and friendship. Not that I have not in my own person experienced all that can possibly be expected of that kind, having had the best and most indulgent father, even to an extreme old age, that ever was, and who was himself descended from a family for many generations famous and exemplary for brotherly concord:

> —— Et ipse
> Notus in fratres animi paterni.[4]
>
> "And he himself noted the rest above,
> Towards his brothers for paternal love."

We are not here to bring the love we bear to women, though it be an act of our own choice, into comparison; nor rank it with the others. Its fire, I confess,

> Neque enim est Dea nescia nostri
> Quæ dulcem curis miscet amaritiem;[5]
>
> "Nor is my goddess ign'rant what I am,
> Who pleasing sorrows mixes with my flame";

is more active, more eager, and more sharp; but, withal, 'tis more precipitous, fickle, moving, and inconstant: a fever subject to intermission and paroxysms, that has hold but on one part of us; whereas, in friendship, 'tis a general and universal fire, but temperate and equal, a constant and steady heat, all easy and smooth, without poignancy or roughness. Moreover, in love, 'tis no other than a frantic desire for that which flies from us:

> Come segue la lepre il cacciatore
> Al freddo, al caldo, alla montagna, al lito;
> Ne più la stima poi che presa vede;
> E sol dietro à chi fugge affretta il piede:[6]
>
> "Like hunters that the flying hare pursue
> O'er hill and dale, through heat and morning dew,
> Which being ta'en, the quarry they despise,
> Being only pleased in following that which flies."

So soon as ever it enters into the terms of friendship, that is to say, into a concurrence of desires, it vanishes and is gone, fruition destroys it, as having only a fleshly end, subject to satiety. Friendship, on the contrary, is enjoyed proportionably as it is desired, and only grows up, is nourished and improves by enjoyment, as being spiritual, and the soul growing still more perfect by use. Under this perfect friendship I cannot deny but that the other vain affections have, in my younger years, found some place in my thoughts, to say nothing of him, who himself confesses it but too much in his verses; so that I had both these passions, but always so that I could myself well enough distinguish them, and never in any degree of comparison with one another; the first maintaining its flight at so lofty a height as with disdain to look down and see the other flying at a far humbler pitch below.

As to marriage, besides that it is a covenant, the making of which is only free, but the continuance in it forced and compelled, having another dependance than that of our own free will, and a bargain, moreover, commonly contracted to other ends, there happen a thousand intricacies in it to unravel, enough to break the thread, and to divert the current, of a lively affection: whereas, friendship has no manner of business or traffic with any thing but itself. Moreover, to say truth, the ordinary talent of women is not such as is sufficient to maintain the conference and communication required to the support of this sacred tie; nor do they appear to be endued with firmness of mind to endure the constraint of so hard and durable a knot. Doubtless if there could be such a free and voluntary familiarity contracted, where not only the souls might have this entire fruition, but the bodies also might share in the alliance, and the whole man be engaged in it, the friend-

[1] Terence, *in vitâ*. [2] Plutarch, *on Brotherly Love*.

[3] That is to say that, according to the usage established in Montaigne's time, they gave one another the style of brothers, as it was to be the token and pledge of the friendship which they had contracted. And upon the same principle Mademoiselle de Gournay *styled herself Montaigne's* daughter, and not because Montaigne married her mother, as I have heard it affirmed.

[4] Horace, *Od.* ii 2, 6.

[5] Catul., lx. 7, 17.

[6] Ariosto, x., Stanza 7.

ship would certainly be more full and perfect; but there is no example that this sex ever arrived at such perfection, and, by the ancient schools, is wholly rejected. That other, the Grecian license, justly abhorred by our manners, from having, according to their practice, a so necessary disparity of age and difference of offices betwixt the lovers, answers as little to the perfect union and harmony of the lovers that we here require. *Quis est enim iste amor amicitiæ? Cur neque deformem adolescentem quisquam amat, neque formosum senem?*[1] "For what is the love of friendship? Why does no one love a deformed youth or a comely old man?" The very picture that the Academy presents of it will not, as I conceive, contradict me when I say that the first fury inspired by the son of Venus, in the heart of the lover, upon the sight of blooming youth, to which they allow all the insolent and passionate efforts that an immoderate ardour can produce, was simply founded upon an external beauty, the false image of corporal generation; for upon the soul it could not ground this love, the sight of which, as yet, lay concealed, was but now springing up, and not of maturity to blossom. Which fury, if it seized upon a mean spirit, the means by which he preferred his suit were rich presents, advancement to dignities, and other such trumpery, which they by no means approve: if on a more generous soul the pursuit was suitably generous, by philosophical instructions, precepts to revere religion, to obey the laws, to die for the good of his country; by examples of valour, prudence, and justice, the lover studying to render himself acceptable by the grace and beauty of his soul, that of his body being long since faded and decayed, hoping by this mental society to establish a more firm and lasting contract. When this courtship came to its effect, in due season, for that which they do not require in the lover, namely leisure and discretion in his pursuit, they strictly require in the person loved; forasmuch as he is to judge of an internal beauty, of difficult knowledge, and obscure discovery, then there sprung in the person loved, the desire of a spiritual conception by the mediation of a spiritual beauty. This was the principal, the corporeal but an accidental and secondary part, all contrary to the lover. For this reason they prefer the person beloved, maintaining that the gods, in like manner, prefer him too, and very much blame the poet Æschylus for having, in the loves of Achilles and Patroclus, given the lover's part to Achilles, who was in the first flower and pubescency of his youth, and the handsomest of all the Greeks. After this general familiarity and mutual community of thoughts, is once settled, supposing the sovereign and most worthy part to govern and to perform its proper offices, they say that thence great utility was derived, both to private and public concerns, that the power of countries received its beginning thence, and that it was the chief security of liberty and justice. Of which the salutary loves of Harmodus and Aristogiton is an instance; and, therefore, it is that they called it sacred and divine, and conceived that nothing but the violence of tyrants and the baseness of the common people was inimical to it. In short, all that can be said in favour of the Academy is that it was a love which ended in friendship; which well enough agrees with the stoical definition of love: *Amorem conatum esse amicitiæ faciendæ ex pulchritudinis specie.*[2] "That love is a desire of contracting friendship from the beauty of the object."

Friendship against nature very much in use among the Greeks. Montaigne's opinion of it.

I return to my own more just and true description. *Omnino amicitiæ, corroboratis jam confirmatis que et ingeniis, et ætatibus judicandæ sunt.*[3] "Those are only to be reputed friendships that are fortified and confirmed by judgment and length of time." For the rest, what we commonly call friends and friendships are nothing but an acquaintance and connection, contracted either by accident or upon some design, by means of which there happens some little intercourse betwixt our souls: but, in the friendship I speak of, they mingle and melt into one piece, with so universal a mixture that there is left no more sign of the seam by which they were first conjoined. If any one should importune me to give a reason why I loved him, I feel it could no otherwise be expressed than by making answer, "Because it was he; because it was I." There is beyond what I am able to say, I know not what inexplicable and inevitable power that brought on this union. We sought one another long before we met, and from the characters we heard of one another, which wrought more upon our affections than in reason mere reports should do, and, as I think, by some secret appointment of heaven; we embraced each other in our names; and at our first meeting, which was accidentally at a great city entertainment, we found ourselves so mutually pleased with one another, we became, at once, mutually so endeared, that thence-forward nothing was so near to us as one another. He wrote an excellent Latin satire, which is printed,[4] wherein he excuses and explains the precipitateness of our intimacy, so suddenly come to perfection. Having so short a time to continue, as being begun so late, for we were both full grown

[1] Cicero, *Tusc. Quæs.* iv. 33.
[2] Id. *ib.* iv. 34. [3] Id. *de Amicitiâ*, c. 20.
[4] In the collection, before mentioned,—Paris, 1571. The following are some of the verses spoken of by Montaigne:

Prudentem bona pars vulgo male credula nulli
Fidit amicitiæ, nisi quam explorarerit ætas,
Et vario casus luctantem exercuit usu.
At nos jungit amor paullo magis annus, et out
Nil tamen ad summum reliqui sibi fecit amorem . . .
Te, Montaine, mihi casus sociavit in omnes
Et natura potens, et auroris gratior illex
Virtus . . . . . .

men, and he some years the older, there was no time to lose; nor was it tied to conform itself to the example of those slow and regular friendships that require so many precautions of a long preliminary conversation. This has no other idea than that of itself, and can have no relation but to itself. 'Tis no one particular consideration, nor two, nor three, nor four, nor a thousand. 'Tis I know not what quintessence of all this mixture which, seizing my whole will, carried it to plunge and lose itself in his; and that having seized his whole will, brought it, with equal concurrence and appetite, to plunge and lose itself in mine. I may truly say lose, reserving nothing to ourselves that was either his or mine.

The quintessence of true friendship.

When Lælius, in the presence of the Roman Consuls, who, after they had sentenced Tiberius Gracchus, prosecuted all those who had any familiarity with him also, came to ask Caius Blosius, who was his chief friend and confidant, how much he would have done for him? he made answer, "All things." "How! All things!" said Lælius. "And what if he had commanded you to fire our temples?" "He would never have commanded me that," replied Blosius. "But what if he had?" said Lælius. "I would have obeyed him," said the other.[1] If he was so perfect a friend to Gracchus as the histories report him to have been, there was yet no necessity of offending the Consuls by such a bold confession, though he might still have retained the assurance he had of Gracchus's disposition. Still those who accuse this answer as seditious, do not well understand the mystery; nor pre-suppose, as was the fact, that he had Gracchus's will in his sleeve, both by the power of a friend and the perfect knowledge he had of the man. They were more friends than citizens, and more friends to one another than either friends or enemies to their country, or than friends to ambition and innovation. Having absolutely given up themselves to one another, each held absolutely the reins of the other's inclination, which they governed by virtue, and guided by the conduct of reason; which, without these, it is not possible to do, and, therefore, Blosius's answer was such as it ought to have been. If their actions flew out of the handle, they were neither, according to my notion, friends to one another nor to themselves. As to the rest, this answer carries no worse sound than mine would do to one that should ask me, "If your will should command you to kill your daughter, would you do it?" And that I should make answer that I would; for this expresses no consent to such an act, forasmuch as I do not, in the least, suspect my own will, and as little should I that of such a friend. 'Tis not in the power of all the eloquence in the world to dispossess me of the certainty I have of the intentions and resolutions of mine; nay, no one action of his, what face soever it might bear, could be presented to me, of which I could not presently, and at first sight, find out the moving cause. Our souls have drawn so unitedly together, and we have, with so mutual a confidence, laid open the very bottom of our hearts to one another's view, that I not only knew his as well as my own, but should, certainly, in any concern of mine, have trusted my interest much more willingly with him than with myself. Let no one, therefore, rank common friendship with such a one as this. I have had as much experience of these as another, and of the most perfect of their kind; but I do not advise that any should confound the rules of the one and the other; for they would find themselves much deceived. In ordinary friendships you must walk bridle in hand, with prudence and circumspection, for in them the knot is not so sure that a man may not fully depend upon its not slipping. "Love him," said Chilo, "so as if you were one day to hate him; and hate him so as you were one day to love him."[2] A precept that, though abominable in the sovereign and perfect friendship which I speak of, is, nevertheless, very sound as to ordinary cases, and to which the saying that Aristotle had so frequently in his mouth, "O my friends, there is no friend,"[3] may very fitly be applied. In this glorious commerce, the good offices, and benefits, by which other friendships are supported and maintained, do not deserve so much as to be mentioned, and are, by this concurrence of our wills, rendered of no use. As the kindness I have for myself receives no increase, for any thing I relieve myself withal, in time of need, whatever the Stoics say, and as I do not find myself obliged to myself for any service I do myself, so the union of such friends, being really perfect, deprives them of all idea of acknowledgment of such duties, and makes them loathe and banish from their conversation these words implying a difference and distinction, benefit, obligation, entreaty, thanks, and the like. All things, wills, thoughts, opinions, goods, wives, children, honour, and life, being, in effect, common betwixt them, and their condition being no other than one soul in two bodies, according to the very proper definition of Aristotle,[4] they can neither lend nor give any thing to one another. This is the reason why the law-givers, to honour marriage with some imaginary resemblance of this divine alliance, interdict all

The idea of common friendship.

Amongst friends all things are common.

[1] Plut., *Lives of the Gracchi*, c. 5. Cic., *De Amicit.* c. 2

[2] Aulus Gellius, i. 3. Diogenes Laertius, *In the Life of Bias*, attributes this saying to that wise man, i. 7., as Aristotle had done before, in his *Rhetoric*, ii. 13, where we read the second article, viz. "That a man should be hated as if some day hereafter he should be loved;" which is not in Diogenes Laertius. As to the first article, "That a man should only be loved as if he were some day to be hated," Cicero says that he cannot imagine such an expression came from Bias, one of the seven wise men. *De Amicitiâ*, 16.

[3] Laertius, *in vitâ*.

[4] Id. *Ib.*

gifts betwixt man and wife; inferring by that that all should belong to each of them, and that they have nothing to divide between or to give one another. If, in the friendship of which I speak, one could give to the other, the receiver of the benefit would be the man that obliged his friend; for each of them, above all things, studying how to be useful to the other, he that affords the occasion is the generous man, in giving his friend the satisfaction of doing that which, above all things, he does most desire. When the philosopher, Diogenes, wanted money, he used to say that he re-demanded it of his friends, not that he demanded it;[1] and to let you see the practice of this, I will here produce an ancient and singular example: Eudamidas, a Corinthian, had two friends, Charixenus, a Syconian, and Aretheus, a Corinthian; this man coming to die, being poor, and his two friends being rich, he made his will, after this manner: "I bequeath to Aretheus the maintenance of my mother, to support and provide for her in her old age; and to Charixenus I bequeath the care of marrying my daughter, and to give her as good a portion as he is able; and in case one of these chances to die, I hereby substitute the survivor in his place."[2] They who first saw this will made themselves very merry at the contents; but the heirs being made acquainted with it, accepted the legacies with very great content; and one of them, Charixenus, dying within five days after, and Aretheus having thus the charge of both devolved solely to him, he nourished the old woman with very great care and tenderness, and, of five talents he had, gave two and a half in marriage with an only daughter he had of his own, and two and a half in marriage with the daughter of Eudamidas, and in one and the same day solemnized both their nuptials. This example is very full to the point, if one thing were not to be objected, namely, the multitude of friends; for the perfect friendship I speak of is indivisible; each one gives himself so entirely to his friend that he has nothing left to distribute to others: nay, is sorry that he is not double, treble, or quadruple, and that he has not many souls and many wills to confer them all upon this one object. Common friendships will admit of division, one may love the beauty of this, the good humour of that person, the liberality of a third, the paternal affection of a fourth, the fraternal love of a fifth, and so on. But this friendship that possesses the whole soul, and there rules and sways with an absolute sovereignty, can admit of no rival. If two, at the same time, should call to you for succour, to which of them would you run? Should they require of you contrary offices, how could you serve them both? Should one commit a thing to your secresy that it were of importance to the other to know, how would you disengage yourself? The one particular friendship disunites and dissolves all other obligations whatsoever. The secret I have sworn not to reveal to any other I may, without perjury, communicate to him who is not another, but, myself. 'Tis miracle enough, certainly, for a man to double himself, but they that talk of tripling, talk they know not of what. Nothing is extreme that has its like; and whoso shall suppose that, of two, I love one as much as the other, that they love one another too, and love me as much as I love them, does multiply into a society that which is the most single and *one* of all things, and wherein, moreover, one only is the hardest thing in the world to find. The remaining part of this story suits very well with what I said before; for Eudamidas, as a bounty and favour, bequeathes to his friends a legacy of employing themselves in his service; he leaves them heirs to this liberality of his, which consists in giving them the opportunity of conferring a benefit upon him, and, doubtless, the force of friendship is more eminently apparent in this act of his than in that of Aretheus. In short, these are effects not to be imagined nor comprehended by such as have no experience of them, and which make me infinitely honour and admire the answer of that young soldier to Cyrus, by whom, being asked how much he would take for a horse, with which he had won the prize of a race, and whether he would exchange him for a kingdom? "No, truly, sir," said he, "but I would give him with all my heart for a true friend, could I find a man worthy of that relation."[3] He did well in saying, *could I find*, for though a man may almost every where meet with men sufficiently qualified for a superficial acquaintance, yet, in this, where a man is to deal from the very bottom of his heart, without any manner of reservation, it will be requisite that all the wards and springs be true and plain, and perfectly sure. In leagues that hold but by one end, we have only to provide against the imperfections that particularly concern that end. It can be of no importance to me of what religion my physician or my lawyer is, provided the one be a good lawyer, and the other a good physician; this consideration has nothing in common with the offices of friendship, and I am of the same indifferency in the domestic acquaintance my servants must necessarily contract with me; I never enquire, when I take a footman, if he be chaste, but if he be diligent; and am not solicitous if my chairman be given to gaming, so he be strong and able, or if my cook be a swearer, so he be a good cook. I do not, however, take upon me to direct what other

In perfect friendship the giver is obliged to the receiver.

A singular and prime friendship dissolves all other obligations.

Perfect friendship is indivisible.

The ordinary friendships may be shared by many persons.

What is necessary in confederacies and in domestic acquaintance.

[1] Laertius. *in vitâ.*

[2] Lucian. *Toxaris*, c. 22.

[3] *Cyropædia*, viii. 2.

men should do in such matters—there are those that meddle enough with that—but only give an account of what I do myself.

Mihi sic usus est: tibi, ut opus est facto, face.[1]

"This has my practice been: but thou may'st do
What thy affairs or fancy prompt thee to."

At table, I prefer the witty before the grave: in bed, beauty before goodness; and in common discourse, eloquence, whether or no there be sincerity in the case. And as he[2] that was found astride upon a stick, playing with his children, entreated the person who had surprised him in that posture to say nothing of it till he himself came to be a father, supposing that the fondness that would then possess his own soul would render him a more equal judge of such an action, so I also could wish to speak to such as have had experience of what I say; though, knowing how remote a thing such a friendship is from the common practice, and how rarely such is to be found, I despair of meeting with any one qualified to be a judge. For even the discourses left us by antiquity upon this subject seem to me flat and low, in comparison of the sense I have of it, and in this particular the effects surpass the very precepts of philosophy.

Nil ego contulerim jucundo sanus amico.[3]

"I know no pleasure that can health attend,
Like the delight of an amusing friend."

Menander of old declared him to be happy that had the good fortune to meet with but the shadow of a friend;[4] and doubtless he had good reason to say so, especially if he spoke by experience: for, in good earnest, if I compare all the rest of my life,—though, thanks be to God, I have always passed my time pleasantly enough and at my ease, and, the loss of such a friend excepted, free from any grievous affliction, and in great tranquillity of mind, having been contented with my natural and original conveniences and advantages, without being solicitous after others,—if I should compare it all, I say, with the four years I had the happiness to enjoy the sweet society of this excellent man, 'tis nothing but smoke, but an obscure and tedious night. From the day that I lost him,

—— Quem semper acerbum,
Semper honoratum (sic Di voluistis!) habebo,[5]

"Which, since 'tis heaven's decree, though too severe,
I shall lament, but ever shall revere,"

I have only led a sorrowful and languishing life; and the very pleasures that present themselves to me, instead of administering anything of consolation, double my affliction for his loss. We were halves throughout, and to that degree that, methinks, by outliving him I defraud him of his part.

Nec jus esse ulla me voluptate hic frui
Decrevi, tantisper dum ille abest, meus particeps.[6]

"No pleasing thought shall e'er my soul employ
While he is absent who was all my joy."

I was so accustomed to be always his second in all places, and in all things, that, methinks, I am no more than half a man, and have but half a being.

Illam meæ si partem animæ tulit
Maturior vis, quod moror altera?
Nec carius æquè, nec superstes
Integer. Ille dies utramque
Duxit ruinam.[7]

"For, since that half my soul was snatched away
By riper age, why does the other stay?
Which now's not dear, nor truly does survive
That day our double ruin did contrive."

There is no act or imagining of mine wherein I do not miss him. For as he surpassed me by infinite degrees in virtue and all other accomplishments, so he also did in all offices of friendship.

Quis desiderio sit pudor, aut modus
Tam cari capitis?[8]

"Why should we stop the flowing tear?
Why blush to weep for one so dear?"

O misero frater adempte mihi!
Omnia tecum una perierunt gaudia nostra,
Quæ tuus in vitâ, dulcis alebat amor.
Tu mea, tu moriens fregisti commoda, frater;
Tecum una tota est nostra sepulta anima:
Cujus ego interitu tota de mente fugavi
Hæc studia, atque omnes delicias animi.

Alloquar? audiero nunquam tua verba loquentem?
Nunquam ego te, vita frater amabilior,
Aspiciam posthac? at certe semper amabo.[9]

"Ah! brother, what a life did I commence,
From that sad day when thou wert snatched from hence!
Those joys are vanished which my heart once knew,
When in sweet converse all our moments flew:
With thee departing, my good fortune fled,
And all my soul is lifeless since thou'rt dead.
The Muses at thy fun'ral I forsook,
And of all joy my leave for ever took.
Dearer than life! am I so wretched then,
Never to hear or speak to thee again?
Nor see those lips, now frozen up by death?
Yet I will love thee to my latest breath!"

But let us hear a boy of sixteen speak:—In this place I had intended to have inserted his Memoirs upon the famous edict of January; but as I have since found that they are already printed,[10] and with a malicious design, by some who make it their business to molest and endeavour to subvert the state of our government, not caring whether they mend and reform it or

[1] Terence, *Heautont.*, i. 1, 28.
[2] *Agesilaus.* Plutarch, *in vitâ.*
[3] Horace, *Sat.* i. 5. 44.
[4] Plutarch, *on Brotherly Love.*
[5] *Æneid*, v. 49.
[6] Terence, *Heautont.*, i. 97. Montaigne has here made some little variation in Terence's words, for the sake of applying them to his subject.
[7] Horace, *Od.* ii. 17. 6.
[8] Id. i. 24. 1.
[9] Catullus, lxviii. 20. lxv. 9.
[10] Stephen de la Boëtie's *Traité de la Servitude Volontaire* was printed for the first time in 1578, in the third volume of the *Mémoires de l'Estat de la France sous Charles IX.* The second title of this work, *Le Contr'un* (translated by De Thou. *Anti-Henoticon*), is rendered by Vernier, in his *Notice sur les Essais de Montaigne*, "*Les Quatres Centre un*,"—a curious blunder.

no; and that they have mixed up this writing of his with others of their own leaven, I desist from that purpose. But that the memory of the author may not suffer with such as were not acquainted with his principles, I here give them to understand that it was written by him in his very early years, and that by way of exercise only, as a common theme that has been tumbled and tossed about by a thousand writers. I make no question but that he himself believed what he wrote, being so conscientious that way that he would not so much as lie in jest: and I moreover know that, could it have been in his own choice, he would rather have been born at Venice than at Sarlac, and he had reason: but he had another maxim sovereignly imprinted in his soul, religiously to obey and submit to the laws under which he was born. There never was a better citizen, nor more anxious for his country's peace; neither was there ever a greater enemy to all the commotions and innovations of his time: so that he would, without doubt, much rather have employed his talent to the extinguishing of those civil flames than have added any fuel to them: for he had a mind framed to the model of better ages. But in exchange of this serious piece, I will present you with another of a more gay and frolic air from the same hand, and writ at the same age.

Apology of Estienne de Boëtie.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

NINE AND TWENTY SONNETS OF ESTIENNE DE LA BOËTIE.

To Madame de Grammont, Countess of Guissen.

MADAM, I offer you nothing of mine, either because it is already yours, or because I find nothing in my writings worthy of you. But I have a great desire that these verses, into what part of the world soever they may travel, may carry your name in the front, for the honour will accrue to them, by having the great Corisande d'Andoins for their safe conduct.[1] I conceive this present, madam, so much the more proper for you, both by reason there are few ladies in France who are so good judges of poetry and make so good use of it as you do; as also that there is none who can give it the spirit and life you can, by that incomparable voice nature has added to your other perfections. These verses, madam, deserve your esteem, and you will concur with me in this, that Gascony never yielded any with more invention, finer expression, or that more evidently shew themselves to have flowed from a master-hand. And be not jealous then that you have but the remainder of what I published some years since, under the name of Monsieur de Foix, your worthy kinsman; for certainly these have something in them more sprightly and luxuriant, as being written in a greener youth, when he was enflamed with a certain noble ardour, madam, of which I will tell you in your ear. The others were written since, when he was a suitor, in honour of his wife, and already smack somewhat of matrimonial coldness. And, for my part, I am of the same opinion with those who hold that poetry appears nowhere so gay as in a wanton and irregular subject.

[*These nine-and-twenty sonnets that were inserted here, are since printed with Boëtie's other works. They are very indifferent compositions, being little else than amorous complaints expressed in a rough style, exhibiting the follies and outrages of a restless passion, overgorged, as it were, with jealousies, fears, and suspicions. Indeed, Montaigne himself, in the editions subsequent to that of* 1588, *omits them, observing,* "*These verses are to be found elsewhere.*"]

CHAPTER XXIX.

OF MODERATION.

As though we had an infectious touch, we, by our manner of handling, corrupt things that in themselves are laudable and good. We may grasp virtue so hard that it becomes vice, if we embrace it too eagerly and with too violent a desire. Those who say there is never any excess in virtue, forasmuch as it is no virtue when it once becomes excess, only play upon words.

Whether virtue can be too vehemently sought after.

> Insani sapiens nomen ferat, æquus iniqui,
> Ultra quàm satis est virtutem si petat ipsam.[2]
>
> "Mad grow the wise, the just unjust are found,
> When e'en to virtue they prescribe no bound."

This is a subtle consideration in philosophy. A man may both be too much in love with virtue and be excessive in a just action. Holy Writ agrees with this: "Be not wiser than you should, but be soberly wise."[3] I have known a great man prejudice the opinion men had of his religion, by pretending to be devout

[1] Diana, Viscountess of Louvigni, surnamed the *Fair Corisandè* of Andouins, married in 1567 Philibert, Count of Grammont and Guiche, who died at the siege of La Fère, in 1580. Andouins, or Andoins, was a barony of Bearn, three leagues from Pau. The King of Navarre, afterwards Henry IV., fell in love with the fair widow, and at one time had even an idea of marrying her. Count Hamilton, in his *Epistle to Count Grammont*, thus reminds him of his illustrious ancestress:—

"Honneur des rives éloignées
Où Corisande vit le jour," &c.

[2] Horace, *Epist.* i. 6-15.

[3] *Romans*, xii. 3.

beyond all examples of others of his condition.[1] I love temperate and moderate nature. An immoderate zeal, even for that which is good, though it does not offend, does astonish me, and puts me to study what name to give it. Neither the mother of Pausanias,[2] who was the first suggester of her son's death, and lay the first stone towards it; nor Posthumius, the dictator, who put his son to death, whom the ardour of youth had pushed upon the enemy a little before the rest of his squadron;[3] appear to me so just as strange; and I should neither advise, nor like to follow, a virtue so savage in itself, and that costs so dear. The archer that shoots over the mark misses as much as he that falls short; and 'tis equally troublesome to my eyes to look up at a great light as to look down into a dark abyss. Callicles, in Plato,[4] says that the extremity of philosophy is hurtful, and advises not to dive into it beyond the limits of profit; that taken moderately it is pleasant and useful, but that in the extreme it renders a man brutish and vicious; a contemner of religion and the common laws; an enemy to civil conversation and all human pleasures; incapable of all public administration; unfit either to assist others or to relieve himself; and a fit object to be injured and affronted without remedy. He says true, for in its excess it enslaves our natural freedom, and by an impertinent subtlety leads us out of the fair and beaten way that nature has traced out for us.

An immoderate zeal for that which is good.

The love we bear to our wives is very lawful, and yet theology thinks fit to curb and restrain it. As I remember, I have read one place of St. Thomas of Aquin, where he condemns marriage within any of the forbidden degrees,—for this reason, amongst others, that there is danger lest the friendship a man bears to such a woman should be immoderate; for if the conjugal affection be full and perfect betwixt them, as it ought to be, and that it be over and above surcharged with that of kindred too, there is no doubt but such an addition will carry the husband beyond the bounds of reason.[5]

Love to wives restrained by divinity.

Those sciences that regulate the manners of men, divinity and philosophy, will have a say in everything. There is no action so private that can escape their inspection and jurisdiction. They are best skilled who themselves can regulate and control their liberty; and not be like women who are ready enough to expose their persons for an amorous embrace, though they are too shy, forsooth, to do so to the physician, however great the need. Let me, therefore, in behalf of these sciences, teach those husbands, if such there be, who are too sensual, this lesson—that the very pleasures they enjoy in their converse with their wives are reproachable, if immoderate; and that a licentious and riotous abuse of them is a fault, as much as an illicit embrace. Those immodest tricks and postures that the first ardour suggests to us in this affair are not only indecently but prejudicially practised upon our wives. Let them at least learn impudence from another hand; they are always apt enough for our business, and I, for my part, always went the plain way to work.

Divinity and philosophy dictate in every thing.

Marriage is a solemn and religious connection, and therefore the pleasure we extract thence should be sober and serious, and mixed with a certain degree of gravity; it should be a kind of discreet and conscientious pleasure. And the chief end of it being generation, some make a question whether, when men have not that object in view, as when their wives are superannuated or already with child, it be lawful to embrace them. 'Tis homicide, according to Plato;[6] and certain nations (the Mahometan amongst others) abominate all conjunction with women with child, and so do others with women in their courses. Zenobia would never admit her husband for more than one encounter, after which she left him to his own swing for the whole time of her conception, and not till after that would again receive

[1] It is likely that Montaigne means Henry III. of France. The Cardinal d'Ossat, writing to Louisa, his queen dowager, told her, in his frank manner, that he had lived as much or more like a monk than a monarch. (*Letter* xxiii.) —And Sextus Quintus, speaking of that prince one day to the Cardinal de Joyeuse, protector of the affairs of France, said to him pleasantly, "There is nothing that your king hath not done, and does not do still, to be a monk, nor any thing that I have not done not to be a monk." See the note by Amelot de la Houssaye upon the words of the Cardinal d'Ossat, just now mentioned, p. 74, tom. i. of the Cardinal d'Ossat's *Letters*, Paris, 1698.

[2] Montaigne would here give us to understand, upon the authority of Diodorus of Sicily, that Pausanias's mother gave the first hint of the punishment that was to be inflicted on her son. "Pausanias (says this historian) perceiving that the Ephori and some other Lacedæmonians aimed at apprehending him, got the start of them, and went and took sanctuary in Minerva's temple; and the Lacedæmonians being doubtful whether they ought to take him thence, in violation of the franchise there, it is said that his own mother came herself to the temple, but spoke nothing, nor did any thing, more than lay a piece of brick, which she brought with her, on the threshold of the temple, which, when she had done, she returned home. The Lacedæmonians, taking the hint from the mother, caused the gate of the temple to be walled up, and by this means starved Pausanias, so that he died with hunger, &c." The name of Pausanias's mother was Alcithea, as we are informed by Thucydides's scholiast, who only says that it was reported that when they set about walling up the gates of the chapel in which Pausanias had taken refuge, his mother Alcithea laid the first stone.

[3] Opinions differ as to the truth of this matter. Livy thinks he has good authority for rejecting it, because it does not appear in history that Posthumius was branded with it, as Titus Manlius was, about 100 years after his time; for Manlius having put his son to death for the like cause, obtained the odious name of Imperiosus, and since that time *Manliana Imperia* has been used as a term to signify orders that are too severe. "*Manliana Imperia*," says Livy, "were not only horrible for the time present, but of a bad example to posterity." And this historian makes no doubt but such commands would have been actually styled *Posthumiana Imperia*, if Posthumius had been the first who set so barbarous an example. (T. Livius, iv. 29, and viii. 7.)—But, however, Montaigne has Valerius Maximus on his side, who says expressly that Posthumius caused his son to be put to death, ii. 7*b* ; and Diodorus of Sicily, xii. 19.

[4] In the *Gorgias*.

[5] St. Thomas Aquinas, *Secunda Secundæ*, quæs. 154. art. 9.

[6] *Laws*, viii.

him. A noble and worthy example of conjugal continency.[1] It was doubtless from some lascivious poet, and one that himself was in great distress for a little of this sport, that Plato borrowed this story:[2] that Jupiter was one day so hot upon his wife that, not having so much patience as till she could get to the couch, he threw her upon the floor, where the vehemence of pleasure made him forget the great and important resolutions he had but newly taken with the rest of the gods in his celestial council, and to boast that he had had as good a bout as when he got her maidenhead unknown to their parents.

Wives of the kings of Persia, how received at their festivals.

The Kings of Persia were wont to invite their wives to the beginning of their festivals; but when the wine began to work in good earnest, and that they were to give the reins to pleasure, they sent them back to their private apartment, that they might not participate of their immoderate lust, sending for other women in their stead, with whom they were not obliged to so great a decorum and respect. All pleasures, and all sorts of gratifications, are not properly and fitly conferred upon all sorts of persons. Epaminondas had imprisoned a young man for certain debauches; Pelopidas requested he might be set at liberty, which Epaminondas denied to him, but granted it at the first word to a wench of his, who made the same intercession; saying, "That it was a gratification due to such a one as she, but not to a captain."[3] Sophocles being joint prætor with Pericles, seeing a fine boy pass by, "O! what a handsome boy is that," said he. "It would be well enough for any other than a prætor," answered Pericles, "who ought not only to have his hands, but his eyes chaste."[4] Ælius Verus, the Emperor, answered his wife, who reproached him for his amours with other women, that he did it upon a conscientious account, inasmuch as marriage was a state of honour and dignity, not of wanton and lascivious desire.[5] And our ecclesiastical history preserves the memory of that woman in great veneration who parted from her husband because she would not comply with his indecent and inordinate desire. In fine, there is no so just and lawful pleasure wherein intemperance and excess is not to be condemned.

Conjugal love ought to be accompanied with respect.

But, in truth, is not man a most miserable creature the while? It is scarce, by his natural condition, in his power to taste one pleasure pure and entire; and yet he must be contriving doctrines and precepts to curtail that little he has. He is not yet wretched enough, unless by art and study he augments his own misery.

Man a miserable creature.

Fortunæ miseras auximus arte vias.[6]

"We with misfortune 'gainst ourselves take part,
And our own miseries increase by art."

Human wisdom makes as ill use of her talent, when she exercises it in lessening the number and sweetness of those pleasures that are naturally our due, as she employs it favourably and well in artificially disguising and tricking out the ills of life, to alleviate the sense of them. Had I ruled the roast, I should have taken another and more natural, course, which, to say the truth, is both convenient and sacred, and should, peradventure, have been able to have limited it, too; notwithstanding that both our spiritual and corporal physicians, as by compact betwixt themselves, can find no other way to cure, nor other remedy for the infirmities of the body and the soul, than what is oft-times worse than the disease, by tormenting us more, and by adding to our misery and pain. To this end watchings, fastings, hair-shirts, remote and solitary banishments, perpetual imprisonments, whips, and other afflictions, have been introduced amongst men: but so that they should carry a sting with them, and be real afflictions indeed; and not fall out so as it once did to one Gallio, who having been sent an exile to the Isle of Lesbos, news was not long after brought to Rome that he there lived as merry as the day was long; and that what had been enjoined him for a penance turned to his greatest pleasure and satisfaction. Whereupon the Senate thought fit to recal him home to his wife and family, and confine him to his own house, to accommodate their punishment to his feeling and apprehension.[7] For to him whom fasting would make more healthful and more sprightly, and to him to whose palate fish was more acceptable than flesh, these would be no proper nor salutary recipe; no more than in the other sort of physic, where the drugs have no effect upon him who swallows them with appetite and pleasure. The bitterness of the potion, and the abhorrence of the patient, are necessary circumstances to the operation. The nature that would eat rhubarb like buttered turnips, would frustrate the use and virtue of it; it must be something to trouble and disturb the stomach that must purge and cure it. And here the common rule, that things are cured by their contraries, fails; for in this, one ill is cured by another.

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[1] Trebellius Pollio, *Trigint. Tyrann.*, c. 30.

[2] Montaigne here laughs at Homer without thinking of it, for this fiction is taken from the *Iliad*, xiv. 194. See Plato's *Republic*, iii. 433. If Montaigne had looked into Homer he would not have been so mistaken as he has been in some circumstances of this affair.

[3] Plutarch, *Instruct. to those who manage State Affairs.*

[4] Cicero, *Offic.*, i. 40.

[5] Ælian. *Spart. in vitâ.*

[6] Propertius, iii. 7. 32.

[7] Tacitus, *Annals*, vi. 2.

This notion somewhat resembles the ancient one, of thinking to gratify the gods and nature by massacre and murder; an opinion once universally received in all religions, even in the time of our fathers. Amurath, at the taking of the Isthmus, immolated six hundred young Greeks to his father's soul, as a propitiatory sacrifice for the sins of the deceased. And in the new countries discovered in this age of ours, which are pure, and virgins yet, in comparison of ours, this practice is in some measure every where received. All their idols reek with human blood, not without various examples of horrid cruelty. Some they burn alive, and half-broiled take them off the coals to tear out their hearts and entrails; others, even women, they flay alive, and with their bloody skins clothe and disguise others. Neither are we without great examples of constancy and resolution in this affair. The poor souls that are to be sacrificed, old men, women, and children, go about some days before to beg alms for the offering of their sacrifice; and present themselves, singing and dancing about with the spectators, to the slaughter.

The sacrifice of human flesh a practice formerly in almost all religions.

How practised in the new world.

Wonderful firmness of those who are sacrificed there.

The ambassadors of the king of Mexico, setting forth to Fernando Cortez the power and greatness of their master, after having told him that he had thirty vassals, of whom each was able to raise an hundred thousand fighting men, and that he kept his court in the fairest and best fortified city under the sun, added at last, that he yearly offered to the gods fifty thousand men. Indeed, they affirmed that he maintained a continual war with some potent neighbouring nations, not only to keep the young men in exercise, but principally to have wherewithal to furnish his sacrifices with his prisoners of war. At a certain town in another place, for the welcome of the said Cortez, they sacrificed fifty men at once. I will tell you this one tale more, and I have done. Some of these people being beaten by him, sent to acknowledge him, and to treat with him of a peace, whose messengers carried him three sorts of presents, which they presented in these terms:—"Behold, lord, here are five slaves; if thou art a furious god, that feedest upon flesh and blood, eat these, and we will bring thee more; if thou art an affable god, behold here incense and feathers; if thou art a man, take these fowls and these fruits that we have brought thee."

The prodigious number sacrificed by the King of Mexico.

Compliment paid by the Americans to Fernando Cortez.

CHAPTER XXX.

OF CANNIBALS.

When Pyrrhus, king of Epirus, invaded Italy, having viewed and considered the order of the army the Romans sent out to meet him,—"I know not," said he, "what kind of barbarians (for so the Greeks called all other nations) these may be; but the disposition of this army that I see has nothing of the barbarian in it."[1] As much said the Greeks of that which Flaminius brought into their country;[2] and Philip, beholding, from an eminence, the order and disposition of the Roman camp, led into his kingdom by Publius Sulpitius Galba, spoke to the same effect.[3] By which it appears how cautious men ought to be of taking things upon trust from vulgar opinion, and that we are to judge by the eye of reason, and not from common report. I have long had a man in my house that lived ten or twelve years in the new world discovered in these latter days, and in that part of it where Villegaignon landed, which he called Antartick France.[4] This discovery of so vast a country seems to be of very great consideration; and we are not sure that hereafter there may not be another found, so many wiser men than we having been deceived in this. I am afraid our eyes are bigger than our bellies, and that we have more curiosity than capacity; for we grasp at all, but catch nothing but air.

Reflections on the discovery of the new world.

Plato[5] brings in Solon, relating that he had heard from the Priests of Sais, in Egypt, that of old, and before the deluge, there was a great island, called Atlantis, situate directly at the mouth of the Strait of Gibraltar, which contained more ground than both Africa and Asia put together; that the kings of that country, who not only possessed that isle, but extended their dominion so far into the continent that they had a country as large as Africa to Egypt, and as long as Europe to Tuscany, had attempted to encroach even upon Asia, and to subjugate all the nations that border upon the Mediterranean Sea, as far as the Great Gulph;[6] and to that effect had over-run all Spain, the Gauls, and Italy, as far as Greece, where the Athenians stopped the torrent of their arms: but some time after both the Athenians, they, and their island, were swallowed by the flood. It is very likely that this violent eruption and inundation of water made strange alterations in the habitable parts of the earth; as 'tis said, for instance, that the sea then cut off Sicily from Italy;

The island of Atlantis.

Deluges the cause of great alterations in the habitable world.

[1] Plutarch, *in vitâ*, c. 8.
[2] Id., *Life of Flaminius*, c. 3.
[3] Livy, xxxi. 34.
[4] Brazil, where he arrived in 1557.
[5] In the *Timæus*.
[6] The Black Sea.

Hæc loca vi quondam et vastâ convulsa ruinâ,
* * * * * * *
Dissiluisse ferunt, cum protenus utraque tellus
Una foret.[1]

"'Tis said those places by the o'erbearing flood,
Too great and violent to be withstood,
Split, and were thus from one another rent,
Which were before one solid continent."

Cyprus from Syria; the isle of Negropont from the Continent of Bœotia; and elsewhere, united lands that were separate before, by filling up the channel betwixt them with sand and mud;

Sterilesque diu palus, aptaque remis,
Vicinas urbes alit, et grave sentit aratrum.[2]

"Where once bare remigable marshes, now
Feed neighb'ring cities and admit the plough."

But there is no great appearance that this isle was this new world so lately discovered; for that almost touched upon Spain,[3] and it were an incredible effect of an inundation to have carried so prodigious a mass above twelve hundred leagues: besides that our modern navigators have already almost discovered it to be no island, but firm land and continent, with the East Indies on the one side, and the land under the two poles on the other; or, if it be separated from them, 'tis by so narrow a strait that it never more deserves the name of an island for that. It should seem that, in this great body, there are two sorts of motions, the one natural, and the other febrifick, as there are in ours. When I consider the impression that my own river, Dordoigne, has made, in my time, on the right bank of its descent, and that, in twenty years, it has gained so much, and undermined the foundation of so many houses, I perceive it to be an extraordinary agitation; for, had it always gone on at this rate, or were hereafter to do it, the aspect of the world would be totally changed. But rivers alter in this respect, sometimes spreading out against the one side, and sometimes against the other, and sometimes quietly keeping the channel. I do not speak of sudden inundations, the causes of which every body understands. In Medoc, by the sea-shore, the Sieur d'Arsac, my brother, had an estate, he had there, buried under the sands which the sea vomits before it; the tops of some houses are yet to be seen, but his good land is converted into pitiful barren pasturage. The inhabitants of the place affirm that, of late years, the sea has driven so vehemently upon them that they have lost four leagues of land. These sands are her harbingers: and we now see great heaps of moving sand that march half a league before her, and take possession of the land.

The other testimony from antiquity, to which some would apply this discovery of the new world, is in Aristotle; at least, if that little book of unheard-of miracles be his. He there tells us that certain Carthaginians, having crossed the Atlantic sea, without the Straits of Gibraltar, and sailed a very long time, discovered, at last, a great and fruitful island, all covered over with wood, and watered with several broad and deep rivers, far remote from any continent, and that they, and others, after them, allured by the pleasantness and fertility of the soil, went thither, with their wives and children, and began to plant a colony. But the senate of Carthage, perceiving their people, by little and little, to grow thin, issued out an express prohibition, that no one, upon pain of death, should transport themselves thither; and also drove out the new inhabitants, fearing, 'tis said, lest, in process of time, they should so multiply as to supplant themselves and ruin their state. But this relation of Aristotle's does no more agree with our new found lands than the other. This man that I have is a plain ignorant fellow, and, therefore, the more likely to tell truth: for though your better-bred sort of men are much more curious in their observation, and discover a great deal more, they gloss upon it, and, to give the greater weight to what they deliver, and allure your belief, they cannot forbear a little to alter the story. They never represent things to you simply as they are, but rather as they appeared to them, or as they would have them appear to you, and, to gain the reputation of men of judgment, and the better to induce your faith, are willing to help out the business with something more than is really true, of their own invention. Now, in this case, we should either have a man of irreproachable veracity, or so simple that he has not wherewithal to contrive and to give a colour of truth to false relations, and that can have no ends in forging an untruth. Such a one is mine; and, besides the little suspicion the man lies under, he has divers times brought me several seamen and merchants that, at the same time, went the same voyage. I shall, therefore, content myself with his information, without enquiring what the cosmographers say to the business. We need topographers to trace out to us the particular places where they have been; but for having had this advantage over us, to have seen the Holy Land, they would have the privilege, forsooth, to tell us stories of all the other parts of the world besides. I would have every one write what he knows, and as much as he knows, but no more; and that not in this only, but in all other subjects: for such a person may have some particular knowledge and experience of the nature of

The qualities requisite in an historian.

Authors should write no more on a subject than what they know of it.

[1] *Æneid*, iii. 414.
[2] Horace, *de Art. Poet.* 65.
[3] Plato does not say anything of the sort. The reader will observe in the following passages several geographical blunders, which were, doubtless, spread abroad by the first travellers in America.

such a river, or such a fountain, that as to other things knows no more than what every body does, and yet, to keep a clutter with this little pittance of his, will undertake to write the whole body of physics: a vice whence many great inconveniences derive their original.

Barbarism, what it is taken for.

Now, to return to my subject, I find that there is nothing barbarous and savage in this nation, by any thing that I can gather, excepting that every one gives the title of barbarism to every thing that is not in use in his own country: as, indeed, we have no other level of truth and reason than the example and idea of the opinions and customs of the place wherein we live. There is always the perfect religion, there the perfect government, there the perfect every thing. This nation are savages, in the same way that we say fruits are wild, which nature produces of herself, and by her own ordinary progress; whereas, in truth, we ought rather to call those wild whose natures we have changed by our artifice, and diverted from the common order. In those, the genuine, most useful, and natural virtues and properties, are vigorous and active, which we have degenerated in these, by accommodating them to the pleasure of our own corrupted palate. And yet, for all this, our taste confesses a flavour and delicacy, excellent even to emulation of the best of ours, in several fruits those countries abound with, without art or culture; nor is it reasonable that art should gain the point over our great and powerful mother, Nature. We have so oppressed her beauty and the richness of her works, by our inventions, that we have almost smothered her; but, where she shines in her own purity and proper lustre, she marvellously baffles and disgraces all our vain and frivolous attempts.

Et veniunt hederæ sponte sua melius,
Surgit et in solis formosior arbutus antri;
* * * * * * * * * *
Et volucres nullâ dulcius arte canunt.[1]

"Best thrives the ivy when no culture spoils,
The strawb'ry most delights in shaded soils;
Birds, in wild notes, their throats harmonious stretch
With greater art than art itself can teach."

Our utmost endeavours cannot arrive at so much as to imitate the nest of the least of birds, its contexture, its elegance, its convenience; not so much as the web of a contemptible spider. "All things," says Plato, "are produced either by nature, or by fortune, or by art; the greatest and most beautiful by the one, or the other of the former, the least and the most imperfect by the last."[2]

In what sense the American savages are barbarians.

These nations then seem to me to be so far barbarous, as having received but very little form and fashion from art and human invention, and being consequently not much remote from their original simplicity. The laws of nature govern them still, not as yet much vitiated with any mixture of ours; nay, in such purity that I am sometimes troubled we were no sooner acquainted with these people, and that they were not discovered in those better times, when there were men much more able to judge of them than we are. I am sorry that Lycurgus and Plato had no knowledge of them; for, to my apprehension, what we now see in those natives does not only surpass all the images with which the poets have adorned the golden age, and all their inventions in feigning a happy state of man, but moreover the fancy, and even the wish and desire of philosophy itself. So native and so pure a simplicity as we by experience see to be in them, could never enter into their imagination, nor could they ever believe that human society could have been maintained with so little artifice. Should I tell Plato that it is a nation wherein there is no manner of traffic, no knowledge of letters, no science of numbers, no name of magistrate, nor political superiority; no use of service, riches or poverty; no contracts, no successions, no dividends, no properties, no employments, but those of leisure; no respect of kindred, but in common; no clothing, no agriculture, no metal, no use of corn or wine; and where so much as the very words that signify lying, treachery, dissimulation, avarice, envy, detraction, and pardon, were never heard of—how much would he find his imaginary republic short of this perfection? *Viri a diis recentes.*[3] "Fresh from the hands of the gods."

The excellency of their polity.

Hos natura modos primùm dedit.[4]

"These were the manners first by nature taught."

As to the rest, they live in a country beautiful and pleasant, and so temperate, as my intelligence informs me, that 'tis very rare to hear of a sick person there; and they moreover assure me that they never saw any of the natives either paralytic, blear-eyed, toothless, or crooked with age. The situation of their country is along the sea-shore, and enclosed on the side towards the land with great and high mountains, having about an hundred leagues in breadth between. They have great store of fish and flesh meat that have no resemblance to ours, which they eat without any other cookery than plain boiling, roasting, or broiling. The first that carried a horse thither, though in several other voyages he had contracted an acquaintance and familiarity with them, put them into so terrible a fright at his appearance so mounted, that they killed him with their arrows before they could come to discover who he was. Their buildings, which

The nature of their climate.

Their meals, their drink, and their bread.

[1] Propertius, i. 2, 10.

[2] *On Laws*, x.

[3] Seneca. *Epist.* 90. This quotation only appears in the copy of the *Essays* whence was printed M. Naigeon's edition. Montaigne omitted it elsewhere, probably on account of the the quotation which immediately follows.

[4] Virg. *Georg.* ii. 20.

are very long, and of capacity to hold two or three hundred people, are made of the barks of tall trees, reared with one end upon the ground, and leaning against and supporting one another at the top, like some of our barns, of which the covering hangs down to the very ground, and serves for the side walls. They have wood so hard that they cleave it into swords, and make grills of it to broil their meat. Their beds are of cotton, hung swinging from the roof, like our seamen's hammocks; for every one one, the wives lying apart from their husbands. They rise with the sun, and so soon as they are up eat for all day; for they have no more meals but that. They do not drink then (as Suidas reports of some other people of the east, that never drink at their meals), but drink very often in the day, and sometimes a great deal. Their liquor is made of a certain root, and is as red as our claret; and this they never drink but luke-warm. It will keep only two or three days, has a sharp taste, is nothing heady, but very wholesome to the stomach, laxative for strangers, and a very pleasant beverage to such as are used to it. Instead of bread they make use of a certain white matter, like coriander comfits: I have tasted of it, the taste is sweet, but somewhat insipid. The whole day is spent in dancing.

Their pastimes.

The young men go a hunting after wild beasts with bows and arrows, and one part of their women are employed in preparing their drink the while, which is their chief employment. Some of their old men in the morning, before they fall to eating, preach to the whole family, walking to and fro from the one end of the house to the other, several times repeating the same sentence, till they have finished their round (for their houses are at least a hundred yards long); enjoining valour towards their enemies and love towards their wives are the two heads of his discourse, never failing, as a burden, to put them in mind that 'tis to their wives they are obliged for providing them their drink warm and relishing. The fashion of their beds, ropes, swords, and the wooden bracelets, which they tie about their wrists when they go to fight, and of their great canes, bored hollow at one end, by the sound of which they keep the cadence of their dances, is to be seen in several places, and amongst others at my house. They shave all over, and much more closely than we, without any other razor than one of wood or of stone.

They believe the immortality of the soul.

They believe the immortality of the soul, and that those who have merited well of the gods are lodged in that part of heaven where the sun rises, and the accursed in the west.

Their priests and prophets, their morality, and how they are treated, if their prophecies prove false.

They have a kind of priests and prophets that rarely present themselves to the people, having their abode in the mountains. At their arrival there is a great feast and solemn assembly of many villages made, that is, all the neighbouring families, for every house, as I have described it, makes a village, and are about a French league distant from one another. This prophet declaims to them in public, exhorting them to virtue and their duty: but all their ethics consist in these two articles—resolution in war and affection to their wives. He also prophesies to them events to come, and the issues they are to expect from their enterprizes, prompts them to, or diverts them from, war. But let him look to't; for if he fail in his divination, and anything happen otherwise than he has foretold, he is cut into a thousand pieces, if he be caught and condemned for a false prophet; and for that reason, if any of them finds himself mistaken, he is no more to be heard of. Divination is a gift of God, and therefore to abuse it ought to be a punishable imposture. Amongst the Scythians, when their diviners failed in the promised effect, they were laid, bound hand and foot, upon carts laden with firewood, and drawn with oxen, on which they were burnt to death.[1] Such as only meddle with things subject to the conduct of human capacity are excusable in doing the best they can: but those other sort of people that come to delude us with assurances of an extraordinary faculty beyond our understanding, ought they not to be punished for the temerity of their imposture, when they do not make good the effect of their promise?

False prophets burnt by the Scythians.

They have wars with the nations that live farther within the main land, beyond their mountains, to which they go naked, and without other arms than their bows and wooden swords, pointed at one end like the head of a javelin. The obstinacy of their battles is wonderful: they never end without great effusion of blood; for as to running away, or fear, they know not what it is. Every one for a trophy brings home the head of an enemy he has killed, which he fixes over the door of his house. After having a long time treated their prisoners very well, and given them all the luxuries they can think of, he to whom the prisoner belongs invites a great assembly of his kindred and friends, who being come, he ties a rope to one of the arms of the prisoner, of which at a distance, out of his reach, he holds the one end himself, and gives to the friend he loves best the other arm, to hold after the same manner; which being done, they two, in the presence of all the assembly, dispatch him with their swords. After that they roast him, eat him amongst them, and send some chops to their absent friends; which nevertheless they do not do, as some think, for nourishment, as the Scythians anciently did, but as a representation of an extreme revenge, as will immediately appear. Having observed

They eat their prisoners, and why.

[1] Herod. iv. 69.

the Portuguese, who were in league with their enemies, to inflict another sort of death upon any of them they took prisoners, which was to set them up to the girdle in the earth, to shoot at the remaining part till it was stuck full of arrows, and then to hang them; they who thought those people of the other world (as men who had sown the knowledge of a great many vices amongst their neighbours, and were much greater masters in all kind of malignity than they,) did not exercise this sort of revenge without reason, and that it must needs be more painful than theirs, began to leave their old way and to follow this. I am not sorry that we should here take notice of the barbarous horror of so cruel an act, but that, seeing so clearly into their faults, we should be so blind to our own. I conceive there is more barbarity in eating a man alive than when he is dead; in tearing a body that is yet perfectly sentient limb from limb, by racks and torments, in roasting it by degrees, causing it to be bit and worried by dogs and swine (as we have not only read, but lately seen, not amongst inveterate and mortal enemies, but amongst neighbours and fellow-citizens, and, what is worse, under colour of piety and religion), than to roast and eat him after he is dead.

Chrysippus[1] and Zeno, chiefs of the Stoic sect, were of opinion that there was no harm in making use of our dead carcases, in what kind soever, for our necessity, and in feeding upon them *too*; as our ancestors, who, being besieged by Cæsar in the city of Alexia, resolved to sustain the famine of the siege with the bodies of their old men, women, and other persons, who were incapable of bearing arms.

> Vascones (fama est) alimentis talibus usi,
> Produxere animas.[2]
>
> "The Gascons once, the story yet is rife,
> With such dire aliment sustained their life."

And the physicians make no scruple of employing it to all sorts of use, either to apply it outwardly, or to give it inwardly for the health of the patient. But there never was any opinion so irregular as to excuse treachery, disloyalty, tyranny and cruelty, which are our familiar vices. We may, then, well call these people barbarous, in respect to the rules of reason; but not in respect to ourselves, who, in all sorts of barbarity, exceed them. Their wars are throughout noble and generous, and carry as much excuse and fair pretence as this human malady is capable of; having with them no other foundation than the sole jealousy of valour. Their disputes are not for the conquests of new lands, those they already possess being so fruitful by nature as to supply them, without labour or concern, with all things necessary, in such abundance that they have no need to enlarge their borders. And they are moreover happy in this, that they only covet so much as their natural necessities require: all beyond that is superfluous to them. Men of the same age generally call one another brothers, those who are younger, sons and daughters, and the old men are fathers to all. These leave to their heirs in common this full possession of goods, without any manner of division, or other title than what nature bestows upon her creatures in bringing them into the world. If their neighbours pass the mountains, and come to attack them, and obtain a victory, all the victors gain by it is glory only, and the advantage of having proved themselves the better in valour and virtue: for they never meddle with the goods of the conquered, but presently return into their own country, where they have no want of any necessary; nor of this greatest of all goods, to know how to enjoy their condition happily, and to be content. And these in turn do the same. They demand of their prisoners no other ransom than acknowledgment that they are overcome. But there is not one found in an age that will not rather choose to die than make such a concession; or either by word or look recede from the grandeur of an invincible courage. There is not a man amongst them who had not rather be killed and eaten, than so much as to open his mouth to entreat he may not. They use them with all liberality and freedom, to the end their lives may be so much the dearer to them; but frequently entertain them withal with menaces of their approaching death, of the torments they are to suffer, of the preparations that are making in order to it, of the mangling their limbs, and of the feast that is to be made, where their carcase is to be the only dish. All which they do to no other end but only to extort some gentle or submissive word from them, or to frighten them so as to make them run away: so that they may obtain this advantage, that they had terrified them, and that their constancy was shaken. And indeed, if rightly taken, it is in this point only that a true victory consists.

The savages of America make war after a very noble manner.

Their moderation.

Their cordiality to one another.

All that they get is glory by any victory over their neighbours.

> Victoria nulla est,
> Quàm quæ confessos animo quoque subjugat hostes.[3]
>
> "No victory's so true and so complete,
> As when the vanquish'd own their just defeat."

The Hungarians, a very warlike people, never pursued their point farther than to reduce the enemy to their discretion; for, having forced this confession from them, they let them go without injury or ransom, excepting, at the most, to make them engage their word never to bear arms against them again. We get several advantages over our enemies that are borrowed,

[1] Laertius, *in vitâ*.

[2] Juvenal, xv. 93.

[3] Claudian, *De Sexto Consul. Honorii*, 248.

and not truly our own: 'tis the quality of a porter, and no effect of valour, to have stronger arms and legs; 'tis a dead and spiritless quality to draw up well; 'tis a stroke of fortune to make our enemy stumble, or to dazzle him with the light of the sun; 'tis a trick of science and art, which may happen in any cowardly blockhead, to be a good fencer. The estimation and value of a man consist in the heart and in the will: there his true honour lives. Valour is stability, not of legs and arms, but of the courage and the soul; it does not lie in the goodness of our horse, or of our arms, but in ourselves. He that falls, firm in his courage,—*Si succiderit, de genu pugnat;*[1] "If his legs fail him, fights upon his knees;" he who, despite the danger of death near at hand, abates nothing of his assurance; who, dying, does yet dart at his enemy a fierce and disdainful look, is overcome, not by us, but by fortune: he is killed, not conquered; the most valiant[2] are sometimes the most unfortunate. There are some defeats more triumphant than victories. Those four sister-victories, the fairest the sun ever beheld, of Salamis, Platea, Mycale, and Sicily, never opposed all their united glories to the single glory of the discomfiture of King Leonidas and his heroes at the Pass of Thermopylæ. Who ever ran with a more glorious desire and greater ambition to the winning, than the Captain Ischolas to the certain loss of a battle? Who ever set about with more ingenuity and eagerness to secure his safety than he did to assure his ruin? He was ordered to defend a certain pass of Peloponnesus against the Arcadians, which, from the nature of the place and the inequality of forces, finding it utterly impossible for him to do, and seeing clearly that all who presented themselves to the enemy must certainly be left upon the place; and, on the other hand, reputing it unworthy of his own virtue and magnanimity, and of the Lacedæmonian name, to fail in his duty, he chose a mean betwixt these two extremes, after this manner: the youngest and most active of his men he preserved for the service and defence of their country, and therefore sent them back; and with the rest, whose loss would be of less consideration, he resolved to make good the pass, and, with the death of them, to make the enemy buy their entry as dear as possibly he could." And so it fell out; for, being presently encompassed on all sides by the Arcadians, after having made a great slaughter of the enemy, he and his men were all cut in pieces.[3] Is there any trophy dedicated to conquerors which is not much more due to those who were thus overcome? The part that true conquering has to play lies in the encounter, not in the coming off; the honour of valour consists in fighting, not in subduing.

What constitutes the true merit of a man, and his superiority over his fellow-creatures.

Defeats that are more meritorious than the greatest victories.

But to return to my story. These prisoners are so far from discovering the least weakness for all the terrors can be represented to them, that, on the contrary, during the two or three months that they are kept, they always appear with a cheerful countenance; importune their masters to make haste to bring them to the test; defy, rail at them, and reproach them with cowardice, and the number of battles they have lost against those of their country. I have a song made by one of these prisoners, wherein he bids them come all and dine upon him, and welcome, for they shall withal eat their own fathers and grandfathers, whose flesh has served to feed and nourish him. "These muscles," says he, "this flesh, and these veins, are your own. Poor fools that you are, you little think that the substance of your ancesters' limbs is here yet: taste it well, and you will find in it the relish of your own flesh." In which song there is to be observed an invention that smacks nothing of the barbarian. Those that paint these people dying after this manner, represent the prisoner spitting in the face of his executioners, and making at them a wry mouth. And 'tis most certain that, to the very last gasp, they never cease to brave and defy them both in word and gesture. In plain truth, these men are very savage in comparison of us, for, of necessity, they must either be absolutely so, or else we are savages; for there is a vast difference betwixt their manners and ours.

The constancy of these savages that are taken prisoners.

The martial song of one of the savage prisoners.

The men there have several wives, and so much the greater number by how much they have the greater reputation for valour, and it is one very remarkable virtue their women have, that the same endeavours our wives jealously use to hinder and divert us from the friendship and familiarity of other women, these employ to acquire it for their husbands; being, above all things, solicitous of their husbands' honour, 'tis their chiefest care to procure for him the most companions in his affections they can, forasmuch as it is a testimony of their husbands' valour. Ours will cry out that 'tis *monstrous*: it is not so; 'tis a truly matrimonial virtue, though of the highest form. In the Bible, Sarah, Leah, and Rachel, and the wives of Jacob, gave the most beautiful of their handmaids to their husbands; Livia promoted the appetites of Augustus to her own prejudice; and Stratonice, the wife of King Dejotarus, not only gave up a fair young maid that served her, to her husband's embraces, but,

The wives of the Cannibals. The nature of their jealousy.

[1] Seneca, *de Provid.*, c. 2. The text has *etiam si cederit.*
Seneca, *De Const. Sap.* c. 6.

[2] Diodorus Sic., xv. 7; where the action of Ischolas is compared to that of King Leonidas, which Montaigne extols above the most celebrated victories.

moreover, carefully brought up the children he had by her, and assisted them in the succession to their father's crown.[1]

And, that it may not be supposed that all this is done by a simple and servile observance of their common practice, or by any authoritative impression of their ancient custom, without judgment or reason, or, from having a soul so stupid that it cannot contrive what else to do, I must here give you some touches of their sufficiency in point of understanding. Besides what I repeated to you before, which was one of their songs of war, I have another, a love-song, that begins thus: "Stay, adder, stay, that, by thy pattern, my sister may draw the fashion and work of a rich belt I would present to my beloved; so may thy beauty and the excellent order of thy scales be for ever preferred before all other serpents." The first couplet is the burthen of the song. Now I have conversed enough with poetry to judge thus much: that not only there is nothing barbarous in this composition, but, moreover, that it is perfectly anacreontic. Indeed, their language is soft, of a pleasing accent, and something bordering upon the Greek terminations. Three of these people, not foreseeing how dear their knowledge of the corruptions of this part of the world will, one day, cost their happiness and repose, and that the effect of this commerce will be their ruin; which, I suppose, is in a very fair way (miserable men, to suffer themselves to be deluded with desire of novelty, and to have left the serenity of their own heaven to come so far to gaze at ours!), went to Rouen, at the time that the late King Charles the Ninth was there. The king himself talked to them a good while, and they were made to see our fashions, our pomp, and the form of a great city; after which some one asked their opinion, and would know of them, what of all the things they had seen they found most to be admired? To which they made answer, three things, of which I have forgot the third, and am vexed at it, but two I yet remember. They said that, in the first place, they thought it very strange that so many tall men wearing beards, strong and well armed, who were about the king ('tis like, they meant the Swiss of the guard), should submit to obey a child, and that they did not rather choose out one amongst themselves to command: secondly, (they have a way of speaking in their language, to call men the half of one another,) that they had observed that there were, amongst us, men full and crammed with all manner of luxuries, whilst, in the mean time, their halves were begging at their doors, lean and half-starved with hunger and poverty; and thought it strange that these necessitous halves were able to suffer so great an inequality and injustice, and that they did not take the others by the throats, or set fire to their houses. I talked to one of them a long while, but I had an interpreter, who followed so ill, and whose stupidity kept him from understanding my questions so almost entirely that I could get nothing out of him of any moment. Asking him what advantage he reaped from the superiority he had amongst his own people—for he was a captain, and our mariners called him king,—he told me, to march at the head of them to war; and demanding of him, farther, how many men he had to follow him? he shewed me a space of ground, to signify as many as could march in such a compass; which might be four or five thousand men; and, putting the question to him, whether or no his authority expired with the war? he told me this remained; that when he went to visit the villages in his dependancy, they cleared him paths through the thick of their woods, through which he might pass at his ease. All this does not sound very ill, but then, forsooth, they wear no breeches.

A love-song of theirs.

What some of the savages who came to France thought of our manners.

Answer of one of the savages to Montaigne.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THAT A MAN IS SOBERLY TO JUDGE OF DIVINE ORDINANCES.

THINGS unknown are the principal and true field of imposture, forasmuch as, in the first place, their very strangeness lends them credit; and, moreover, by not being subjected to our ordinary reason, they deprive us of the means to question and dispute them. On which account, says Plato,[2] it is much more easy to satisfy the hearers, when speaking of the nature of the gods, than of the nature of men, because the ignorance of the auditory affords a fair and large career, and all manner of liberty in the handling of recondite things; and thence it comes to pass that nothing is so firmly believed as what we least know: nor any people so confident as those who entertain us with fables, such as your alchymists, judicial astrologers, fortune-tellers, physicians, and *id genus omne*. To whom I could, willingly, if I durst, join a set of people that take upon them to interpret and controul the designs of God himself, making a business of finding out the cause of every accident, and of prying into the secrets of the divine will, there to discover the incomprehensible motives of his works. And although the variety and the continual discordance of events throw them from corner to corner, and toss them from east to west, yet do they still persist in their vain inquisition, and, with the same pencil, paint black and white. In a nation of the Indies, there is this commendable custom, that when any thing befalls them amiss in any

The subjects of imposture.

[1] Plutarch, *Virtuous deeds of women.*

[2] *Critias.*

encounter or battle, they publicly ask pardon of the sun, who is their God, as having committed an unjust action, always imputing their good or evil fortune to the divine justice, and to that submitting their own judgment and reason. 'Tis enough for a Christian to believe that all things come from God, to receive them with acknowledgment of his divine and inscrutable wisdom, and thankfully to accept and receive them with what face soever they may present themselves. But I do not approve of what I see in use, that is, to seek to conform and support our religion by the prosperity of our enterprises. Our belief has other foundation enough without going about to authorise it by events; for the people being accustomed to such arguments as these, so plausible, and so fitted to their own taste, it is to be feared lest, when they fail of success, they should also stagger in their faith. As in the war, wherein we are now engaged, upon the account of religion, those who had the better in the affair of Rochelabeille,[1] making great brags of that success, as an infallible approbation of their cause, when they came afterwards to excuse their misfortunes of Jarnac and Moncontour,[2] 'twas by saying they were fatherly scourges and corrections; if they have not a people wholly at their mercy, they make it manifestly enough to appear what it is to take two sorts of grist out of the same sack, and with the same mouth to blow hot and cold. It were better to possess the vulgar with the solid and real foundations of truth. 'Twas a brave naval battle that was gained a few months since, against the Turks, under the command of Don John of Austria;[3] but it has also pleased God, at other times, to let us see as great victories at our own expense. In fine, 'tis a hard matter to reduce divine things to our balance without losing a great deal of the weight. And he that would take upon him to give a reason why Arius and his Pope Leo, the principal heads of that heresy, should die at different times, of such similar and such strange deaths (for being withdrawn from the disputation by a disorder of the bowels, they both of them suddenly gave up the ghost upon the close-stool[4]), and would aggravate this divine vengeance by the circumstances of the place; might as well add the death of Heliogabalus, who was also slain in a house of office.[5] But what then? Irenæus was involved in the same fortune; God being pleased to shew us that the good have something else to hope for; and the wicked something else to fear, than the fortunes and misfortunes of this world: he manages and applies them according to his own secret will and pleasure, and deprives us of the means foolishly to make our own profit. And those people both abuse themselves and us who will pretend to dive into these mysteries by the strength of human reason. They never give one hit that they do not receive two for it; of which St. Augustin gives a very great proof upon his adversaries. 'Tis a conflict that is more decided by strength of memory than the force of reason. We are to content ourselves with the light it pleases the sun to communicate to us by his rays, and he who will lift up his eyes to take in a greater, let him not think it strange if, for the reward of his presumption, he there lose his sight. *Quis hominum potest scire consilium Dei? Aut quis poterit cogitare, quid velit Dominus?*[6] "Who amongst men can know the counsel of God? Or who can think what the will of the Lord is?"

No authority can be ascribed to our religion from events.

The good or bad success of men no proof either of their merit or demerit.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THAT WE ARE TO AVOID PLEASURES EVEN AT THE EXPENSE OF LIFE.

I HAVE, long ago, observed most of the opinions of the ancients to concur in this, that it is high time to die when there is more ill than good in living, and that to preserve life, to our own torment and inconvenience, is contrary to the very laws of nature, as these old lines instruct us:

Ἢ ζῆν ἀλύπως, ἢ θανεῖν εὐδαιμόνως.
Καλὸν θνήσκειν οἷς ὕβρι τὸ ζῆν φέρει.
Κρεῖσσον τὸ μὴ ζῆν ἐσὶν, ἢ ζῆν ἀθλίως.[7]

"Adieu! want, care, with mis'ry's various train,
Death then is happy, when to live is pain."

But to push this contempt of death so far as to employ it to the removing our thoughts from the coveting of honours, riches, dignities, and other favours, and goods of fortune, as we call them, as if reason had not sufficient to do to persuade us to avoid them without adding this new charge I had never seen it either enjoined or practised, till this passage of Seneca fell into my hands; who, advising Lucilius, a man of great power and authority about the Emperor, to alter his voluptuous and magnificent way of living, and to retire himself from this worldly vanity and ambition, to some solitary, quiet, and philosophical life, and the other alleging some difficulties: "I am of opinion," says he,[8] "either that you leave that life or life itself; but I would advise thee to the gentler way, and to untie, rather than to break, the knot thou hast ill knit, provided that, if it be not otherwise to be untied, thou resolutely break it. There is no man so great a

[1] A great skirmish that had like to have caused a general battle betwixt the troops of the Admiral de Coligny, and those of the Duke of Anjou, in May, 1569.
[2] These battles were won by the Duke of Anjou, the first in March, and the last in October, 1569.
[3] In the Gulph of Lepanto, 7th October, 1571.
[4] Athanasius, *Epist. ad Serapion.*
[5] Ælian, Lamp. *ix. vitâ.*
[6] *Wisdom*, ix. 13.
[7] Stobæus, *Serm.* 20.
[8] *Epist.* 22.

coward that had not rather once fall than be always falling." I should have found this counsel conformable enough to the stoical roughness; but it appears the more strange for being borrowed from Epicurus, who writes the same thing upon the like occasion to Idomeneus. And I think I have observed something like it, but with Christian moderation, amongst our own people. St. Hilary, Bishop of Poictiers, that famous enemy of the Arian heresy, being in Syria, had intelligence thither sent him that Abra, his only daughter, whom he left at home under the eye and tuition of her mother, was sought in marriage by the greatest nobleman of the country, as being a virgin virtuously brought up, fair, rich, and in the flower of her age. Whereupon he writ to her (as it appears upon record) that she should remove her affection from all the pleasures and advantages proposed unto her; for he had in his travels found out a much greater and more worthy fortune for her, a husband of much greater power and magnificence, that would present her with robes and jewels of inestimable value: wherein his design was to dispossess her of the appetite and use of worldly delights, to join her wholly to God. But the nearest and most certain way to this being, as he conceived, the death of his daughter, he never ceased, by vows, prayers, and orisons, to beg of the Almighty that he would please to call her out of this world, and to take her to himself; as accordingly it came to pass; for soon after his return she died, at which he expressed a singular joy. This seems to outdo the others, forasmuch as he applies himself to this means in the first instance, which they only take subsidiarily, and, besides, it was towards his only daughter. But I will not omit the latter end of this story, though it be from my purpose. St. Hilary's wife, having understood from him how the death of their daughter was brought about by his desire and design, and how much happier she was, to be removed out of this world than to have stayed in it, conceived so lively an apprehension of the eternal and heavenly beatitude that she begged of her husband with the extremest importunity to do as much for her; and God, at their joint request, shortly after calling her to him, it was a death embraced on both sides with singular content.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THAT FORTUNE[1] IS OFTENTIMES OBSERVED TO ACT BY THE RULE OF REASON.

THE inconstancy of the various motions of fortune may reasonably make us expect she should present us with all sorts of faces. Can there be a more express act of justice than this? The Duke of Valentinois, having resolved to poison Cardinal Adrian Corneto, with whom his father, Pope Alexander the Sixth, and himself, were to sup in the Vatican, sent before a bottle of poisoned wine, with strict order to the butler to keep it very safe. The Pope being come before his son, and calling for drink, the butler, supposing this wine had only been so strictly recommended to his care upon the account of its excellence, presented it immediately to the Pope, and the Duke himself, coming in presently after, and being confident that they had not meddled with his bottle, took also his cup; so that the father died immediately upon the spot, and the son, after having been long tormented with sickness, was reserved to another and a worse fortune.[2] Sometimes she seems to play upon us just in the nick of an affair. Monsieur d'Estrée, at that time standard-bearer to Monsieur de Vendosme, and Monsieur de Liques, lieutenant to the Duke of Ascot's troop, being both suitors to the Sieur de Founguesselles's sister,[3] though of different parties (as it oft falls out amongst frontier neighbours), the Sieur de Liques carried her; but on the same day he was married, and, which was worse, before he went to bed to his wife, the bridegroom having a mind to break a lance in honour of his new bride, went out to skirmish near St. Omers, where the Sieur d'Estrée proving the stronger, took him prisoner; and, the more to illustrate his victory, the lady herself was fain

Fortune seems sometimes to sport with us.

> Conjugis antè coacta novi dimittere collum,
> Quam veniens una atque altera rursùs hyems,
> Noctibus in longis avidum saturasset amorem,[4]

> "Of her fair arms, the am'rous ring to break,
> Which clung so fast to her new spouse's neck,
> Ere of two winters many a friendly night
> Had sated her love's greedy appetite,"

[1] The word *fortune*, so often used by Montaigne, and sometimes in passages where he might have employed the word *providence*, was censured by the *docteurs moines*, who examined the Essays during the author's stay in Rome, in 1581. (See his Journey in Italy.) In countries subject to the Inquisition, at Rome especially, it was forbidden to say *fatum* or *fata*. An author having occasion to use the word, printed it *facta*, but in the *errata* put "for *facta*, read *fata*." And similar stratagems were more than once resorted to. Thus the Protestant Daniel Heinsius, sending forth in that city a work in which he spoke of Pope Urban VIII., called him in the text, *Ecclesiæ Caput*, but, in the *errata*, *Ecclesiæ Romanæ Caput*. It would seem that the censorship of books was not always exercised by persons of much ability. La Mothe le Vayer says, that Naudæus himself told him that in a work which he wished to print at Rome, and which contained these words, *Virgo fata est*, the Inquisitor noted in the margin, *Propositio hæretica; nam non datur* FATUM. The prohibition was so closely carried in force that Addison, in his Travels in Italy, tells us he was much amused at reading, at the head of an opera-bill, the following:—"PROTESTA. *Le Voci, Fato, Deità, Destino, e simili*, che per entro questo dramma troverai, son messe per ischerzo poetico, è non per sentimento vero, credendo sempre in tutto quello, che crede et comanda santa madre Chiesa." Montaigne justifies himself, in chap. lvi. of this work, for having used some of these prohibited words, *verbis indisciplinata*, as he calls them; it would seem, from the old editions, that he did not put forth this sort of apology till after his return from Rome.

[2] In 1503. Guicciardini, vi.

[3] Or rather *Fouquerolles*. See Mem. of Mart. du Bellay, ii.

[4] Catullus, lxviii. 81.

to request him of courtesy to deliver up his prisoner to her, as he accordingly did; the gentlemen of France never denying anything to the ladies. Does this not seem a master-stroke: Constantine, the son of Helen, founded the empire of Constantinople; and so many ages after, Constantine, the son of Helen, put an end to it.

Sometimes she is pleased to emulate our miracles. We are told that King Clovis besieging Angouleme, the walls fell down of themselves by divine favour. And Bouchet has it from some author, that King Robert, having sat down before a city, and being stolen away from the siege to keep the feast of Saint Aignan at Orleans; as he was in devotion at a certain point of the mass, the walls of the beleaguered city, without any effort of the besiegers, fell down in ruins. But she did quite contrary in our Milan war; for Captain Rense laying siege to the city of Arona,[1] and having carried a mine under a great parcel of the wall, the mine being sprung, the wall was lifted from its base, but dropped down again nevertheless whole and entire, and so exactly upon its foundation that the besieged suffered no inconvenience by that attempt.

Fortune sometimes turns doctor.

Sometimes she plays the doctor. Jason of Phereus being given over by the physicians, by reason of a desperate imposthume in his breast, having a mind to rid himself of his pain, by death at least, in a battle threw himself desperately into the thickest of the enemy, where he was so fortunately wounded quite through the body that the imposthume broke, and he was perfectly cured.[2] Did she not also excel the painter Protogenes in his art? who having

Sometimes she is superior to art;

finished the picture of a dog, quite tired and out of breath, in all the other parts excellently well to his own liking, but not being able to express as he would the slaver and foam that should come out of his mouth, vexed and angry at his work, he took his spunge, which by cleaning his brushes had imbibed several sorts of colours, and threw it in a rage against the picture, with an intent utterly to efface it; when fortune guiding the sponge to hit just upon the mouth of the dog, it there performed what all his art was not able to do.[3] Does she not sometimes direct our councils and correct them? Isabella, Queen of England, being to sail from Zealand into her own kingdom,[4] with an army in favour of her son against her husband, had been lost had she come into the port she intended, being there laid wait for by the enemy; but fortune,

and sometimes she corrects our counsels.

against her will, threw her into another haven, where she landed in safety. And he of old who, throwing a stone at a dog, hit and killed his mother-in-law, had he not reason to pronounce this verse:—

Ταυτόματον ημῶν καλλίω βουλεύεται.[5]

"fortune has more judgment than we."

She surpasses the rules of human prudence.

Icetes[6] had engaged with two soldiers to kill Timoleon at Adrano in Sicily. These chose their time to do it, when he was assisting at a sacrifice, and, thrusting into the crowd, as they were making signs to one another, that now was a fit time to do their business, in steps a third, who with a sword takes one of them full drive on the head, lays him dead upon the place, and runs away. Which the other seeing, and concluding himself discovered and lost, he runs to the altar and begs for mercy, promising to discover the whole truth, which as he was doing, and laying open the whole conspiracy, behold the third man, who, being apprehended, was as a murderer thrust and hauled by the people through the crowd towards Timoleon and other the most eminent persons of the assembly, before whom being brought he cried out for pardon, pleaded that he had justly slain his father's murderer; which he also proved upon the place, by sufficient witnesses, whom his good fortune very opportunely supplied him withal, that his father was really killed in the city of the Leontines by that very man on whom he had taken his revenge; he was presently awarded ten attic minæ, for having had the good fortune, in designing to revenge the death of his father, to preserve the life of the common father of Sicily. Thus fortune, in her conduct, surpasses all the rules of human prudence. But, to conclude, is there not a direct application of her favour, bounty, and piety, manifestly discovered in this action? Ignatius the father and Ignatius the son being proscribed by the triumviri of Rome, resolved upon this generous act of mutual kindness, to fall by the hands of one another, and by that means to frustrate and defeat the cruelty of the tyrants; and accordingly, with their swords drawn, ran full drive one upon another, where fortune so guided the points that they made two equally mortal wounds, affording withal so much honour to so brave a friendship, as to leave them just strength enough to draw out their bloody swords, that they might have liberty to embrace one another in this dying condition, with so close an embrace that the executioners cut off both their heads at once, leaving the

A father and son proscribed, die together, by a special favour of fortune.

[1] On the Lago Maggiore. Mem. of Mart. du Bellay, ii.
[2] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* vii. 50. Valerius Maximus, who mentions this accident, i. 9. in Externis, represents the fact in a manner still more miraculous; for he says that Jason received this important service from an assassin. Seneca ascribes this accident to the same cause. *De Ireuef*, ii. 19.
[3] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xxxv. 10.
[4] In 1326. Mem. of Froissart.
[5] Menander.
[6] He was a Sicilian, born at Syracuse, that aimed to oppress the liberty of his country, of which Timoleon was the protector. Plutarch, *Life of Timoleon*, 7.

bodies still fast linked together in this noble knot, and their wounds joined, affectionately sucking in the last blood and remainder of the lives of one another.[1]

CHAPTER XXXIV.

OF ONE DEFECT IN OUR GOVERNMENT.

My late father, who, for a man that had no other advantages than experience only, and his own natural parts, was of a very clear judgment, formerly told me that he once had thoughts of endeavouring to introduce this practice, that there might be in every town a certain place assigned, to which such as stood in need of any thing might repair, and have their business entered by an officer appointed for that purpose. As, for example, I want to sell pearls; I want to buy pearls; such a one wants company to go to Paris; such a one enquires for a servant of such a quality; such a one for a master; such a one for such an artificer; some for one thing, some for another, every one according to what he wants. And it seems to me that these mutual advertisements would be of no contemptible advantage to the public business; for there are, every day, conditions that seek after one another, and for want of knowing one another's occasions, leave men in very great necessity.

The project of an office of agency.

I hear, to the great shame of the age we live in, that in our very sight two most excellent men for learning died so poor that they had scarce bread to put in their mouths, Lilius Gregorius Giraldus,[2] in Italy, and Sebastianus Castalio,[3] in Germany. And I believe there are a thousand men would have invited them into their families, on advantageous conditions, or have relieved them where they were, had they known their wants. The world is not so generally corrupted but that I know a man that would heartily wish the estate his ancestors have left him might be employed, so long as it shall please fortune to give him leave to enjoy it, to secure remarkable persons of any kind, whom misfortune sometimes persecutes to the last degree, from the danger of necessity; and, at least, place them in such a condition that they must be very hard to please if they were not contented. My father, in his domestic government, had this order (which I know how to commend but by no means imitate), that besides the day-book or register of the household affairs, where the small accounts, payments, and disbursements, which do not require a special hand, were entered, and which a bailiff always had in custody; he ordered him whom he kept to write for him, to keep a journal, and in it to set down all the remarkable occurrences, and, day by day, the memoirs of the affairs of his house; very pleasant to look over when time begins to wear things out of memory, and very useful sometimes to put us out of doubt, when such a thing was begun, when ended, what courses were debated on, what concluded; our voyages, absences, marriages, and deaths, the reception of good or ill news, the change of principal servants, and the like. An ancient custom which I think it would not be amiss for every one to revive in his own house; and I did very foolishly in neglecting it.

The miserable deaths of Giraldus and Castalio.

The laudable regulations observed by Montaigne's father.

CHAPTER XXXV.

OF THE CUSTOM OF WEARING CLOTHES.

Whatever I shall say upon this subject, I must, of necessity, invade some of the bounds of custom, so careful has she been to shut up all the avenues. I was discussing with myself, in this shivering season, whether the fashion of going naked, in those nations lately discovered, is imposed upon them by the hot temperature of the air, as we say of the Moors and Indians, or whether it was the original fashion of mankind. Men of understanding, forasmuch as all things under the sun, as Holy Writ declares, are subject to the same laws, have been wont, in such considerations as these, where we are to distinguish the natural laws from those of man's invention, to have recourse to the general polity of the world, where there can be nothing counterfeited. Now, all other creatures being sufficiently furnished with all things necessary for the support of their being, without needle and thread, it is not to be imagined that we only should be brought into the world in a defective and indigent condition, and in such a state as cannot subsist without foreign assistance; and therefore it is that I believe that, as plants, trees, and animals, and all things that have life, are seen to be, by nature, sufficiently clothed and covered to defend them from the injuries of weather,

What gave rise to the custom of some nations to go stark naked.

> Proptereaque feré res omnes, aut corio sunt,
> Aut setâ, aut conchis, aut callo, aut cortice tectæ.[4]
>
> "And, therefore, shells, or rinds, or films, inclose,
> Or skin, or hair, on ev'ry body grows."

so were we: but as those who, by artificial light, put out that of the day, so we, by borrowed forms and fashions, have destroyed our own. And 'tis plain enough to be seen that

[1] Appian, *de Bell. Civil*, iv.

[2] Born at Ferrara, 1480. died there 1552. His works, of which the principal are a History of the Gods, and Dialogues on the Poets, were published by Jensius, at Leyden, 1696.

[3] A native of Dauphiny, born 1515, died 1563. He is principally known by his Latin version of the Bible, in which he affects to use only the Ciceronian style of language.

[4] Lucretius, iv. 936.

'tis custom only which renders that impossible that otherwise is nothing so; for, of those nations who have no manner of knowledge of clothing, some are situated under the same temperature that we are, and some in much colder climates. And, besides, our most tender parts are always exposed to the air, as the eyes, mouth, nose, and ears; and our country fellows, like our ancestors, go with their breasts open. Had we been born with a necessity upon us of wearing petticoats and breeches, there is no doubt but nature would have fortified those parts she intended should be exposed to the fury of the seasons with a thicker skin, as she has done the fingers' ends and the soles of the feet. And why should this seem hard to believe? I observe much greater distance betwixt my mode of dress and that of one of our country peasants, than betwixt his and a man that has no other covering but his skin. How many men, especially in Turkey, go naked merely upon account of devotion? Somebody, I forget who, asked a beggar, whom he saw in his shirt, in the depth of winter, as brisk and frolic as he who goes muffled up to the ears in furs, how he was able to endure to go so? "Sir," said the fellow, "you go with your face bare; I am all face." The Italians have a story of the Duke of Florence's fool, whom his master asking how, being so thin clad, he was able to support the cold, when he, himself, warm wrapt up as he was, was hardly able to do it? "Why," replied the fool, "use my receipt; put on all the clothes you have at once, as I do, and you'll feel no more cold than I." King Massinissa, to an extreme old age, could never be prevailed upon to go with his head covered, how cold, stormy, or rainy soever the weather might be.[1] Which also is reported of the Emperor Severus. Herodotus tells us[2] that, in the battles fought betwixt the Egyptians and the Persians, it was observed, both by himself and others, that of those who were left dead upon the place, the heads of the Egyptians were found to be, without comparison, harder than those of the Persians, by reason that the last had gone with their heads always covered from their infancy, first, with biggins, and then with turbans, and the others always shaved and bare. And King Agesilaus continued to a decrepid age, to wear always the same clothes in winter that he did in summer.[3] Cæsar, says Suetonius, marched always at the head of his army, for the most part on foot, with his head bare, whether it was rain or sun-shine, and as much is said of Hannibal,

Tum vestice nudo,
Excipere insanos imbres, cœlique ruinam.[4]

" Exposing his bare head to furious show'rs,
While hail or rain in torrents on it pours."

A Venetian, who has long lived in Pegu, and is lately returned thence, writes, that the men and women of that kingdom, though they cover the rest of their persons, go always bare foot, and ride so too. And Plato does very earnestly advise, for the health of the whole body, to give the head and the feet no other clothing than what nature has bestowed. He whom the Poles have elected for their king,[5] since ours left them, who is indeed one of the greatest princes of this age, never wears any gloves, and for winter, or whatever weather may come, never wears any other cap abroad than the same he wears at home. Whereas, I cannot endure to go unbuttoned or loose, our neighbouring labourers would think themselves in chains if they were so braced. Varro is of opinion that when it was ordained we should be bare in the presence of the Gods, and before the magistrate, it was rather so ordered upon the score of health, and to inure us to the injuries of weather, than upon the account of reverence.[6] And since we are now talking of cold, and are Frenchmen, used to trick ourselves out in many colours, (not I myself, for I seldom wear other than black or white, in imitation of my father,) let us add another story of Captain Martin du Bellay, who affirms, that in the journey through Luxemburg, he saw such a great frost that the munition-wine was cut with hatchets and wedges, delivered out to the soldiers by weight, and carried away in baskets:[7] and Ovid,

Nudaque consistunt formam servantia testæ
Vina, nec hausta meri, sed data frusta, bibunt.[8]

" The wine
Stript of its cask, retains the figure still,
Nor do they draughts, but crusts of Bacchus, swill."

At the mouth of the Lake Mœotis, the frosts are so severe that in the very same place where Mithridates's lieutenant had fought the enemy dry-foot, and given them a defeat, the summer following he also obtained over them a naval victory.[9] The Romans fought at a very great disadvantage in the engagement they had with the Carthaginians near Placentia, by reason that they went to the charge with their blood congealed, and their limbs numbed with cold,[10] whereas Hannibal had caused great fires to be made through his camp to warm his soldiers, and oil to be distributed amongst them, to the end that, anointing themselves, they might render their nerves more supple and active, and fortify the pores against the violence of the air, and freezing wind that then raged. The retreat the Greeks made from Babylon into their own country is famous for the difficulties and calamities they had to overcome. Of which this

[1] Cicero, *De Senect.* c. 10.
[2] Book iii.
[3] Plutarch, *in Vitâ.*
[4] Silius Italicus, i. 250.
[5] Stephen Bathory.
[6] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xviii. 1.
[7] In 1543. *Mem. de Mart. du Bellay*, x.—Philip de Comines, speaking of such cold weather in his time (1469,) in the principality of Liege, says, that the wine was in like manner frozen in their pipes, and that it was dug out, and cut into the form of wedges, and so carried off by gentlemen in hats or baskets. ii. 14.
[8] Ovid, *Trist.*, iii. 10. 23.
[9] Strabo, vii.
[10] Livy, xxi. 54.

Terrible ravages made by snow, in the mountains of Armenia.

was one, that being encountered in the mountains of Armenia, with a horrible storm of snow, they lost all knowledge of the country, and of the ways, and being shut up, were a day and a night without eating or drinking, most of their cattle dead, many of themselves starved dead, several struck blind with the driving and glittering of the snow, many of them maimed in their fingers and toes, and many stiff and motionless with the extremity of the cold, who yet had their understanding entire.[1]

Fruit trees buried in the winter.

Alexander saw a nation where they bury the fruit trees in winter, to defend them from the frost,[2] and we also may see the same. But concerning clothes, the King of Mexico changed his apparel four times a day, and never put them on more, employing those he left off, in his continual liberalities and rewards; nor was either pot, dish, or other utensil of his kitchen or table ever served up to him twice.

How often the King of Mexico changed his clothes in a day.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

OF CATO THE YOUNGER.

I AM not guilty of the common error of judging another by myself. I easily believe that in another's humour which is contrary to my own: and though I find myself engaged to one certain form, I do not oblige others to it, as many do, but believe and apprehend a thousand different ways of living; and, contrary to most men, more easily admit of differences than uniformity amongst us. I, as frankly as any one would have me, discharge a man from my humours and principles, and consider him simply as he is, without reference to myself, taking him according to his own particular model. Though I am not continent myself, I nevertheless sincerely approve of the continency of the Feuillans and the Capuchins, and highly commend their way of living. I insinuate myself very well by imagination into their place, and love and honour them the more for being other than I am myself. I very much desire that we may be judged every man by himself, and would not be drawn into the consequences of common examples. My weakness does nothing alter the esteem I ought to have of the force and vigour of those who deserve it. *Sunt qui nihil nudent quam quod se imitari posse confidunt.*[3] "There are those who persuade nothing but what they believe they can imitate themselves." Crawling upon the slime of the earth, I do not, for all that, the less observe in the clouds the inimitable height of some heroic souls. 'Tis a great deal for me to have my judgment regular and right, even though the effects cannot be so, and to maintain this sovereign power at least free from corruption: 'tis something to have my will right and good when my legs fail me. This age wherein we live, in our part of the world at least, is grown so stupid that not only the exercise, but the very imagination of virtue is defective, and seems to be nothing but college jargon.

Virtutem verba putant, ut lucum ligna.[4]

"Words finely couch'd these men for virtue take,
As if each wood a sacred grove could make."

Quam vereri deberent, etiam si percipere non possent.[5] "Which they ought to reverence, though they cannot comprehend." 'Tis a mere gew-gaw to hang in a cabinet, or at the end of the tongue as on the tip of the ear, for ornament only. There are no more virtuous actions extant, and those actions that carry a shew of virtue have yet nothing of its essence; for 'tis profit, glory, fear and custom, and other such like foreign causes, are the incentives to produce them. Our justice also, our valour and good offices, may be called so too in respect to others, and according to the face they appear with to the public; but in the doer it can by no means be virtue, because there is another end proposed, another moving cause. Now, virtue owns nothing to be her's but what is done by herself, and for herself, alone. In that great battle of Platæa, which the Greeks, under the command of Pausanias, obtained against Mardonius and the Persians, the conquerors, according to their custom, coming to divide amongst them the glory of the exploit, they assigned to the Spartan nation the pre-eminence of valour in this engagement. The Spartans, great judges of bravery, when they came to determine to what particular man of their nation the honour was due of having best behaved himself upon this occasion, found that Aristodemus had, of all others, hazarded his person with the greatest courage; but they did not, however, allow him any prize or reward, by reason that his valour had been incited by a desire to clear his reputation from the reproach of his miscarriage at the affair of Thermopylæ, and, with a desire to die bravely, to wipe off that former blemish.[6] Our judgments are yet sick, and obey the humour of our depraved manners. I observe most of the wits of these times exercise their ingenuity in endeavouring to blemish and darken the glory of the greatest and most generous actions of former ages, putting one vile interpretation or another

Vicious motives destroy the essence of virtue.

Why the Spartans refused the reward of valour to a person who signalized himself the most in a battle.

Many people study to depreciate the noblest deeds of the ancients.

[1] Xenophon, *Expedition of Cyrus*, iv. 5.
[2] Quintus Curtius, vii. 3.
[3] Cicero, *De Orat.*, c. 7.
[4] Horace, *Epist.* i. 6, 31.
[5] Cicero, *Tusc. Quæ.*, i. 2. Montaigne applies to virtue what Cicero here says of philosophy, and of those who presume to find fault with it.
[6] Nepos, *Life of Pausanias.* Herod. ix.

upon them all, and forging and supposing vain causes and motives for them. A mighty fine subtlety indeed! Give me the greatest and purest action that ever the day beheld, and I will furnish a hundred plausible vicious motives to obscure it. God knows, whoever will stretch them out to the full, what diversity of images our internal wills suffer under; they do not play the censurers so maliciously as they do it ignorantly and rudely. The same pains and license that others take to bespatter these illustrious names, I would willingly undergo to lend them a shoulder to raise them higher. These rare images, that are culled out by the consent of the wisest men of all ages for the world's example, I should endeavour to honour anew, as far as my invention would permit, in all the circumstances of favourable interpretation. And we may well believe that the force of our invention is infinitely short of their merit. 'Tis the duty of good men to draw virtue as beautiful as they can, and there would be no impropriety in the case should our passion a little transport us in favour of so sacred a form. What these people do to the contrary they either do out of malice, or by the vice of confining their belief to their own capacity, as I have said before; or, which I am more inclined to think, from not having their sight strong, clear, and elevated enough to conceive the splendour of virtue in her native purity. As Plutarch complains that, in his time, some attributed the cause of the younger Cato's death to his fear of Cæsar, at which he is very angry, and with good reason, by that a man may guess how much more he would have been offended with those who have attributed it to ambition. Senseless people! He would have performed a just and generous action, even though he were to have had ignominy for his reward instead of glory. That man was, in truth, a pattern that nature chose out to shew to what height human virtue and constancy could arrive. But I am not capable of handling so noble an argument, and shall therefore only set five Latin poets together by the ears, to see who has done best in the praise of Cato; and, inclusively, for their own too. Now, a man well read in poetry will think the two first, in comparison of the others, a little languishing; the third, more vigorous, but overthrown by the extravagance of his own force. He will then think that there will be yet room for one or two gradations of invention to come to the fourth; but, coming to mount the pitch of that, he will lift up his hands for admiration; the last, the first by some space (but a space that he will swear is not to be filled up by any human wit), he will be astonished, he will not know where he is. These are wonders. We have more poets than judges and interpreters of poetry. It is easier to write an indifferent poem than to understand a good one. There is, indeed, a certain low and moderate sort of poetry that a man may well enough judge by certain rules of art; but the true, supreme, and divine poesy is above all the rules of reason. Whoever discerns the beauty of it, with the most assured and most steady sight, sees no more than the quick reflection of a flash of lightning. This is a sort of poetry that does not exercise, but ravishes and overwhelms, our judgment. The fury that possesses him who is able to penetrate into it, wounds yet a third man by hearing him repeat it. It is like a loadstone, that not only attracts the needle, but also infuses into it the virtue to attract others. And this is more evidently seen at our theatres, where the sacred inspiration of the muses, having first stirred up the poet to anger, sorrow, hatred, and out of himself, to whatever it will, does moreover by the poet possess the actor, and by the actor, consecutively, all the spectators,—showing how much our passions hang and depend upon one another.[1] Poetry has ever had that power over me, from a child, to transpierce and transport me. But this quick sense of it, that is natural to me, has been variously handled by variety of forms, not so much higher and lower (for they were ever the highest of every kind), as differing in colour. First, a gay and sprightly fluency, afterwards a lofty and penetrating subtlety; and, lastly, a mature and constant force. Their names will better express them: Ovid, Lucan, Virgil. But our poets are beginning their career:

Montaigne acts quite contrary, and why.

Various opinions of the death of the younger Cato.

Choice passages out of five poets in praise of Cato, compared and estimated by Montaigne.

Excellent poetry above rules.

What sort of poetry Montaigne preferred.

Sit Cato, dum vivit sanè vel Cæsare major.[2]

"Let Cato's fame,
Whilst he shall live, eclipse great Cæsar's name,"

says one.

Et invictum devicta morte Catonem,[3]

"And Cato fell, invincible in death,"

says the second. And the third, speaking of the civil wars betwixt Cæsar and Pompey, says,

Victrix causa diis placuit, sed victa Catoni.[4]

"Heaven approves
The conquering cause the conquer'd Cato loves."

The fourth, upon the praises of Cæsar, writes,

Et cuncta terrarum subacta,
Præter atrocem animum Catonis.[5]

"And conquer'd all, where'er his eagle flew,
But Cato's mind, that nothing could subdue."

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1 Plato, *Ion.*
2 Martial, vi. 32.
3 Manlius, *Astron.* iv. 97.
4 Lucan, i. 128.
5 Horace, *Od.* ii. 1. 23.

And the master of the choir, after having set forth all the names of the greatest Romans, ends thus:—

His dantem jura Catonem.[1]

"And Cato giving laws to all the rest."

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THAT WE LAUGH AND CRY FOR THE SAME THING.

The vanquished bewailed by the victors.

WHEN we read in history that Antigonus was very much displeased with his son, for presenting him the head of King Pyrrhus, his enemy, newly slain, fighting against him, and that seeing it he wept;[2] that René, Duke of Lorraine, also lamented the death of Charles, Duke of Burgundy,[3] whom he had himself defeated, and appeared in mourning at his funeral; and that in the battle of Auroy,[4] which Count de Montfort obtained over Charles de Blois, his competitor for the duchy of Brittany, the conqueror meeting the dead body of his enemy was very much afflicted at his death; —we must not presently cry out,

Et così aven che l'animo ciascuna,
Sua passion sotto el contrario manto,
Ricopre, con la vista or' chiara, or' bruma.[5]

"That every one, whether of joy or woe,
The passion of his mind can govern so
As when most griev'd to show a visage clear,
And melancholy when best pleas'd appear."

When Pompey's head was presented to Cæsar the histories tell us that he turned away his face, as from a sad and unpleasing object.[6] There had been so long an intelligence and companionship betwixt them in the management of the public affairs, such a community of fortunes, so many mutual offices, and so near an alliance, that this countenance he wore ought not to suffer under any misinterpretation, or to be suspected for either false or counterfeit, as this other seems to believe:

Tutumque putavit
Jam bonus esse socer; lachrymas non sponte cadentes
Effudit, gemitusque expressit pectore læto,
Non aliter manifesta putans abscondere mentis
Gaudia, quam lachrymas.[7]

"And now he saw
'Twas safe to be a pious father-in-law,
He shed fore'd tears, and from a joyful breast
Fetch'd sighs and groans, conceiving tears would best
Conceal his inward joy."

For though it be true that the greatest part of our actions are no other than vizor and disguise, and that it may sometimes be real and true that

Hæredis fletus sub personâ risus est,[8]

"The heir's dissembled tears, behind the screen
Could one but peep, would joyful smiles be seen,"

yet in judging of these matters we should consider how much our souls are oftentimes agitated with divers passions. And as they say that in our bodies there is a congregation of divers humours, of which that is the sovereign which, according to the complexion we are of, is commonly most predominant in us: so, though the soul has in it divers motions to agitate it, yet must there of necessity be one to over-rule all the rest, though not with so necessary and absolute a dominion but that through the flexibility and inconstancy of the soul those of less authority may, upon occasion, re-assume their place and make a little sally in turn. Thence it is that we see not only children, who innocently obey and follow nature, often laugh and cry at the same thing: but none of us can boast, what journey soever he may have in hand that he has the most set his heart upon, but when he comes to part with his family and friends he will find something that troubles him within; and though he restrain his tears, yet he puts his foot in the stirrup with a sad and cloudy countenance. And what gentle flame soever may have warmed the heart of modest and well-born virgins, yet have they to be forced from about their mothers' necks to be put to bed to their husbands, whatever this boon companion is pleased to say:

Mankind subject to different passions.

Estne novis nuptis odio Venus? anne parentum
Frustrantur falsis gaudia lachrymulis,
Ubertim thalami quas intra limina fundunt?
Non, ita me divi, vera gemunt, juverint.[9]

"Does the fair bride the sport so greatly dread,
That she takes on so when she's put to bed?
Her parents' joys t' allay with a feign'd tear,
She does not cry in earnest, I dare swear."

Neither is it strange to lament a person dead whom a man would by no means wish to be alive. When I rattle my servant I do it with all my mettle, and load him with no feigned, but downright real, curses: but the heat being over, if he should stand in need of me, I should be very ready to do him good; for I instantly turn the leaf. When I call him calf and coxcomb I do not pretend to entail those titles upon him for ever; neither do I think I give myself the lie in calling him an honest fellow presently after. No one quality possesses us solely and universally. Were it not like a fool to talk to one's self, there would hardly be a day or an hour wherein I might not be heard to mutter to myself and against myself, "Fool! blockhead!" and yet I do not think that to be my character. Who for seeing me one while cold, and presently very kind to my wife, believes the one or other to be counterfeit, is an ass. Nero, taking leave of his mother, whom he sent to be drowned, was nevertheless sensible of some emotion at the farewell, and was struck with horror and pity. 'Tis said that the light

[1] *Æneid*, viii. 670.
[2] Plutarch, *Life of Pyrrhus*.
[3] In 1477, before Nancy.
[4] Or Auray, near Vannes. The battle was fought under Charles V., 29th Sept., 1364.
[5] Petrarch, edit. 1545, p. 25.
[6] Plutarch, *Life of Cæsar*, c. 13.
[7] Lucretius, ix. 1037.
[8] Aulus Gellius, xvii. 14.
[9] Catullus, *de Comâ Berenices*, xv. 15.

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of the sun is not one continuous thing, but that he darts new rays so thick one upon another that we cannot perceive the intermission:

> Largus enim liquidi fons luminis, æthereus Sol
> Irrigat assiduè cœlum candore recenti,
> Suppetidatque novo confestim lumine lumen.[1]
>
> "For the æthereal sun that shines so bright,
> Being a fountain large of liquid light,
> With fresh rays sprinkles still the cheerful sky,
> And with new light the light does still supply."

Just so the soul variously and imperceptibly darts out her passions. Artabanus surprising once his nephew Xerxes, chid him for the sudden alteration of his countenance. He was considering the immeasurable greatness of his forces passing over the Hellespont for the Grecian expedition, and was first seized with a palpitation of joy to see so many thousands of men at his command, and this appeared in the gaiety of his looks: but his thoughts at the same instant suggesting to him that of so many lives there would not be one left in a century, at most, he presently knit his brows and grew sad, even to tears.[2] We have resolutely pursued the revenge of an injury received, and been sensible of a singular satisfaction at our victory: but we weep notwithstanding. Yet 'tis not for the victory that we weep; there is no alteration as to that. But the soul looks upon the thing with another eye, and represents it to itself with another kind of face; for every thing has many faces and several aspects, like a ball. Relations, old acquaintance, and friendships, possess our imaginations, and make them tender for the time: but the turn is so quick that it escapes us in a moment.

The soul does not look upon things with one and the same eye, nor with one and the same bias.

> Nil adeò fieri celeri ratione videtur,
> Quàm si mens fieri propouit, et inchoat ipsa.
> Ociùs ergo animus, quàm res se perciet ulla,
> Aute oculos quorum in promptu natura videtur.[3]
>
> "As no one action seems so swiftly done
> As what the mind has plann'd and once begun;
> This observation evidently proves
> The mind than other things more swiftly moves."

And therefore, while we would make one continued thing of all this succession of passion, we deceive ourselves. When Timoleon[4] laments the murder he had committed upon so mature and generous deliberation, he does not lament the liberty restored to his country, he does not lament the tyrant, but he laments his brother. One part of his duty is performed, let us give him leave to perform the other.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

OF SOLITUDE.

LET us pass over that old comparison betwixt the active and the solitary life; and as for the fine saying in which ambition and avarice cloak themselves, "That we are not born for ourselves, but for the public,"[5] let us boldly appeal to those who are in the thick of public affairs, and let them lay their hands upon their hearts and then say whether, on the contrary, they do not rather aspire to titles and offices, and the tumult of the world, to make their private advantage at the public expense. But we need not ask them the question; for the corrupt ways by which men push on towards the height at which their ambitions aspire, do manifestly enough declare that their ends cannot be very good. Let us then tell ambition that it is she herself that gives us a taste of solitude; for what does she so much avoid as society? What does she so much seek as elbow-room? A man may do well or ill everywhere; but if what Bias says be true, that the greatest part is the worse,[6] or what the preacher says, that there is not one good in a thousand,

> Rari quippe boni: numero vix sunt totidem, quot
> Thebarum portæ, vel divitis ostia Nili.[7]
>
> "How few good men are numbered on this soil!
> Scarce more than gates of Thebes or mouths of Nile."

The contagion is very dangerous in the crowd. A man must either imitate the vicious or hate them. Both are dangerous, either to resemble them, because they are many, or to hate many, because they are unresembling.[8] And merchants that go to sea are in the right, when they are cautious that those who embark with them in the same ship be neither dissolute blasphemers nor vicious otherways; looking upon such society as unfortunate. And therefore it was that Bias pleasantly said to some who, being with him in a dangerous storm, implored the assistance of the gods, "Peace! speak softly," said he, "that they may not know you are here in my company."[9] And a more forcible example:—Albuquerque, viceroy in the Indies for Emanuel, King of Portugal, in an extreme peril of shipwreck took a young boy upon his shoulders, for this only end, that in the society of their common danger his innocency might serve to protect him and to recommend him to the divine favour, that they might get safe to shore. 'Tis not that a wise man may not live everywhere content, and be alone in the crowd of a palace, but if it be left to his own choice he, according to the school, will fly the very sight of it. He can endure that, if need be; but if it be referred to him, he will choose this. He cannot think himself sufficiently rid of vice if he must yet contend with it in other men. Charondas punished as bad men those who were convicted of keeping bad company.[10] There is nothing so unsociable and sociable as man; the one by his vice, the other by his nature. And Antisthenes, in my opinion,

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[1] Lucret. v. 282.
[2] Herod. vii. Pliny, *Epist.* iii. 7. Val. Max. ix. 13.
[3] Lucret. iii. 183.
[4] Cornelius Nepos, ex. 1. Diod. Sic. xvi. 65.
[5] Lucan's *Eulogy on Cato of Utica.*
Nec sibi, sed toti genitum se credere mundo.—*Luc.* ii. 383.
[6] Laertius, *in vitâ.*
[7] Juvenal, xiii. 26.
[8] Seneca, *Epist.* 7.
[9] Laertius, *in vitâ.*
[10] Diod. Sic. xii.

did not give him a satisfactory answer, who reproached him with frequenting bad company, by saying, "That physicians live well amongst the sick."[1] For if they contribute to the health of the sick, no doubt but by the contagion, continual sight of, and familiarity with, diseases, they must of necessity impair their own. Now the end I suppose is all one, to live at more leisure and at greater ease. But men do not always choose the right way; for they often think they have totally taken leave of all business when they have only exchanged one employment for another. There is little less trouble in governing a private family than a whole kingdom. Wherever the mind is perplexed it is in an entire disorder, and domestic employments are not less troublesome for being less important. Moreover, for having shaken off the court and the exchange, we have not taken leave of the principal vexations of life:

——— Ratio et prudentia curas,
Non locus effusi late maris arbiter aufert.[2]

"Reason and prudence our affections ease,
Not the bold site that wide commands the seas."

Solitude does not free us from our vices.

Our ambition, avarice, irresolution, fear, and inordinate desires, do not leave us with change of place:

Et post equitem sedet atra cura.[3]

"And when he rides, black care sits close behind."

They often follow us even to the cloisters and to the philosophical schools; nor deserts, nor caves, hair-shirts, nor fasts, can disengage us from them.

Hæret lateri lethalis arundo.[4]

"The fatal shaft sticks to the wounded side."

One telling Socrates that such a one was nothing improved by his travels: "I very well believe it," said he, "for he took himself along with him."[5]

Quid terras alio calentes
Sole mutamus? Patriæ quis exul
Se quoque fugit.[6]

"To change our native soil why should we run,
And seek one warmed by a fiercer sun?
For who in exile ever yet could find
He went abroad and left himself behind?"

If a man do not first discharge both himself and his mind of the burden with which he finds himself oppressed, motion will but make it press the harder and sit the heavier, as the lading of a ship is of less incumbrance when fast stowed in a settled posture. You do a sick man more harm than good in removing him from place to place; you fix and establish the disease by motion, as stakes go deeper and more fixedly into the earth by being moved up and down in the place where they are designed to stand. And therefore it is not enough to get remote from the public; 'tis not enough to shift one's self,—a man must fly from the popular dispositions that have taken possession of his soul—he must sequester and tear himself from himself.

——Rupi jam vincula, dicas:
Nam luctata canis nodum arripit; attamen illi,
Cum fugit, à collo trahitur pars longa catenæ.[7]

"Thou'lt say, perhaps, that thou hast broke the chain;
Why, so the dog has gnaw'd the knot in twain
That tied him there; but, as he flies, he feels
The ponderous chain still rattling at his heels."

We still carry our fetters along with us; 'tis not an absolute liberty; we yet cast back a kind look upon what we have left behind us; the fancy is still full of our old way of living:

Nisi purgatum est pectus, quæ prælia nobis
Atque pericula tunc ingratis insinuandum?
Quantæ conscindunt hominem cupidinis æres
Sollicitum curæ? quantique perinde timores?
Quidve superbia, spurcitia, ac petulantia, quantus
Efficiunt clades? quid luxus, desidiæque?[8]

"Unless the mind be purged, what conflicts dire,
And dangers will not ev'ry thought inspire!
Th' ungrateful man, how many bitter cares
Incessant gall, and then how many fears!
What horrid massacres from pride ensue,
From sloth, lust, petulance, and from luxury, too!

In what true solitude consists.

The mind itself is the disease, and cannot escape from itself;

In culpâ est animus, qui se non effugit unquam,[9]

"Still in the mind the fault doth lie,
That never from itself can fly,"

and therefore it should be called home, and be confined within itself: that is the true solitude, which may be enjoyed in populous cities and in the courts of kings, though more commodiously apart.

Now, since we will attempt to live alone, and to waive all conversation amongst men, let us so order it that our content may depend wholly upon ourselves; let us dissolve all obligations that ally us to others. Let us obtain this from ourselves, that we may live alone in good earnest, and live at our ease too.

Constancy in the midst of misfortunes.

Stilpo having escaped from the fire that consumed the city where he lived, and where he had his wife, children, goods, and everything he was master of destroyed by the flames, Demetrius Poliorcetes seeing him, amidst so great a ruin, appear with a serene and undisturbed countenance, asked him if he had received no loss? To which he made answer: No; and that, thanks be to God, nothing was lost of his.[10] The philosopher Antisthenes pleasantly said, that men should only furnish themselves with such things as would swim, and might with the owner escape the storm;[11] and certainly a wise man never loses anything, if he has himself. When the city of Nola was ruined by the Barbarians, Paulinus, who was bishop of that place, having there lost all he had, and being himself a prisoner, prayed after this manner:—"O Lord, keep me from being sensible of this loss;

[1] Laertius, *in vitâ.*
[2] Horace, *Epist.* i. 11, 25.
[3] Hor. iii. i. 40.
[4] *Æneid*, iv. 473.
[5] Seneca, *Epist.* 104.
[6] Horace, *Od.*, ii. 16, 19.
[7] Persius, v. 158.
[8] Lucretius, v. 44.
[9] Horace, *Epist.*, i. 14, 15.
[10] Seneca, *Epist.*, ix.
[11] Laertius, *in vitâ.*

for thou knowest they have yet touched nothing of that which is mine."[1] The riches that made him rich, and the goods that made him good, were still entire. This it is to make choice of treasures that can secure themselves from plunder and violence, and to hide them in a place into which no one can enter, and which no one can betray but ourselves. Wives, children, goods, must be had, and especially health, by him that can get it; but we are not so to set our heart upon them that our happiness must have its dependence upon any of them: we must reserve a withdrawing-room, wholly our own, and entirely free wherein to settle our true liberty, our principal solitude and retreat. And in this we must, for the most part, entertain ourselves with ourselves, and so privately that no knowledge or communication of any foreign concern be admitted there; there to laugh and to talk, as if without wife, children, goods, train, or attendance; to the end that, when it shall so fall out that we must lose any or all of these, it may be no new thing to be without them. We have a mind that can turn to itself, that can be its own company; that has wherewithal to attack and to defend, to receive and to give. Let us not then fear, in this solitude, to languish in an uncomfortable vacancy of thought.

In solis sis tibi turba locis.[2]

"In solitary places be
Unto thyself good company."

Men put themselves into a flurry for a thousand things that don't concern them.

Virtue is satisfied with herself, without discipline, without words, without effects. In our ordinary actions there is not one of a thousand that concerns ourselves. He that thou seest scrambling up that battered wall, furious and transported, against whom so many musket shots are levelled; and that other, all over scars, pale, and fainting with hunger, yet resolved rather to die than to open the gate to him, dost thou think that these men are there upon their own account? No, peradventure in the behalf of one whom they never saw, and that never concerns himself for their pains and danger, but lies wallowing the while in sloth and pleasure. And this other snivelling, weak-ey'd, slovenly fellow, that thou seest come out of his study after midnight, dost thou think he has been tumbling over books to learn how to become a better man, wiser and more content? No such matter, he will there end his days, but he will teach posterity the measure of Plautus's verses, and the true orthography of some Latin word. Who is there that does not voluntarily exchange health, repose, and life itself, for reputation and glory, the most useless, frivolous, and false coin that passes current amongst us? As though our own death were not sufficient to terrify and trouble us, we charge ourselves, in addition, with those of our wives, children, and family: as though our own affairs did not afford us anxiety enough, we take upon us to annoy ourselves and disturb our brains, with those of our neighbours and friends:

Vah, quemquamne hominem in animum instituere, aut
Parare, quod sit carius, quam ipse est sibi![3]

"Alas! what mortal will be so unwise
Anything dearer than himself to prise?"

In whom solitude is most becoming.

Solitude seems to me to have the best pretence in such as have already employed most their active and flourishing age in the world's service; as for example, Thales. We have lived enough for others, let us at least live out the small remnant of life for ourselves; let us now call in our thoughts and intentions to ourselves, and to our own ease and repose. 'Tis no light thing to make a sure retreat; it will be enough to do, without mixing up with it other enterprizes and designs. Since God gives us leisure to prepare for, and to order our removal, let us make ready, pack up our baggage, take leave betimes of the company, and disentangle ourselves from those strong ties that engage us elsewhere, and separate us from ourselves. We must break the knot of our obligations, how powerful soever, and hereafter love this, or that, but espouse nothing but ourselves. That is to say, let the remainder be our own, yet not so joined and so rivetted as not to be forced away without flaying us, or tearing away a part of the whole piece. The greatest thing in the world is for a man to know how to be his own: 'tis time to wean ourselves from society when we can no more add any thing to it; he who is not in a condition to lend must forbid himself to borrow. Our forces begin to fail us; let us call them in, and lock them up at home. He that can convert and resolve into himself the offices of so many friendships, and of society, let him do it. In this decay of nature, which renders him useless, burthensome, and troublesome to others, let him take care not to be useless, burthensome, and troublesome to himself. Let him soothe and caress himself, and above all things be sure to govern himself with reverence to his reason and conscience to that degree as to be asham'd to make a false step in their presence. *Rarum est enim, ut satis se quisque vereatur.*[4] "For 'tis rarely that men have respect and reverence *enough* for themselves." Socrates says, that boys should cause themselves to be instructed, men exercise themselves in well doing, and old men retire from all civil and military employments, living at their own discretion, without the obligation to any office.[5] There are some complexions more

Of what importance it is for a man to know that he is his own master.

[1] August. *de Civit. Dei*, i. 18.
[2] Tibullus, iv. 13, 12.
[3] Terence, *Adelph.*, i. 1. 13.
[4] Quint. x. 7.

[5] Montaigne assigns this maxim of the Pythagoreans to Socrates, because, in the work whence he took it, (*Stobæus, Serm.* i.) it is immediately preceded by a saying of that philosopher.

proper for these precepts of retirement, than others. Such as are of a soft and faint apprehension, and of a delicate will, and affection which is not easily subdued to employment, which is my own case, will sooner incline to this advice than active and busy souls who embrace all, engage in all, and are hot upon every thing, who offer, present, and give themselves up to every occasion. We should avail ourselves of these accidental and extraneous things, so far as they are pleasant to us, but by no means lay our principal foundation thereon, for it is no true one; neither nature nor reason can allow it so to be; and why, then, should we, contrary to their laws, enslave our own content by giving it into the power of another? So, to anticipate also the accidents of fortune, and to deprive ourselves of the advantages we have in our own power, as several have done upon the account of devotion, and some philosophers upon a principle of reason, for a man to be his own servant, to lie hard, to put out his own eyes, throw wealth into the river, and seek out grief, as some do, that by the misery of this life they may pretend to bliss in another; and others, that by laying themselves on the ground they may avoid the danger of falling, are acts of an excessive virtue. The stoutest and firmest natures render even their retirement glorious and exemplary.

The constitutions most fitted for retirement.

Tuta et parvula laudo,
Cum res deficiunt, satis inter vilia fortis:
Verum, ubi quid melius contingit et unctius, idem
Hos sapere, et solos aio bene vivere, quorum
Conspicitur nitidis fundata pecunia villis.[1]

"Thus I, when better entertainments fail,
Bravely commend a plain and frugal meal;
On cheaper suppers show myself full wise;
But if some dainties more luxurious rise,
I call those wise and blest, and only those,
Whose large estates their splendid mansion shews."

A great deal less would serve my turn well enough. 'Tis enough for me, while in Fortune's favour, to prepare myself for her disgrace, and being at my ease to represent to myself, as far as my imagination can stretch, the ill to come; just as we practise at justs and tiltings, where we counterfeit war in the greatest calm of peace. I do not think Arcesilaus, the philosopher, the less a philosopher for knowing that he made use of gold and silver vessels,[2] as the condition of his fortune allowed him to do; and, indeed, have a better opinion of him than if he had denied himself what he used with liberality and moderation. I see the utmost limits of natural necessity, and considering a poor man begging at my door often more jocund and more healthy than I myself am, I put myself into his place, and attempt to dress my mind after his fashion. And running in like manner over other examples, though I fancy death, poverty, contempt, and sickness treading on my heels, I easily resolve not to be affrighted, forasmuch as a less than I am takes them with so much patience; I am not willing to believe that a weak understanding can do more than a strong one; or that the effects of reason cannot be as great as those of custom. And knowing how slight and uncertain these accidental conveniences are, I never forget, in the height of these enjoyments, to make it my chief prayer to God that he will please to render me content with myself, and the condition wherein he has placed me. I see young men, gay, merry fellows, who nevertheless keep a provision of pills in their trunks at home, to take when they catch a cold, which they fear so much the less because they think they have the remedy at hand. We should all take the example, and, if we find ourselves subject to some more violent disease, should furnish ourselves with such medicines as may numb and stupify the part affected. The employment a man should choose for a solitary life ought neither to be a laborious, nor an unpleasing one, otherwise 'tis to no purpose at all to be retired. And this depends upon every one's liking and humour; mine has no turn for household matters, and such as love this occupation ought to apply themselves to it with moderation;

The limits of natural necessities.

What occupation suits a solitary life.

Conentur sibi res, non se submittere rebus:[3]

"A man should to himself his business fit,
And not himself to 's business submit."[4]

otherwise 'tis a very servile employment, as Sallust tells us;[4] though some parts of it are more colourable than others, as the care of gardens, which Xenophon gives to Cyrus;[5] a mean may be found out betwixt that low and sordid application, so full of perpetual solicitude, which is seen in men who make it their entire business and study, and that stupid and extreme negligence, letting all things go to rack, which we see in others.

Democriti pecus edit agellos,
Cultaque, dum peregrè est animus sine corpore velox.[6]

"Democritus's cattle spoils his corn,
Whilst he aloft on Fancy's wings is borne."

But let us hear what advice the younger Pliny gives his friend, Cornelius Rufus, upon the subject of solitude: "I advise thee, in the pleasant retirement wherein thou art, to leave to thy servants that base and abject care of thy domestic matters, and to addict thyself to the study of letters, to extract thence something that may be entirely and absolutely thine own."[7] By which he means reputation; like Cicero, who says that he wishes to employ his solitude and retirement

With what view Pliny and Cicero advised retirement.

[1] Hor. *Epist.* i, 15, 42.
[2] Laertius, *in Vitâ.*
[3] Hor., *Epist.* i., 1. 19.
[4] *Catiline*, iv.
[5] Econom., iv. 20 Cicero, *On Old Age*, c. 17.
[6] Hor. *Epist.* i., 12. 12.
[7] *Epist.* i. 3. It is *Caninius*, and not Cornelius, Rufus, whom Pliny addresses.

from public affairs, to acquire by his writings an immortal life.[1]

Usque adeone
Scire tuum nihil est, nisi te scire hoc sciat alter.[2]

"Is knowledge nothing worth, unless you show
To others all that you pretend to know?"

It appears to be reason, when a man talks of retiring from the world, that he should look quite out of himself. These do it but by halves. They design well enough for themselves, 'tis true, when they shall be no more in it; but still they pretend to extract the fruits of their design from the world, when absent from it, by a ridiculous contradiction.

The imagination of those who seek solitude upon the account of devotion, filling up their courage with the certainty of the divine promises in the other life, is much more rationally founded. They propose to themselves God, an infinite object in goodness and power. The soul has there wherewithal, at full liberty, to satiate her desires. Afflictions and sufferings turn to their advantage, being undergone for the acquisition of an eternal health and everlasting joys. Death is to be wished and longed for, where it is the passage to so perfect a condition. And the severe rules they impose upon themselves are immediately softened down by custom, and all their carnal appetites baffled and subdued, by refusing to humour and feed them; they being only supported by use and exercise. This sole end, therefore, of another happy and immortal life, is that which really merits that we should abandon the pleasures and conveniences of this. And he who can really and constantly enflame his soul with the ardour of this lively faith and hope, does erect for himself in his solitude a more voluptuous and delicious life than any other sort of life. Neither the end, then, nor the means, of this advice of Pliny pleases me, for we often fall out of the frying-pan into the fire. This book-employment is as painful as any other, and as great an enemy to health, which ought to be the first thing in every man's thoughts; neither ought a man to be allured with the pleasure of it, which is the same that destroys the wary, avaricious, voluptuous, and ambitious men. The sages give us caution enough to beware of the treachery of our appetites, and to distinguish true and entire pleasures from such as are mixed and complicated with pain. For the greatest part of pleasures (say they) tickle and caress only to strangle us, like those thieves whom the Egyptians called Philetas.[3] If head-ache came before drunkenness, we should have a care of drinking too much: but pleasure to deceive us marches before, and conceals her train. Books are pleasant, but if by their use we impair our health, and spoil our good humour, the best things we have, let us give them over. I, for my part, am one of those who think that no fruit derived from them can recompense so great a loss. As men who feel themselves weakened by a long series of indisposition give themselves up at last to the mercy of medicine, and submit to certain rules of living, which they are for the future never to transgress; so he who retires, weary of, and disgusted with, the common way of living, ought to model this new one he enters into by the rules of reason, and to institute and arrange it by premeditation, and after the best method he can contrive. He ought to have taken leave of all sorts of labour, what face soever it bears; and generally to have shaken off all those passions which disturb the tranquillity of body and soul, and then choose the way that best suits his own humour:

What is to be thought of the solitude which is courted for the sake of devotion.

Unusquisque suâ noverit ire viâ.[4]

"We each best know to what we are inclined."

In attending to domestic matters, in study, hunting, and all other exercises, we should go to the utmost limits of pleasure; but must take heed of proceeding farther, or trouble begins to mix in it. We are to reserve so much employment only as is necessary to keep us in breath; and to defend us from the inconveniences that the other extreme, of a dull and stupid laziness, brings along with it. There are some sterile, knotty sciences, and chiefly hammered out for the crowd; let such be left to them who are engaged in the service of the world. I for my part care for no other books but either such as are pleasant and easy, to tickle my fancy, or those that comfort and instruct me how to regulate my life and death.

Certain sciences with which the mind must not be embarrassed.

Tacitum sylvas inter reptare salubres,
Curantem quidquid dignum sapiente bonoque est.[5]

"Silently meditating in the groves,
What best a wise and honest man behoves."

The defect of Pliny's and Cicero's advice.

Wiser men may propose to themselves a repose wholly spiritual, as having great force and vigour of mind; but for me, who am but ordinarily furnished that way, I find it necessary to support myself with bodily conveniences; and age having of late deprived me of those pleasures that were most acceptable to me, I instruct and whet my appetite to those that remain, and are more suitable to this new season of my life. We ought to hold fast, tooth and nail, of the use of the pleasures of life, that our years, one after another, snatch away from us.

Carpamus dulcia; nostrum est
Quod vivis; cinis, et manes, et fabula fies.[6]

——— "And our time employ
In pleasures which alone give life its zest;
You'll be a tale and ashes like the rest."

[1] Cicero, *Orat.* c. 43.
[2] Pers. i. 27.
[3] Seneca, *Epist.* 54.
[4] Propertius, ii. 25, 38.
[5] Horace, *Epist.* iv. 4, 4.
[6] Persius, v. 151.

Now, as to the end that Pliny and Cicero propose to us of glory; 'tis infinitely wide of my account; ambition is, of all others, the most contrary humour to solitude. Glory and repose are so inconsistent that they cannot possibly inhabit in one and the same place; and, as far as I understand, those who seek the two have only their arms and legs disengaged from the crowd: their mind and wishes remain engaged behind more than ever.

Glory and tranquillity incompatible.

Tun', vetule, auriculis alienis colligis escas?[1]

"Old as you are, will you the food supply
For other ears?

They are only retired to take a better leap, and by a stronger motion to give a brisker charge into the crowd. Will you see how they shoot short? Let us put into the balance the advice of two philosophers, of two very different sects,[2] writing the one to Idomeneus, the other to Lucilius, their friends, to retire into solitude from worldly honours and the administration of public affairs. "You have," say they, "hitherto lived swimming and floating; come now to die in the harbour. You have given the first part of your life to the light, give what remains to the shade. It is impossible to give over business if you do not also quit the fruit, and therefore disengage yourselves from all the concerns of name and glory. 'Tis to be feared the lustre of your former actions will give you but too much light, and follow you into your most private retreat. Quit with other pleasures that which proceeds from the approbation of the world. And as to your knowledge and parts, never concern yourselves, they will not lose their effect if yourselves be ever the better for them.[3] Remember him who, being asked Why he took so much pains in an art that could come to the knowledge of but few persons?[4] 'A few are enough for me,' replied he; 'I have enough with one, I have enough with never a one.' He said true; yourself and a companion are theatre enough to one another, or you to yourself.[5] Let us be to you the whole people, and the whole people to you but one.[6] 'Tis a low ambition to think to derive glory from a man's sloth and privacy. You should do like the beasts of chase, who efface the track at the entrance into their den.[7] You are to concern yourselves no more how the world talks of you, but how you are to talk to yourselves. Retire yourself into yourself, but first prepare yourself there to receive yourself.[8] It were a folly to trust yourself in your own hands, if you cannot govern yourself.[9] A man may miscarry alone as well as in company; till you have rendered yourself one before whom you dare not trip, and till you have a bashfulness and respect for yourself; *obversentur species honestæ animo*.[10] (Let just and honest things be still represented to the mind.) Present continually to your imagination Cato, Phocion, and Aristides, in whose presence fools themselves will hide their faults, and make them controllers of all your intentions. Should these deviate from virtue, your respect to those will again set you right; they will keep you in the way of being contented with yourself, to borrow nothing of any other but yourself; to restrain and fix your soul in certain and limited thoughts, wherein she may please herself, and, having comprehended the true and real good which men the more enjoy the more they understand, to rest satisfied, without desire of prolongation of life or memory." These are the precepts of the true and natural philosophy, not of a boasting and prating philosophy, such as that of the two former.[11]

CHAPTER XXXIX.

A CONSIDERATION UPON CICERO.

One word more by way of comparison betwixt these two. There are to be gathered out of the writings of Cicero and the younger Pliny (who, in my opinion, but little resembles his uncle in his humour), infinite testimonies of a nature boundlessly ambitious; and, amongst others, this for one, that they both, in the sight of all the world, solicit the historians of their time not to forget them in their memoirs;[12] and fortune, as it were in spite, has made the vanity of these requests live upon record down to this age of ours, while she has long since buried the histories of themselves in

The ambition of Cicero and Pliny.

1 Persius. i. 22.

2 Epicurus and Seneca. See Seneca (*Epist.* 21), who quotes a passage of Epicurus's Letter to Idomeneus, very different from that preserved by Laertius.

3 "Cur ego, inquis, ista didici? Non est quod timeas ne operam perdideris: tibi didicisti."—Seneca, *Epist.* 7.

4 Seneca, *Epist.* 7.

5 "Satis magnum alter alteri theatrum sumus." This is what Epicurus wrote to one of his friends.

6 Seneca ascribes this saying to Democritus, *Ep.* 7.

7 Seneca, *Epist.* 68.

8 Id. *ibid.*

9 "Prodest sine dubio custodem sibi imposuisse, et habere quem respicias, quem interesse tuis cogitationibus judices. Omnia nobis mala *solitudo* persuadet. Cum jam profeceris ut sit tibi etiam tui reverentia, licebit dimittas pædagogum. Interim te aliquorum auctoritate custodi. Aut Cato ille sit, aut Scipio, aut Lælius, aut cujus interventu perditi quoque homines vitia supprimerent, dum te efficis coram quo peccare non audit."—Seneca, *Epist.* 25.

10 Cicero, *Tusc. Quæs.* i. 2. 21.

11 Pliny the Younger and Cicero.

12 Cicero writing to Lucceius (*Epist.* v. 12), and Pliny to Tacitus (vii. 33), with this most remarkable difference, however, that the first earnestly desires his friend not to attach himself scrupulously to the rules of, but boldly to leap the barriers of, truth in his favour. "Te plane etiam atque etiam rogo, ut et ornes ea vehementius etiam quam fortasse sentis et in ea leges historiæ negligas;" whereas Pliny declares expressly that he does not desire Tacitus to give the least offence to the truth:—"Quamquam non exigo ut excedas rei actæ modum. Nam nec historia debet egredi veritatem, et honeste factis veritas sufficit." One would have thought that Montaigne should, in justice to Pliny, have distinguished him from Cicero in this particular.

oblivion. But this exceeds all meanness of spirit in persons of such quality as they were to think to derive any glory from babbling and prating; even to the making use of their private letters to their friends, and so withal that, though some of them were never sent, the opportunity being lost, they nevertheless published them with this worthy excuse, that they were unwilling to lose their labour and have their lucubrations thrown away.[1] Was it not well becoming two consuls of Rome, sovereign magistrates of the republic that commanded the world, to spend their time in patching up elegant missives, in order to gain the reputation of being well versed in their own mother-tongue? What could a pitiful schoolmaster have done worse, who by it got his living? If the acts of Xenophon and Cæsar had not far transcended their eloquence, I don't believe they would ever have taken the pains to write them. They made it their business to recommend not their saying, but their doing. And could the perfection of eloquence have added any lustre proportionable to the merit of a great person, certainly Scipio and Lælius had never resigned the honour of their comedies, with all the luxuriances and delicacies of the Latin tongue, to an African slave; for that the work was theirs its beauty and excellency sufficiently prove: besides Terence himself confesses as much,[2] and I should take it ill in any one that would dispossess me of that belief.

Why Xenophon and Cæsar wrote their own histories.

'Tis an injurious mockery and impertinence to extol a man for qualities misbecoming his condition, though otherwise commendable in themselves, and for such as ought not to be his chief talent; as if a man should commend a king for being a good painter, a good architect, a good marksman, or a good runner at the ring. Commendations that add no honour unless in combination with, and in addition to, those that are befitting him, namely, justice and the knowledge how to govern his people both in peace and war. 'Tis in this way only that agriculture was an honour to Cyrus, and eloquence and the knowledge of letters to Charlemagne. I have, indeed, in my time, known some who, by a knack of writing, have got both title and fortune, yet disown their apprenticeship, purposely corrupt their style, and affect ignorance of so vulgar a quality (which also our nation observes to be rarely seen in very learned hands), carefully seeking a reputation by better qualities.

Qualities, which are not suitable to a man's rank in the world, cannot do him honour.

The companions of Demosthenes in the embassy to Philip, extolling that prince as handsome, eloquent, and a stout drinker, Demosthenes said, "That those were commendations more proper for a woman, an advocate, or a sponge, than for a king."[3]

Great men are not to be praised for common things.

> Imperet bellante prior, jacentem
> Lenis in hostem.[4]
>
> "First let his empire from his valour flow,
> And then from mercy on a prostrate foe."

'Tis not his profession to know either how to hunt or to dance well:

> Orabunt causas alii, cœlique meatus
> Describent radio, et fulgentia sidera dicent,
> Hic regere imperio populos sciat.[5]
>
> "Let others
> Plead better at the bar, describe the skies,
> And when the stars descend, and when they rise,
> But, Rome! 'tis thine alone, with awful sway,
> To rule mankind, and make the world obey."

Plutarch says, moreover, that to appear so excellent in these less necessary qualities is to produce witness against a man's self, that he has spent his time, and applied his study ill, which ought to have been employed in the acquisition of more necessary and more useful things. Thus, Philip, King of Macedon, having heard the great Alexander, his son, sing at a feast, to the wonder and envy of the best musicians there:—"Art thou not ashamed," said he to him, "to sing so well?"[6] And to the same Philip, a musician with whom he was disputing about something concerning his art, said, "Heaven forbid, sir, that so great a misfortune should ever befal you as to understand these things better than I."[7] A king should be able to answer, as Iphicrates did the orator, who pressed upon him in his invective after this manner: "And who art thou, that thou bravest it at this rate? Art thou a man-at-arms? Art thou an archer? Art thou a pikeman?" "I am none of all this, but I know how to command all these."[8] And Antisthenes took it for an argument of little valour in Ismenias that he was commended for playing excellently well upon a flute.[9] I know very well that when I hear any one insist upon the language of these Essays, I had rather a great deal he would say nothing. 'Tis not so much to elevate the style as to depress the sense, and so much the more offensively as they do it obliquely. I am much deceived if many other writers deliver more worth noting as to the matter; and, how well or ill soever, if any other writer has strewed

Great men should not excel in things not altogether necessary.

The merit of Montaigne's Essays.

[1] Montaigne is mistaken in supposing that the Letters of Cicero were written for the public. Cicero himself had only preserved seventy of them (*ad Attic.* xvi.); the rest were collected by Tiron. It is only necessary to read the letters of Atticus to be convinced that they were addressed to him alone. What Montaigne says applies only to Pliny the Younger.

[2] He does not confess it exactly, but he does not deny it very forcibly.

[3] Plutarch, *in vitâ*.

[4] Hor. *Carmen Secul.* 51.

[5] *Æneid*, vi. 849.

[6] Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*.

[7] Id., *How to distinguish a flatterer*.

[8] Id., *On Fortune*.

[9] Id., *Life of Pericles*.

them either with much more material, or thicker upon his paper, than myself. To bring the more in, I only put in the heads; were I to annex the sequels, I should vastly multiply this volume. And how many stories have I scattered up and down here that I only touch upon, which, should any one more curiously search into, they would find matter enough to produce infinite Essays. Neither these stories, nor my allegations, do always serve simply for example, authority, or ornament; I do not only regard them for the use I make of them; they carry sometimes, besides what I apply them to, the seed of a richer and a bolder matter, and sometimes, collaterally, a more delicate sound, both to me myself, who will say no more about it in this place, and to others who shall happen to be of my fancy.

But returning to the speaking virtue; I find no great choice betwixt not knowing to speak anything but ill, and not knowing any thing but speaking well. *Non est ornamentum virile concinnitas.*[1] "Neatness of style is no manly ornament." The sages tell us that, as to what concerns knowledge, there is nothing but philosophy; and to what concerns effects, nothing but virtue, that is generally proper to all degrees, and to all orders. There is something like this in these two other philosophers, for they also promise eternity to the letters they write to their friends; but 'tis after another manner, and by accommodating themselves for a good end, to the vanity of another; for they write to them, that if the concern of making themselves known to future ages, and the thirst of glory, do yet detain them in the management of public affairs, and make them fear the solitude and retirement to which they would persuade them; let them never trouble themselves more about it, forasmuch as they shall have credit enough with posterity to assure them that, were there nothing else but the very letters thus writ to them, those letters will render their names as known and famous as their own public actions themselves could do.[2] And besides this difference, these are not idle and empty letters, that contain nothing but a fine gingle of well-chosen words, and fine couched phrases, but replete and abounding with grave and learned discourses, by which a man may render himself not more eloquent, but more wise; and that instruct us not to speak, but to do well. Away with that eloquence that so enchants us with its harmony that we should more study it than things; unless you will affirm that of Cicero to be of so supreme a perfection as to form a complete body of itself. And of him I shall further add one story we read of him to this purpose, wherein his nature will much more manifestly be laid open to us. He was to make an oration in public, and found himself a little straitened in time, to fit his words to his mouth, as he had a mind to do; when Eros, one of his slaves, brought him word that the audience was deferred till the next day, at which he was so ravished with joy that he enfranchised him for the good news.[3]

Epicurus and Seneca set in opposition to Pliny and Cicero.

Upon this subject of letters, I will add, that it is a kind of writing wherein my friends think I can do something; and, I am willing to confess, I should rather have chosen to publish my whimsies that way than any other, had I had to whom to write; but I wanted such a settled correspondent as I once had, to attract me to it, to raise my fancy, and keep me to it. For to traffic with the wind, as some others have done, and to forge vain names to direct my letters to, in a serious subject, I could never do it but in a dream, being a sworn enemy to all manner of falsification. I should have been more diligent, and more confident, had I had a judicious and indulgent friend to whom to address, than thus to expose myself to various judgments of a whole people; and I am deceived if I had not succeeded better. I have naturally a comic and familiar style; but it is peculiar to myself, and not proper for public business, but, like the language I speak, too compact, irregular, abrupt, and singular. And as to letters of ceremony, that have no other substance than a fine contexture of courteous words, I am wholly to seek: I have no faculty nor relish for those tedious offers of service and affection; I don't much believe in them, and should not forgive myself, should I say more than I meant, which is very remote from the present practice; for there never was so abject and servile a prostitution of tenders of life, soul, of devotion, adoration, vassal, slave, and I know not what, as now; all which expressions are so common, and so indifferently used to and fro by every one, and to every one, that, when they would profess a greater and more respectful inclination upon more just occasions, they have not wherewithal to express it.

Montaigne's account of himself as a letter-writer.

I mortally hate all air of flattery, which is the cause that I naturally fall into a dry, rough, and crude way of speaking, which, to such as do not know me, may seem a little to smack of disdain. I honour those most to whom I show the least honour; and where my soul moves with the greatest cheerfulness, I easily forget the ceremonies of look and gesture; I offer

[1] Senec. *Epist.* cxv.

[2] When Epicurus wrote to Idomeneus, then the slave of rigid power, and who had great affairs in his hands, to persuade him from a gay life, to the pursuit of true and solid glory, "If," said he, "you are fond of glory, my epistles will make you more celebrated than all things that you admire, and for which you are admired." Seneca, (*Epist.* xxi.) who, in the same epistle, says to his friend, Lucilius, "The very thing which Epicurus could promise to his friend, I promise to you, Lucilius; I shall be in the favour of posterity: it is in my power to bring out names that shall be lasting."

[3] Plutarch, *Apothegms.*

myself faintly and bluntly to them whose I effectually am, tendering myself the least to him to whom I am the most devoted. Methinks they should read it in my heart, and that my expression would but injure the love I have conceived within. To welcome, take leave, give thanks, accost, offer service, and such verbal formalities as the laws of our modern civility enjoin, I know no man so stupidly unprovided of language as myself. And I have never been employed in writing letters of favour and recommendation but he in whose behalf it was did not think my mediation cold and imperfect. The Italians are great printers of letters. I do believe I have at least a hundred several volumes of them, of all which, those of Annibal Caro[1] seem to me to be the best.

If all the paper I have scribbled to the ladies at the time when my hand was really prompted by my passion were now in being, there might, peradventure, be found a page worthy to be communicated to our young inamoratos that are besotted that way. I always write my letters post-haste, and so precipitately that, though I write an intolerable bad hand,[2] I rather choose to do it myself than to employ another; for I can find none able to follow me, and I never transcribe. I have accustomed the great folks that know me to endure my blots and dashes, and paper without fold or margin. Those that cost me the most pains are the worst; when I once begin to draw them on, 'tis a sign my mind's not there. I fall to without premeditation or design, the first paragraph begets the second, and so to the end of the chapter. The letters of this age consist more in margin and prefaces than matter; whereas, just as I had rather write two letters than fold up one, and always assign that employment to another person, so, when the business of my letter is dispatched, I would, with all my heart, transfer it to another hand, to add those long harangues, offers, and prayers that we place at the bottom, and should be glad that some new custom would discharge us of that trouble altogether; as also superscribing them with a long ribble-row of qualities and titles, for fear of making mistakes in which I have several times omitted writing, and especially to men of the long robe and of finance. There are so many new offices, that 'tis hard to place so many titles of honour in their proper and due order, though, being so dearly bought, they are neither to be mistaken nor omitted without offence. I find the same fault likewise with loading the fronts and title-pages of the books we commit to the press with such a clutter of titles.

[1] The celebrated translator of the *Æneid*, born 1507, at Citta-Nuova, in the Marches of Ancona; died at Rome, 1566. The first part of his Letters appeared in 1572, and the second in 1574. They are reckoned among the models of Italian prose writing.

[2] Montaigne must not be believed altogether, when he talks of his bad hand-writing. I have seen the copy of his Essays, corrected by his own hand, from which Naigeon's edition was printed, and I can affirm that his hand-writing is very legible, straight, and, which is remarkable, exhibits but slight traces of the extreme vivacity of his character.—A. Duval.

CHAPTER XL.

THAT THE RELISH OF GOOD AND EVIL IN A GREAT MEASURE DEPENDS UPON THE OPINION WE HAVE OF THEM.

Men (says an ancient Greek sentence[3]) are tormented with the opinions they have of things, and not by the things themselves. It would be a great victory obtained for the relief of our miserable human condition, could this proposition be established for certain and true throughout. For if evils have no admission into us but by the judgment we ourselves make of them, it should seem that it is then in our own power to despise them or to turn them to good. If things surrender themselves to our mercy, why do we not convert and accommodate them to our advantage? If what we call evil and torment is neither evil nor torment in itself, but only that our fancy gives it that quality, and makes it so, it lies in us to change and alter it; and it being in our own choice, if there be no constraint upon us, we must certainly be very strange fools to take arms for that side which is most offensive to us, and to give sickness, want, and contempt, a nauseous taste, if it be in our power to give them a more grateful relish, and if, fortune simply providing the matter, 'tis our business to give it its form.

What evil is and how it concerns us.

Now what we call evil is not so of itself, or at least that, be it what it may, it depends upon us to give it another taste or complexion (for all comes to one), let us examine how this can be maintained. If the original being of those things we fear had power to lodge itself in us by its own authority, it would then lodge itself alike and in like manner in all; for men are all of the same kind, and, saving in greater and less proportions, are all provided with the same utensils and instruments to conceive and to judge; but the diversity of opinions we have of those things does clearly evince that they only enter us by composition. One particular person, peradventure, admits them in their true being; but a thousand others give them a new and contrary being in them.

The different ideas of death.

We hold death, poverty, and grief, to be our principal enemies; now this death, which some repute the most dreadful of all dreadful things, who knows but that others call it the only secure harbour from the storms and tempests of life; the sovereign good of nature; the sole support of liberty; and the common and ready remedy for all evils? And, as the one expects it with fear and trembling, the others support

[3] Epictetus, *Manual*, c. 10.

it with greater ease than life. This fellow complains of its facility :—

> Mors, utinam pavidos vitæ subducere nolles,
> Sed virtus te sola daret ![1]
>
> "O death ! I wish thou wouldst the coward spare,
> That of thy gift the brave alone might share."

But let us leave this vaunting courage. Theodorus answered Lysimachus, who threatened to kill him, "Thou wilt do a brave feat," said he, "to arrive at the force of a cantharides."[2] The greatest portion of philosophers are observed to have either purposely anticipated, or hastened and assisted, their own death. How many ordinary people do we see led to execution, and that not to a simple death, but mixed with shame, and sometimes with grievous torments, who yet appear with such assurance, some through obstinacy, some from natural simplicity, that one can discover no change from their ordinary condition; settling their domestic affairs, commending themselves to their friends, singing, preaching, and talking with the people: nay, sometimes passing jokes to make the bystanders laugh, and drinking to their companions, just as well as Socrates. One that they were leading to the gallows, told them they must not carry him through such a street, lest a merchant that lived there should arrest him by the way for an old debt. Another told the hangman he must not touch his neck, for fear of making him laugh, he was so ticklish; another answered his confessor, who promised him that he should that day sup with our Lord, "Do you go then," said he, "in my room; for I for my part keep fast to-day." Another having called for drink, and the hangman having drunk first, said he would not drink after him, for fear of catching the pox. Everybody has heard the tale of the Picard, to whom, being upon the ladder, they presented a girl of the town, telling him (as our law does sometimes permit) that if he would marry her they would save his life; he having a while considered her, and perceiving that she halted, "Tie up, tie up," said he, "she limps." And they tell another story of the same kind, of a fellow in Denmark, who, being condemned to lose his head, and the like condition being proposed to him upon the scaffold, refused it, by reason the girl they offered him had hollow cheeks and too sharp a nose. A servant at Thonlouse being accused of heresy, for the sole ground of his belief referred himself to that of his master, a young student, prisoner with him, and chose rather to die than suffer himself to be persuaded that his master could err. We read of the inhabitants of Arras, when Louis the Eleventh took that city, that a great many let themselves be hanged, rather than they would say, "God save the king." And amongst that mean-souled race of men, the buffoons, there have been some who would not leave their fooling at the very moment of death. He that the hangman turned off the ladder cried, "Launch the galley," a slang saying of his; and another, who at the point of death was laid upon a pallet before the fire, the physician asking him where his pain lay, "Betwixt the bench and the fire," said he; and the priest, to give him extreme unction, groping for his feet, which his pain had made him pull up to him, "You will find them," said he, "at the end of my legs." To one that being present exhorted him to recommend himself to God, "Why? who's going there?" said he. And the other replying, "It will presently be yourself, if it be his good pleasure,"—"Would I were sure to be there by to-morrow night," said he. "Do but recommend yourself to him," said the other, "and you will soon be there." "I were best then," said he, "to carry my recommendations myself."

Merry jokes of some persons led to execution.

In the kingdom of Narsingua to this day the wives of their priests are buried alive with the bodies of their husbands; all other wives are burnt at their husbands' funerals, which they not only firmly, but cheerfully, undergo.[3] At the death of their king his wives and concubines, his favourites, all his officers and domestic servants, who make up a great number of people, present themselves so cheerfully to the fire where his body is burnt that they seem to take it for a singular honour to accompany their master in death. During our late war of Milan, where there happened so many takings and retakings of towns, the people, impatient of so many various changes of fortune, took such a resolution to die that I have heard my father say he there saw a list taken of five and twenty masters of families that made themselves away in one week's time. A misfortune somewhat resembling that of the Zanthians, who being besieged by Brutus precipitated themselves, men, women, and children, into such a furious appetite of dying that nothing can be done to evade death which these did not put in practice to avoid life; insomuch that Brutus with all his endeavours could save but a very small number.[4]

Women that bury or burn themselves alive with the dead bodies of their husbands.

Death fondly coveted.

Even opinion is of force enough to make itself to be espoused at the expense of life. The first article of that valiant oath that Greece took and observed, in the Median war, was that every one should sooner exchange life for death than their own

Opinions espoused at the expense of life.

[1] Lucret. iv. 580. [2] Cicero, *Tus. Quæs.* v. 40.

[3] In the Indies (says Cicero), where it is the custom for a man to have several wives, when the husband dies the women dispute who was his greatest favourite; and she who carries the question is overjoyed, and burnt on the same pile with her husband. (*Tus. Quæs.* v. 27.) The same custom was observed by a people of Thrace, according to Herodotus, v., and is still kept up in Indostan.

[4] Fifty only, who were saved against their will.—Plutarch *Life of Marcus Brutus*, c. 8.

laws for those of Persia.[1] What a world of people do we see, in the wars betwixt the Turks and the Greeks, rather embrace a cruel death than to uncircumcise themselves to admit of baptism! An example of which no sort of religion is incapable. The Kings of Castile having banished the Jews out of their dominions, John, King of Portugal, in consideration of eight crowns a-head, sold them a retirement into his for a certain limited time, he undertaking to furnish them with shipping to transport them into Africa. The limited day being come, which, once lapsed, they were given to understand that such as were afterwards found in the kingdom should remain slaves, vessels were very slenderly provided, and those who embarked in them were rudely and villanously used by the seamen, who, besides other indignities, kept them cruising upon the sea, one while forwards, and another backwards, till they had consumed all their provisions, and were constrained to buy of them at so dear a rate, and for so long a time, that they set them not on shore till they were all stripped to their very shirts. The news of this inhuman usage being brought to those who remained behind, the greater part of them resolved upon slavery, and some made a shew of changing their religion. Emanuel, the successor of John, being come to the crown, first set them at liberty; and afterwards, altering his mind, ordered them to depart his country, assigning three ports for their departure;—hoping (says the Bishop Osorius, no contemptible Latin historian of these latter times,) that the favour of the liberty he had given them having failed of converting them to Christianity, yet the aversion to commit themselves to the outrages of the mariners, and to abandon a country they were now habituated to, and were grown very rich in, to go and expose themselves in strange and unknown regions, would certainly do it. But, finding himself deceived in his expectation, and that they were all resolved upon the voyage, he cut off two of the ports he had promised them, to the end that the length and incommodity of the passage might reduce some; or that he might have opportunity, by crowding them all into one place, the more conveniently to execute what he had designed; which was to force all the children under fourteen years of age from the arms of their fathers and mothers, to transport them from their sight and conversation into a place where they might be instructed and brought up in our religion.[2] He says that this produced a most horrid spectacle: the natural affections betwixt the parents and their children, and, above all, their zeal to their ancient belief, contending against this violent decree, fathers and mothers were commonly seen making themselves away, and, by a still sadder and sterner example, precipitating, out of love and compassion, their young children into wells, to avoid the severity of this law. As to the remainder of them, the time that had been prefixed being expired, for want of means to transport them, they again returned into slavery. Some turned Christians, upon whose faith, or rather that of their posterity, even to this day, which is a hundred years after, few Portuguese rely, or believe them to be real converts: though custom, and length of time, are much more powerful counsellors in such changes than any constraint whatever. In the town of Castlenau-Darry, fifty heretics, Albigenses, at one time suffered themselves to be burnt alive in one fire, rather than they would renounce their opinions. *Quoties non modò ductores nostri* (says Cicero), *sed universi etiam exercitus, ad non dubiam mortem concurrerunt?*[3] "How oft have not only our leaders, but whole armies, run to certain death!" I have seen an intimate friend of mine, with a real affection that was rooted in his heart by divers plausible arguments, which I could never dispossess him of, ardently seek death, and, upon the first honourable occasion that offered itself, precipitate himself into it; and that, too, without any manner of visible reason, with an obstinate and ardent desire of dying. We have several examples in our own times of those, even among little children, who, for fear of a whipping, or some such little thing, have dispatched themselves. And what shall we not fear (says one of the ancients), if we dread that which cowardice itself has chosen for its refuge?[4]

Cruel treatment of Jews by the King of Castile.

Jews that out of zeal for their religion killed themselves and children.

Albigenses heretics chose rather to be burnt than recant their opinions.

To produce here a catalogue of those of all sexes, and conditions, and sects, even in the most happy ages, who have either with great constancy looked death in the face, or voluntarily sought it; and sought it not only to avoid the evils of this life, but some purely to avoid the satiety of living, and others, for the hope of a better condition elsewhere; I should never

[1] Diod. Sic. v. 29.

[2] Mariana, the celebrated Jesuit, says, in his history of Spain, tom. ii. xxvi. 13, that, by an edict of this prince, those children were baptised by force: a cruel edict, says the good Jesuit, altogether contrary to the Christian laws and institutes. What! he adds, shall violence be used to force men to embrace Christianity, and, in the most important affair of the world, to rob those whom God has been pleased to leave to their own discretion, of that heavenly present, LIBERTY! To proceed so far is a horrible crime, as well as to force children with this view from the arms of their parents. The Portuguese nation, however, committed sin in these two points, having dragged the children to baptism by force, and without the consent of their parents, and having engaged those more advanced in years to make profession of Christianity, by loading them with reproaches and injuries, and especially by fraudulently depriving them of the means of retiring elsewhere, which they had expressly obliged themselves to grant them.

[3] *Tusc. Quæs.* i. 37.

[4] Seneca, *Epist.* 70.

have done. Nay, the number is so infinite that in truth I should have a better bargain on't to reckon up those who have feared it. This one, therefore, shall serve for all. Pyrrho, the philosopher, being one day in a boat, in a very great tempest, shewed to those he saw the most affrighted about him, and encouraged them by the example of, a hog that was there, nothing at all concerned at the storm.[1] Shall we then dare to say that this advantage of reason, of which we so much boast, and upon the account of which we think ourselves masters and emperors over all other creatures, was given us for a torment? To what end serves the knowledge of things, if it renders us more unmanly; if, with it, we lose the tranquillity and repose we should enjoy without it, and if it puts us into a worse condition than Pyrrho's hog? Shall we employ the understanding that was conferred upon us for our greatest good to our own ruin; setting ourselves against the design of nature, and the universal order of things, which intend that every one should make use of the faculties, members, and means he has, to his own best advantage? But it may peradventure be objected against me:—Your rule is true enough as to what concerns death; but what will you say of indigence? What will you say of pain, which Aristippus, Hieronymus, and almost all the wise men, have reputed the worst of evils? And those who have denied it by word of mouth have confessed it in effects. Possidonius being extremely tormented with a sharp and painful disease, Pompeius came to visit him, excusing himself that he had taken so unseasonable a time to come to hear him discourse of philosophy: "The gods forbid," said Possidonius, "that pain should ever have the power to hinder me from talking of it;" and thereupon fell immediately upon a discourse of the contempt of pain. But, in the mean time, pain was playing its part, and plagued him incessantly; on which he cried out, "Do thy worst, pain, thou shalt never make me say thou art an evil."[2] This story, that they make such a clutter about, what is there in it of the contempt of pain? It only fights it with words, and, in the mean time, if its shootings did not move him, why did he let it interrupt his discourse? Why did he fancy he did so great a thing in refusing to call it an evil? All does not here consist in the imagination; our fancies may work upon other things. But this is a certain knowledge that is playing its part, and of which our senses themselves are judges.

To what use the knowledge of things should be applied.

Qui nisi sunt veri, ratio quoque falsa sit omnis.[3]

"Which, if not true, even reason itself must be false."

Shall we persuade our skins that the lashes of a whip tickle us? Or our palates, that a potion of aloes is *vin de Grave*? Pyrrho's hog is here in the same predicament with us; he is not afraid of death, 'tis true, but, if you beat him, he will cry out to some purpose. Shall we force the general law of nature, which in every living creature under heaven is seen to tremble under pain? The very trees seem to groan under the blows they receive. Death is only felt by reason, forasmuch as it is but the movement of an instant:

Aut fuit, aut veniet; nihil est præsentis in illa,
Morsque minus pœnæ, quam mora mortis, habet.[4]

"Still past or future, here no present tense
Submits the fleeting object to our sense;
Death cuts so quick the thread of life in twain,
The thought is far more dreadful than the pain."

A thousand beasts, a thousand men, are dead ere they are threatened. That also which we principally pretend to fear in death is pain, the ordinary forerunner of it; yet, if we may believe a holy father, *Malam mortem non facit, nisi quod sequitur mortem.*[5] "Nothing makes death evil but what follows it." And I should say, yet more probably, that neither that which goes before, nor that which follows after, are at all the appurtenances of death. We excuse ourselves falsely, and I find, by experience, that it is rather our impatience at the imagination of death that makes us impatient of pain; and that we find it doubly grievous, as it threatens us with death. But reason, accusing our cowardice for fearing a thing so sudden, so unavoidable, and so insensible, we take the other as the more excusable pretext. All ills that carry no other danger along with them, but simply the evils themselves, we despise as things of no danger. The tooth-ache, or the gout, painful as they are, being yet not reputed mortal, who reckons them in the catalogue of diseases?

Now let us suppose that in death we principally regard the pain; so, also, there is nothing to be feared in poverty but the miseries it brings along with it, thirst, hunger, cold, heat, watching, and the other inconveniences it makes us suffer; here, still, we have nothing to do but with pain. I will grant, and very willingly, that it is the worst misfortune of our being; (for I am the man upon earth that the most hates and avoids it, considering that hitherto, I thank God, I have had so little to do with it,) but still, it lies in us, if not to annihilate, at least to lessen it by patience; and, though the body should mutiny, to maintain the soul and reason, nevertheless, in good temper. And were it not so, who would ever have given any reputation to virtue,

Pain, the worst accident of our being, how it may be mitigated.

[1] Laertius, *in vitâ.*
[2] Cicero, *Tusc. Quæs.* iv. 25.
[3] Luc. iv. 487.
[4] The first verse of this distich is taken from a satirical composition which Montaigne's friend, Boëtius, addressed to him, and of which I quoted the beginning in chap. 27, *Of Friendship.* The second is from Ovid's Epistle, *Ariadne to Theseus*, ver. 84.
[5] St. August., *de Civit. Dei*, i. 11.

valour, strength, magnanimity, and resolution? Where were their parts to be played, if there were no pain to be defied? *Avida est periculi virtus.*[1] "Virtue is greedy of danger." Were there no lying upon the ground, no enduring, armed at all points, the meridian heat, no feeding upon the flesh of horses and asses, no seeing ourselves hacked and hewed to pieces, no having a bullet pulled out from amongst the shattered bones, no stitching up, cauterizing, and searching of wounds, by what means were the advantage we covet to have over the vulgar to be acquired? 'Tis very far from flying evil and pain, what the sages say, that of actions equally good, a man should most covet to perform that wherein there is greatest labour and pain. *Non enim hilaritate, nec lascivià, nec risu, aut joco comite levitatis, sed sæpè etiam tristes firmitate et constantiâ sunt beati.*[2] "For men are not always happy by mirth and wantonness, nor by laughter and jesting, the companions of levity, but very often the graver and more melancholy sort of men reap felicity from their steadiness and constancy." And for this reason it ever was impossible to persuade our forefathers but that the victories obtained by dint of force, and the hazard of war, were still more honourable than those gained in security, by stratagem or wiles.

Lætius est, quoties magno sibi constat honestum.[3]

"A noble act more noble does appear
By how much more it costs the doer dear."

Besides, this ought to be our comfort, that naturally, *Si gravis, brevis: si longus, levis.*[4] "If the pain be violent, 'tis short; and if long, not violent." Thou wilt not feel it long, if thou feelest it much, it will either put an end to itself, or to thee, which comes to the same thing; if thou canst not support it, it will export thee. *Memineris maximos morte finiri; parvos multa habere intervalla requietis: mediocrium nos esse dominos: Ut si tolerabiles sint, feramus; sin minùs, è vita, quum ea non placeat, tanquam è theatro, exeamus.*[5] "Remember that great pains are terminated by death, that small ones have many intermissions of repose, and that we are masters of the moderate sort: so that, if tolerable, we may bear them, if not, we can go out of life as from a theatre, where the entertainment does not please us." That which makes us suffer pain with so much impatience is the not being accustomed to repose our chiefest contentment in the soul, that we do not enough rely upon her who is the sole and sovereign mistress of our condition. The body, saving in greater or less proportion, has but one and the same bent and bias; whereas, the soul is variable into all sorts of forms, and subjects to herself, and to her own empire, all things whatsoever; both the senses of the body, and all other accidents. And therefore it is that we ought to study her, to enquire into her, and to rouse up all her powerful faculties. There is neither reason, form, nor prescription, that can anything prevail against her inclination and choice. Of so many thousands of biasses that she has at her disposal, let us give her one proper to our repose and conversation, and then we shall not only be sheltered and secured from all manner of injury and offence, but moreover gratified and obliged, if she will it, with evils and offences. She makes her profit indifferently of all things. Error and dreams serve her to good use, as lawful matter, to lodge us in safety and contentment. 'Tis plain enough to be seen that 'tis the sharpness of our mind that gives the edge to our pains and pleasures. Beasts, that have no such things, leave to their bodies their own free and natural sentiments, and are consequently, in every kind, very near the same, as appears by the resembling application of their motions. If we should not disturb, in our members, the jurisdiction that appertains to them in this, 'tis to be believed it would be the better for us, and that nature has given them a just and moderate temper, both to pleasure and pain; neither can it fail of being just, being equal and common. But seeing we have enfranchised ourselves from her rules, to give ourselves up to the rambling liberty of our own fancies, let us, at least, help to incline them to the most agreeable side. Plato[6] fears our too vehemently engaging ourselves with grief and pleasure, forasmuch as these too much knit and ally the soul to the body: whereas I rather, on the contrary, by reason it too much separates and disunites them. As an enemy is made more fierce by our flight, so pain grows proud to see us truckle under her. She will surrender upon much better terms to them who make head against her: a man must oppose, and stoutly set himself against her. In retiring and giving ground, we invite, and pull upon ourselves, the ruin that threatens us. As the body is more firm in an encounter, the more stiffly and obstinately it applies itself to it; so it is with the soul. But let us come to examples, which are the proper commodity for fellows of such feeble reins as myself; where we shall find that it is with pain, as with stones, that receive a brighter or duller lustre, according to the foil they are set upon, that it has no more room in us than we are pleased to allow it: *Tantùm doluerunt, quantùm doloribus se inseruerunt.*[7] "The more they gave way to pain, the more it pained them." We are more sensible of one little touch of a surgeon's lancet than of twenty sword-cuts in the heat of fight.

The pains of child-bearing supported with ease.

The pains of child-bearing, said by the physician, and even by God himself,[8] to be very great, and which our women keep so

[1] Senec. *De Provid.*, iv.
[2] Cicero, *de Finibus*, ii. 20.
[3] Luc., ix., 404.
[4] Cicero, *ut supra*, ii., 29.
[5] Cicero, *ut supra*, i. 15.
[6] In the *Phæd.*
[7] St. August., *de Civit. Dei*, i. 10.
[8] Genesis iii., 16.

great a clutter about, there are whole nations that make nothing of them. To say nothing of the Lacedæmonian women, what alteration can you see in the Swiss wives of our foot soldiers, saving, as they trot after their husbands, you see them to-day with the child hanging at their backs that they carried yesterday in their bellies? And the counterfeit gypsies we have amongst us, go themselves to wash their infants as soon as they come into the world, in the first river they meet. Besides the many wenches that daily steal their children out of their womb, as before they stole them in; that fair and noble wife of Sabinus, a patrician of Rome, for another's interest alone, without help, without crying out, or so much as a groan, endured the bearing of twins.[1] A poor simple boy of Lacedæmon, having stolen a fox (for they more feared the shame of bungling in a theft, than we do the punishment of our knavery), and having got him under his coat, chose rather to endure the beast's tearing out his bowels than he would discover his theft.[2] And another, offering incense at a sacrifice, suffered himself to be burnt to the bone by a coal that fell into his sleeve, rather than disturb the ceremony.[3] And there have been a great number who, only for a trial of virtue, following their institutions, have at seven years old endured to be whipped to death, without changing their countenance. And Cicero has seen them fight in parties, with fists, feet, and teeth, till they have fainted and sunk down, rather than confess themselves overcome. *Nunquam naturam mos vinceret; est enim ea semper invicta: sed nos umbris, deliciis, otio, languore, desidiâ, animum infecimus; opinionibus maloque more delinitum mollivimus.*[4] "Custom would never conquer Nature, for she is ever invincible, but we have infected the mind with shadows, delights, wantonness, negligence and sloth; and with vain opinions, and corrupt manners, rendered it effeminate and mean." Every one knows the story of Scævola, who, having slipped into the enemies' camp to kill their general, and missing his blow, to repair his fault by a more strange invention, and to deliver his country, boldly confessed to Porsenna (who was the king he had an intent to kill,) not only his design, but moreover added that there were then in his camp a great number of Romans, his accomplices in the enterprise, as good men as he, and, to show what he himself was, having caused a pan of burning coals to be brought, he saw and endured his arm to broil and roast, till the king himself, conceiving horror at the sight, commanded the pan to be taken away.[5] What would you say of him that would not vouchsafe to respite his reading of a book, whilst he was under incision?[6] And of the other that persisted to mock and laugh, in contempt of the pains inflicted upon him; so that the irritated cruelty of the executioners that had him in handling, and all the inventions of tortures redoubled upon him, one after another, spent in vain, only added to his triumph?[7] A gladiator of Cæsar's endured, laughing all the while, his wounds to be probed and laid open. *Quis mediocris gladiator ingemuit? Quis vultum mutavit unquam? Quis non modò stetit, verùm etiam decubuit, turpiter? Quis, cum decubuisset, ferrum recipere jussus, collum contraxit?*[8] "What common gladiator ever so much as gave a groan? Which of them ever so much as changed his countenance? Which of them, standing or falling, did either with shame? Which of them, when he was down, and commanded to receive the stroke of the sword, ever shrunk in his neck?" Let us bring in the women, too. Who has not heard, at Paris, of her who caused her face to be flea'd, merely for the sake of getting the fresher complexion of a new skin? There are some who have drawn good and sound teeth to make their voices more soft and sweet, or to range the rest in better order. How many examples of the contempt of pain have we in that sex? What can they not do? What do they fear to do, for never so little hopes of an addition to their beauty?

> Vellere queis cura est albos à stirpe capillos,
> Et faciem, dempta pelle, referre novam.[9]
>
> "Who by the roots pluck their grey hairs, and try
> With a new skin an old face to supply."

I have seen some of them swallow sand, ashes, and do their utmost to destroy their stomachs, to get pale complexions. To make a fine Spanish, slender waist, what racks will they not endure in tightening and bracing, till they have notches in their sides, cut to the quick, aye, sometimes to death? It is an ordinary thing with several nations at this day to wound themselves in good earnest, to gain credit to what they profess; of which our king relates notable examples of what he has seen in Poland and had done towards himself.[10] But besides this, which I know to have been imitated by some in France, when I came from that famous Assembly of the Estates at Blois, I had a little before seen a girl in Picardy who, to manifest the sincerity of her promises, and also her constancy, gave herself, with a bodkin she wore in her hair, four or five good stabs in the arm, till the blood gushed out to some purpose

1 Plutarch, *On Love*, c. 34.
2 Id., *Life of Lycurgus*.
3 V...
4 ...
5 ...
6 ...
7 ...tâ.

10 M. de Thou says expressly that Henry III. ran away privately from Poland, to return to his kingdom of France.

Turks make on themselves great scars in honour of their mistresses, and, to the end they may the longer remain, they presently clap fire to the wound, where they hold it an incredible time, to stop the wound and form the cicatrice. People that have been eye-witnesses of it have both writ and sworn it to me. But for ten aspers[1] there are there every day fellows to be found that will give themselves a good deep slash in the arms or thighs. I am willing, however, to have the testimonies nearest to us, where we have most to do with them, for Christendom furnishes us enough. And, after the example of our blessed Guide, there have been many who from devotion would bear the cross. We learn by testimony, very worthy of belief, that King St. Louis wore a hair shirt, till in his old age his confessor gave him a dispensation to leave it off; and that every Friday he caused his shoulders to be drubbed by his priest with five small chains of iron, which were always carried about amongst his night accoutrements for that purpose. William, our late Duke of Guienne, the father of that Eleanor who transmitted this duchy into the houses of France and England, continually, for ten or twelve years before he died, wore a suit of armour under a religious habit, by way of penance. Fulk, Count of Anjou, went as far as Jerusalem, to cause himself to be whipped there by two of his servants, with a rope about his neck, before the sepulchre of our Lord. But do we not, moreover, every Good Friday, in several places, see great numbers of men and women beat and whip themselves till they lacerate and cut the flesh to the very bones? I have often seen this, and without any enchantment in the matter; and it was said there were some amongst them (for they go disguised), who for money undertook by this means to save harmless the religion of others; showing herein a contempt of pain so much the greater, as the incentives of devotion are more effectual than those of avarice. Q. Maximus buried his son when he was a consul, and M. Cato his when prætor elect; and L. Paulus both his, within a few days one after the other, with such countenances as expressed no manner of grief. I said once merrily of a certain person that he had disappointed the divine justice: for the violent death of three grown-up children of his being one day sent him for a severe scourge, as it is to be supposed, he was so far from being afflicted that he rather took it for a particular grace and favour of heaven. I do not follow these monstrous humours, though I lost two or three at nurse, if not without grief, at least [illegible] repining; and yet there is hardly any [illegible] that pierces nearer to the quick. I [illegible] other occasions of sorrow [illegible] to me, I should hardly feel; and have despised some, when they have befallen me, to which the world has given so terrible a figure that I should blush to boast to people of my firmness therein. *Ex quo intelligitur, non in naturâ, sed in opinione, esse ægritudinem.*[2] "By which it is understood that the grievance is not in nature, but opinion." Opinion is a powerful body, bold and without measure. Who ever so greedily hunted after security and repose as Alexander and Cæsar did after disquiet and difficulties? Terez, the father of Sitalces, was wont to say that when he had no war in hand he fancied there was no difference betwixt him and his groom.[3] Cato, when consul, to secure some cities of Spain from revolt, merely interdicting the inhabitants from wearing arms, a great many killed themselves. *Ferox gens nullam vitam rati sine armis esse.*[4] "A fierce people, who thought there was no life without war." How many do we know who have forsaken the calm and sweetness of a quiet life, at home amongst their acquaintance, to seek out the horror of uninhabitable deserts; and, having precipitated themselves into so abject a condition as to become the scorn and contempt of the world, have hugged themselves with the conceit, even to affectation. Cardinal Borromeo,[5] who died lately at Milan, in the midst of all the jollity that the air of Italy, his youth, birth, and great riches invited him to, kept himself in so austere a way of living that the same robe he wore in summer served him for winter too: he had only straw for his bed, and his hours of vacation from the affairs of his charge he continually spent in study upon his knees, having a little bread and water set by his book, which was all the provision for his repast, and all the time he spent in eating. I know some who consentingly have acquired both profit and advancement from their own cuckoldom, of which the bare name affrights so many people.

If the sight be not the most necessary of all our senses, 'tis at least the most pleasant. But, at once, the most pleasant and the most useful of all our members seem to be those of generation; and yet a great many people have conceived a mortal hatred against them only for this, that they were too delightful; and have deprived themselves of *them* only for their value. As much thought he of his eyes that put them out. The generality and most solid sort of men look upon abundance of children as a great blessing; I, and some others, think it as great a benefit to be without them. And when you ask Thales why he does not marry, he tells you because he has no mind to leave any posterity behind him.[6]

That our opinion gives the value to things is very manifest in the great number of those which we do not so much regard for themselves,

4 Livy, xxxiv. 17.

[illegible] as

but on our own account; never considering either their virtues or their use, but only how dear they cost us, as though that were a part of their substance, and reputing for value in them, not what they bring to us, but what we add to them. By which I understand that we are great managers of our expense. As it weighs, it serves for so much as it weighs; our opinion will never suffer it to want of its value. The price gives value to the diamond, difficulty to virtue, suffering to devotion, and griping to physic. One man,[1] to be poor, threw his money into the same sea which so many others, in all parts of the world, rummage and rifle for riches. Epicurus says that to be rich is no advantage, but only an alteration of affairs.[2] In plain truth it is not want, but rather abundance, that creates avarice. Let me give my own experience in this matter.

Montaigne's account of three conditions in which he had lived.

I have, since my childhood, lived in three sorts of conditions: the first, which continued for nearly twenty years, I passed over without any other means but what were accidental, and depending upon the allowance and assistance of others, without stint, but without certain revenue. I then spent my money so much the more cheerfully, and with so much the less care how it went, as it wholly depended upon my confidence in fortune; and I never lived more at my ease. I never found the purse of any of my friends shut against me, having enjoined myself this necessity above all other necessities whatever, by no means to fail of payment at the appointed time: which they have a thousand times respited, seeing how anxious I was to satisfy them; so that I made my good faith both a matter of thrift, and, withal, a kind of allurement. I naturally feel a kind of pleasure in paying, as if I eased my shoulders of a troublesome weight and an image of slavery; besides that, I have a great satisfaction in pleasing another and doing a just action. I except that kind of payment where reckoning and round-about settlements are required; and in such cases where I can meet with nobody to ease me of that hateful torment, I avoid them, how scandalously and injuriously soever, all I possibly can, for fear of any altercation, for which both my humour and way of speaking are so totally unfit. There is nothing I hate so much as driving a bargain; 'tis a mere traffic of cozenage and impudence; where, after an hour's cheapening and dodging, both parties abandon their word and oath for five halfpence advance or abatement. And yet I always borrowed at great disadvantage, for, wanting the confidence to speak to the person myself, I committed my request to the persuasion of a letter, which usually is no very successful advocate, and gives very great opportunity to him who has a mind to deny. I, in those days, more jocundly and freely referred the conduct of my affairs to the stars than I have since done to my own providence and judgment. Most good managers look upon it as a horrible thing to live always thus in uncertainty; not considering, in the first place, that the greatest part of the world live so, and how many worthy men have wholly slighted and abandoned the certainty of their own estates, and still daily do it, to trust to the inconstant favour of princes and fortune. Cæsar ran in debt above a million of gold more than he was worth, to become Cæsar; and how many merchants have begun their traffic by the sale of their farms, which they sent to the Indies?

Tot per impotentia freta?[3]

"Over so many stormy seas."

In so great a dearth of devotion as we see in these days, we have a thousand and a thousand convents, that go on comfortably enough, expecting every day their dinner from the liberality of heaven. Secondly, they do not take notice that this certitude, upon which they so much rely, is not much less uncertain and hazardous than hazard itself. I see misery as near, beyond two thousand crowns a-year, as if it stood close by me; for, besides that it is in the power of chance to make a hundred breaches to poverty through the greatest strength of our riches, there being very often no mean betwixt the highest and the lowest fortune,

Fortuna vitrea est: Tum, quum splendet, frangitur;[4]

"Fortune is glass, the brighter it doth shine
More frail; and soonest broken when most fine;"

and to turn all our barricades and bulwarks topsy-turvy, I find that, by divers causes, indigence is as frequently seen to inhabit with those who have property as with those that have none; and, peradventure, it is then far less grievous, when alone, than when accompanied with riches; which flow more from good management than income. *Faber est suæ quisque fortunæ.*[5] "Every one is the maker of his own fortune;" and an uneasy, necessitous, busy man, seems to me more miserable than he that is simply poor. *In divitiis inopes, quod genus egestatis gravissimum est.* "Poor in the midst of riches, which is the most insupportable kind of poverty."[6] The greatest and most wealthy princes are by poverty and want driven to the most extreme necessity: for can there be any more extreme than to become tyrants and unjust usurpers of their subjects' goods and estates?

My second condition of life was to have money of my own: wherein I so ordered the matter that I had soon laid up a notable sum out of so mean a fortune; considering with myself that that only was to be reputed having which a man reserved from his ordinary expense, than a man could not absolutely rely upon revenue to be received, how clear soever his

[illegible]ippus. See Laertius, *in vitâ*.
[illegible] *Epist.* 17. [illegible] Cat. 4.
[illegible]i Publii Syri.

[3] Sallust. *De Republ. Ordin.* i. 1.
[4] Seneca, *Epist.* 74. At the beginning, Montaigne has transposed Seneca's words to apply them to his subject.

estate might be. For what, said I, if I should be surprised by such or such an accident; and, after such like vain and vicious imaginations, would very learnedly, by this hoarding of money, provide against all inconveniences; and could moreover answer such as objected to me that the number of them was too infinite, that if I could not lay up for all, I could do it at least for some and for many. Yet was not this done without a great deal of solicitude and anxiety of mind. I kept it very close, and, though I dare talk so boldly of myself, never spoke of my money but falsely, as others do who, being rich, pretend to be poor, and being poor, pretend to be rich, dispensing their consciences from ever telling sincerely what they have. A ridiculous and shameful prudence. Was I going a journey? methought I was never enough provided; and the more I loaded myself with money, the more also was I loaded with fear, one while of the danger of the roads, another of the fidelity of him who had the charge of my baggage, of whom, as of some others that I know, I never felt secure, if I had him not always in my eye. Did I leave my box behind me—what suspicions and anxiety of mind did I enter into? and, which was worse, without daring to acquaint any body with it. My mind was eternally taken up with such things, so that, all considered, there is more trouble in keeping money than in getting it. And if I did not altogether so much as I say, or was not effectually so scandalously solicitous of my money as I have made myself out, yet it cost me something at least to govern myself from being so. I reaped little or no advantage by what I had, and my expenses seemed nothing less to me for having the more to spend; for, as Bion said, "hairy men are as angry as the bald to be pulled;"[1] and after you are once accustomed to it, and have once set your heart upon your heap, it is no more at your service; you cannot find in your heart to break it: 'tis a building that you fancy must of necessity all tumble down in ruins, if you stir but the least pebble. Necessity must first take you by the throat, before you can prevail upon yourself to touch it; and I would have pawned any thing I had, or sold a horse, with much less constraint upon myself than have made the least breach in that beloved purse I had laid by. But the danger was that a man cannot easily prescribe certain limits to this desire (they are hard to find in things that a man conceives to be good), and to stint economy so that it may not degenerate into avarice. Men are still intent upon adding to the heap, and increasing the stock from sum to sum till at last they vilely deprive themselves of the enjoyment of their own proper goods, deriving their whole gratification from hoarding their treasures, without making any use of them at all. According to this rule, they are the richest people in the world who have charge of the gates and walls of a wealthy city. All monied men I take to be covetous. Plato places corporal or human riches in this order: health, beauty, strength, wealth; and wealth, says he, is not blind, but very clear-sighted when illuminated by prudence.[2] Dionysius the son[3] did a very sensible thing upon this subject. He was informed that one of the Syracusans had hid a treasure in the earth, and thereupon sent to the man to bring it to him, which he accordingly did, privately reserving a small part of it only to himself, with which he went to another city, where, being cured of his appetite of hoarding, he began to live at a more liberal rate; which Dionysius hearing, caused the rest of his treasure to be restored to him, saying that, since he had learnt how to use it, he very willingly returned it back to him.

How Montaigne regulated his expenses.

I continued some years in this hoarding humour, when I know not what good genius fortunately put me out of it, as he did the Syracusan, and made me throw abroad all my reserve. The pleasure of a certain voyage I took at very great expense[4] having made me spurn this absurd fancy under foot, by which means I am now fallen into a third way of living (I speak what I think of it), doubtless much more pleasant and better regulated, which is that my expenses run level with my revenue; sometimes, indeed, the one, sometimes the other, may perhaps exceed, but 'tis very little that they differ at all. I live from hand to mouth, and content myself in having sufficient for my present and ordinary expense; for as to extraordinary occasions, all the laying up in the world would never suffice; and 'tis the greatest folly imaginable to expect that fortune should ever sufficiently arm us against herself. 'Tis with our own arms that we are to fight her, accidental ones will betray us in the pinch of the business. If I lay up, 'tis for some near and designed expense, and not to purchase lands, of which I have no need, but to purchase pleasure. *Non esse cupidum pecunia est; non esse emacem, vectigal est.*[5] "Not to be covetous is money; not to be a purchaser is a revenue." I neither am in any great apprehension of wanting, nor in any desire of getting more: *Divitiarum fructus est in copiâ; copiam declarat satietas.*[6] "The fruits of riches lie in abundance; satiety declares abundance." And I am very well pleased with myself, that this reformation in me has fallen out in an age naturally inclined to avarice, and that I see myself freed of a folly so common

[1] Seneca, *De Tranquillité*, c. 8.
[2] On Laws, i.
[3] Or rather the father, according to Plutarch, in his *Apothegms of Kings*, &c.
[4] Probably that into Italy in 1580 and 1581.
[5] Cicero, *Paradox*, vi. 3.
[6] Id. *ib.*

to old men, and the most ridiculous of all human follies.

A fine instance of the contempt of riches.

Feraulez, a man who had run through both fortunes, and found that the increase of substance was no increase of appetite, either to eating or drinking, sleeping, or the enjoyment of his wife; and who, on the other hand, felt the care of his economy lie heavy upon his shoulders, as it does on mine; was resolved to please a poor young man, his faithful friend, who panted after riches, by making him a gift of all his, which were excessively great, and moreover of all he was in the daily way of getting by the liberality of Cyrus, his good master, and by war; conditionally that he should take care handsomely to maintain and to entertain him as his guest and friend, and they afterwards lived very happily together, both of them equally content with the change of their condition.[1]

Another instance to the same purpose.

An example that I could imitate with all my heart, and I very much approve the fortune of an ancient prelate, whom I see to have so absolutely stripped himself of his purse, his revenue, and expenditure, committing them one while to one trusty servant, and another while to another, that he has spun out a long succession of years, as ignorant by this means of his domestic affairs as a mere stranger. The confidence in another man's virtue is no light evidence of a man's own, and God is pleased to favour such a confidence. As to him of whom I am speaking, I see nowhere a better governed family, nor a house more nobly and uniformly maintained than his; happy in this, to have regulated his affairs to so just a proportion that his estate is sufficient to do it without his care or trouble, and without any hindrance, either in the spending or laying it up, to other more suitable and quiet employments, and more to his liking.

What renders a man contented or indigent.

Plenty then and indigence depend upon the opinion every one has of them; and riches, no more than glory or health, have no more either beauty or pleasure than he is pleased to invest them with by whom they are possessed. Every one is well or ill at ease, according as he finds himself: not he whom the world believes, but he who believes himself to be so, is content; and therein alone belief gives itself being and reality. Fortune does us neither good nor hurt; she only presents us the matter and the seed, which our soul, more powerfully than she, turns and applies as she best pleases, being the sole cause and sovereign mistress of her own happy or unhappy condition. All external accessions receive taste and colour from the internal constitution, as clothes warm us not with their heat, but our own, which they are adapted to cover and keep in; and who would cover a cold body would do the same service for the cold, for so snow and ice are preserved. And after the same manner that study is a torment to a sluggard, abstinence from wine to a drunkard, frugality to the spendthrift, and exercise to a lazy, tender-bred fellow, so it is of all the rest. The things are not so painful and difficult of themselves, but our weakness or cowardice makes them so.[2] To judge of great and high matters requires a suitable soul, otherwise we attribute the vice to them which is really our own. A straight oar seems crooked in the water: it does not only import that we see a thing, but how and after what manner we see it.

The notion of pain, on what it is founded.

But after all this, why amongst so many discourses, that by so many arguments persuade men to despise death and endure pain, can we not find out one that makes for us? And of so many sorts of imaginations as have prevailed upon others, why does not every one apply some one to himself, the most suitable to his own humour? If he cannot digest a strong working drug to eradicate the evil, let him at least take a lenitive to ease it. *Opinio est quædam effeminata ac levis, nec in dolore magis quam eadem in voluptate: qua quum liquescimus, fluimusque mollitia, apis aculeum sine clamore ferre non possumus. . . . Totum in eo est ut tibi imperes!*"[3] "There is a certain frivolous and effeminate opinion, and that not more in pain than it is even in pleasure itself, by which, whilst we wallow in ease and wantonness, we cannot endure so much as the sting of a bee without crying out. The whole secret is this, to command thyself." For the rest, a man does not escape philosophy by permitting the acrimony of pains and human frailty to prevail beyond measure; for they constrain it to these invincible replies: "If it be ill to live in necessity, at least there is no necessity to live in necessity."[4] "No man continues in discomfort long, but by his own fault." He who has neither the courage to die, nor the heart to live, who will neither resist nor fly, what should one do with him?

CHAPTER XLI.

NOT TO COMMUNICATE A MAN'S HONOUR OR GLORY.

The vanity of a passion for honour.

Of all the foolish dreams of the world, that which is most universally received is the solicitude of reputation and glory, which we are fond of to that degree as to abandon riches, peace, life, and health, which are effectual and

[1] [illegible], *Cyrop.*, viii. 3.
[illegible] *Ep.* 81.

[3] Cicero, *Tusc. Quæs.* ii 22.
[4] Senec. *Epist.* 12.

substantial good, to pursue this vain phantom and empty word, that has neither body nor hold to be taken of it.

> La fama, ch' invaghisce a un dolce suono
> Gli superbi mortali, et par si bella,
> E un eco, un sogno, anzi del sogno un ombra
> Ch' ad ogni vento si dilegua et sgombra.[1]
>
> "Glory, whose sweet and captivating sound
> Enchants proud mortals all the world around,
> Is but an echo, dream, or phantom fair,
> Mov'd and dispers'd by ev'ry breath of air."

And of all the irrational humours of men, it should seem that the philosophers themselves have the most ado, and do the least disengage themselves from this the most restive and obstinate of all follies.[2] *Quia etiam bene proficientes animos tentare non cessat.*[3] "Because it ceases not to tempt the wisest minds." There is not any one vice of which reason does so clearly accuse the vanity as that; but it is so deeply rooted in us that I doubt whether any one ever clearly freed himself from it or no. After you have said all, and believed all that has been said to its prejudice, it creates so intestine an inclination in opposition to your best arguments that you have little power and firmness to resist it; for, as Cicero says,[4] even those who controvert it would yet that the books they write should appear before the world with their names in the title-page, and seek to derive glory from seeming to despise it. All other things are communicable and fall into commerce; we lend our goods and stake our lives for the necessity and service of our friends; but to communicate one's honour, and to robe another with one's own glory, is very rarely seen.

And yet we have some examples of that kind. Catulus Luctatius, in the Cymbrian war, having done all that in him lay to make his flying soldiers face about upon the enemy, ran himself at last away with the rest, and counterfeited the coward, to the end his men might rather seem to follow their captain than to fly from the enemy;[5] which was to abandon his own reputation to palliate the shame of others. When Charles the Fifth came into Provence, in the year 1537, 'tis said that Antonio de Leva, seeing the emperor positively resolved upon this expedition, and believing it would redound very much to his honour, did nevertheless very stiffly oppose it in the council, to the end that the entire glory of that resolution should be attributed to his master; and that it might be said his wisdom and foresight had been such as that, contrary to the opinion of all, he had brought about so great an enterprize: which was to do him honour at his own expense.[6]

The Thracian ambassadors, coming to comfort Archielonida, the mother of Brasidas, upon the death of her son, and commending him to that height as to say he had not left his like behind him, she rejected this private and particular commendation to attribute it to the public: "Tell me not that," said she; "I know the city of Sparta has several citizens greater and more valiant than he."[7] In the battle of Crecy, the Prince of Wales, being then very young, had the van-guard committed to him; the main stress of the battle happened to be in that place, and the lords that were with him, finding themselves well-nigh overmatched, sent to King Edward to advance to their relief; who thereupon inquiring what condition his son was in, and being answered that he was living and on horseback, "I should then do him wrong," said the king, "now to go and deprive him of the honour of winning this battle he has so long and so bravely disputed; what hazard soever he runs, it shall be entirely his own." And accordingly would neither go nor send, knowing that, if he went, it would be said all had been lost without his succour, and that the honour of the victory would be wholly attributed to him:[8] *Semper enim quod postremum adjectum est, id rem totam videtur traxisse.*[9] "For the last stroke to a business seems always to draw along with it the merit of the performance of the whole action." Many at Rome thought, and 'twas commonly said, that the greatest of Scipio's acts were, in part, due to Lelius, whose constant practice it was still to advance and promote Scipio's grandeur and renown, without any care of his own.[10] And Theopompus, king of Sparta, to him who told him the republic could not miscarry, since he knew so well how to command, "'Tis rather," answered he, "because the people know so well how to obey."

Private or particular praise refused.

Edward III. chooses to leave all the honour of the victory to his son.

As women succeeding to peerages had, notwithstanding their sex, the right to assist, and give their votes in the causes that appertained to the jurisdiction of peers, so the ecclesiastical peers, notwithstanding their profession, were obliged to assist our kings in their wars, not only with their friends and servants, but in their own persons. A Bishop of Beauvais did so, who being with Philip Augustus at the battle of Bouvines,[11] took a gallant share in that action, but did not think it fit for him to participate in the fruit and glory

Conduct of a bishop at the battle of Bouvines.

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[1] Tasso, *Gerusal.* xiv. 68.

[2] This idea seems borrowed from Tacitus, *Hist.* iv. 6:—*Etiam sapientibus cupido gloriæ novissima exuitur.* "The desire of glory is the last passion of which even wise men can divest themselves."

[3] St. August. *de Civit. Dei.* v. 14.

[4] "Ipsi illi philosophi, etiam illis libellis quos de contemnendâ gloriâ scribunt, nomen suum inscribunt; in eo ipso in quo prædicationem nobilitatemque despiciunt, prædicari de se ac nominari volunt."—*Orat. pro Archiâ Poetâ*, cap. 11.

[5] Plutarch, *Life of Marius*, c. 8.

[6] *Mem. of William du Bellay*; and Brantome, *Lives of Illustrious Men*, at the article Antonio de Leyva.

[7] Plutarch, *Apothegms.*

[8] Froissart, vol. i.

[9] Livy, xxvii. 45.

[10] Plutarch, *Instructions for those who* [illegible] *Affairs.*

[11] Fought 1214, between Lille and Tour[illegible]

of that violent and bloody trade. He with his own hand reduced several of the enemy that day to his mercy, whom he delivered to the first gentleman he met, either to kill, or to receive them to quarter, referring this part to another hand. As also did William, Earl of Salisbury, to Messire John de Nesle. With a like subtlety of conscience to the other, he would kill, but not wound, him, and for that reason, fought only with a mace. And a certain person in my time, being reproached by the king that he had laid hands on a priest, stiffly and positively denied it. The case was, he had cudgelled and kicked him.

CHAPTER XLII.

OF THE INEQUALITY AMONGST US.

PLUTARCH says somewhere[1] that he does not find so great a difference betwixt beast and beast, as he does betwixt man and man; which is said in reference to the internal qualities, and the perfection of the soul. And, in truth, I find, according to my poor judgment, so vast a distance betwixt Epaminondas and some that I know, who are yet men of common sense, that I would willingly enhance upon Plutarch, and say that there is more difference betwixt such and such a man than there is betwixt such a man and such a beast:

Hem, vir viro quid præstat![2]

"How much, alas,
One man another doth surpass!"

and that there are as many and as innumerable degrees of mind, as there are cubits betwixt this and heaven. But touching the estimate of men, 'tis strange that, ourselves excepted, no other creature is esteemed beyond its proper qualities. We commend a horse for his strength and sureness of foot,

Volucrem
Sic laudamus equum, facili cui plurima palma
Fervet, et exultat rauco victoria circo;[3]

"'Tis thus we praise the horse that mocks our eyes,
While to the goal with lightning's speed he flies;
Whom many a well-earn'd palm and trophy grace,
And the cirque hails, unrivalled in the race;"

and not for his rich caparisons; a greyhound for his speed, not for his fine collar; a hawk for her wing, not for her jesses and bells.

A man to be valued for what he has in him, and not what he has about him.

Why, in like manner, do we not value a man for what is properly his own? He has a great train, a beautiful palace, so much credit, so many thousand pounds a-year: all these are about him, not in him. You will not buy a pig in a poke. If you cheapen a horse you will see him stripped of his housing clothes, you will see him naked and open to your eye; or if he be clothed, as they anciently were wont to present them to princes to sell, 'tis only on the less important parts, that you may not so much consider the beauty of his colour, or the breadth of his crupper, as principally to examine his limbs, eyes, and feet, which are the members of greatest use:

Regibus hic mos est: ubi equos mercantur, opertos
Inspiciunt; ne, si facies, ut sæpe, decora
Molli fulta pede est, emptorem inducat hiantem,
Quod pulchræ clunes, breve quod caput, ardua cervix.[4]

"When kings steeds cloth'd, as 'tis their manner, buy,
They straight examine very curiously,
Lest a short head, a thin and well-raised crest,
A broad spread buttock, and an ample chest,
Should all be propt with an old beaten hoof,
To gull the buyer when they come to proof."

Why, in giving your estimate of a man, do you value him wrapt and muffled up in clothes? He then discovers nothing to you but such parts as are not in the least his own; and conceals those by which alone one may rightly judge of his worth. 'Tis the price of the blade that you enquire into, and not of the scabbard. You would not, peradventure, bid a farthing for him if you saw him stripped. You are to judge him by himself, and not by what he wears. And as one of the ancients very pleasantly said, "Do you know why you repute him tall? You reckon withal the height of his clogs," whereas the pedestal is no part of the statue. Measure him without his stilts, let him lay aside his revenues and his titles, let him present himself in his shirt; then examine if his body be sound and sprightly, active, and disposed to perform its functions. What soul has he? Is she beautiful, capable, and happily provided with all her faculties? Is she rich of what is her own, or of what she has borrowed? Has fortune no hand in the affair? Can she, without winking, stand drawn swords? Is she indifferent whether her life expire by the mouth or through the throat? Is she settled, even, and content? This is what is to be examined, and by that you are to judge of the vast differences betwixt man and man. Is he

Sapiens, sibique imperiosus;
Quem neque pauperies, neque mors, neque vincula terrent;
Responsare cupidinibus, contemnere honores
Fortis; et in seipso totus teres atque rotundus,
Externi ne quid valeat per læve morari;
In quem manca ruit semper fortuna?[5]

"The wise, who well maintains
An empire o'er himself; whom neither chains,
Nor want, nor death, with slavish fear inspire,
Who boldly answers to his warm desire,
Who can ambition's vainest gifts despise,
Firm in himself who on himself relies,
Polish'd and sound who runs his proper course,
And breaks misfortune with superior force."

Such a man is raised five hundred fathoms above

[1] In his treatise, *That Beasts have the use of Reason*, towards the end.
[2] Terence, *Eunuch*, ii. 3. 1.
[3] Juvenal, viii. 57.
[4] Horace, *Sat.* i. 2, 85.
[5] Id. *ib.* ii. 7, 83.

kingdoms and duchies; he is an absolute monarch in and to himself.

Sapiens . . . . . pol ipse fingit fortunam sibi.[1]

"The wise man his own fortune makes."

What remains for him to desire?

——— "Nonne videmus,
Nil aliud sibi naturam latrare, nisi ut, quoi,
Corpore sejunctus dolor absit, mente fruatur
Jucundo sensu, cura semotu, metuque?[2]

"We see that nature only seeks for ease,
A body free from pains, free from disease,
A mind from cares and jealousies at peace."

Compare with such a one the common rabble of mankind, stupid, mean-spirited, servile, instable, and continually floating with the tempest of various passions, that tosses and tumbles them to and fro, all depending upon others, and you will find a greater distance than betwixt heaven and earth; and yet the blindness of common usage is such that we make little or no account of it. Whereas, if we consider a peasant and a king, a nobleman and a clown, a magistrate and a private man, a rich man and a poor, there appears a vast disparity, though they differ no more (as a man may say) than in their breeches.

Wherein the kings of Thrace distinguished themselves from their subjects.

In Thrace the king was distinguished from his people after a very pleasant and rare manner. He had a religion by himself, a god of his own, whom his subjects might not presume to adore, which was Mercury; whilst, on the other side, he disdained to have any thing to do with theirs, Mars, Bacchus, and Diana.[3] And yet they are no other than pictures, that make no essential dissimilitude; for as you see actors in a play representing a duke or an emperor upon the stage, and immediately after, in the tiring-room, return to their true and original condition: so the emperor, whose pomp so dazzles you in public,

Scilicet et grandes viridi cum luce smaragdi
Auro includuntur, teriturque Thalassina vestis,
Assidue, et Veneris sudorem exercita potat.[4]

"Great emeralds richly are in gold enchast,
To dart green lustre; and the sea-green vest
Continually is worn and rubb'd to frets,
While it imbibes the juice that Venus sweats."

Kings subject to the same passions and accidents as other men.

Do but peep behind the curtain, and you'll see nothing but an ordinary man, and peradventure more contemptible than the meanest of his subjects. *Ille beatus introrsum est; istius bracteata felicitas est.*[5] "True happiness lies within, the other is but a counterfeit felicity." Cowardice, irresolution, ambition, spite, and envy, work in him as in another.

Non enim gazæ, neque consularis
Summovet lictor miseros tumultus
Mentis, et curas laqueata circum
Tecta volantes.[6]

"For neither wealth, honours, nor offices,
Can the wild tumults of the mind appease,
Nor chase those cares that, with unwearied wings,
Hover about the palaces of kings."

Cares and fears attack him even in the centre of his armies.

Re veraque metus hominum, curæque sequaces
Nec metuunt sonitus armorum, nec fera tela;
Audacterque inter reges, rerumque potentes
Versantur, neque fulgorem reverentur ab auro.[7]

"For fears and cares warring with human hearts,
Fear not the clash of arms, nor points of darts;
But with great kings and potentates make bold,
Maugre their purple and their glitt'ring gold."

Do fever, head-ache, and the gout, spare them any more than one of us? When old age hangs heavy upon a prince's shoulders, can the archers of his guard ease him of the burthen? When he is transfixed with the apprehension of death, can the gentlemen of his bed-chamber re-assure him? When jealousy, or any other caprice, swims in his brain, can our compliments and ceremonies restore him to his good humour? The canopy embroidered with pearl and gold he lies under has no virtue against a violent fit of the stone or cholic.

Nec calidæ citius decedunt corpore febres,
Textilibus si in picturis, ostroque rubenti
Jactaris, quàm si plebeia in veste cubandum est.[8]

Nor sooner will a bed superb assuage
The dreadful symptoms of a fever's rage
Than if the homely couch were meanly spread
With poorest blankets of the coarsest thread.

Alexander and Antigonus scorn their flatterers.

The flatterers of Alexander the Great possessed him that he was the son of Jupiter: being one day wounded, and looking at the blood streaming from his wound—"What say you now!" exclaimed he. "Is not this blood of a crimson colour, and purely human? This is not of the complexion with that which Homer makes to issue from the wounded gods!"[9] The poet Hermodorus had writ a poem in honour of Antigonus, wherein he called him the son of the Sun. "He that has the emptying of my close-stool," said Antigonus, "will find 'tis no such thing."[10] He is but a man at best, and if he be deformed, or ill qualified from his birth, the empire of the universe can neither mend his shape nor his nature;

Puellæ
Hunc rapiant; quicquid calcaverit hic, rosa fiat,[11]

"Though virgins rush the favoured youth to greet,
And roses spring where'er he sets his feet,"

[1] Plautus, *Trinummus*. ii. 2, 84. [2] Lucret. ii. 16.
[3] Herodotus, indeed, says (lib. v.) that the Thracian kings worshipped Mercury above all other gods; that they swore by him alone, and pretended to be descended from him; but he does not say that they despised Mars, Bacchus, and Diana, the only deities of their subjects.
[4] Lucretius, iv. 1123.
[5] Seneca, *Epist.* 115.
[6] Horace, *Od.* ii. 16, 9.
[7] Lucret. ii. 47.
[8] Id. *ib.* 34.
[9] Plutarch, *Apothegms.*
[10] Id. *ib.*
[11] Persius, ii. 38.

In what sense the favours of fortune are a good.

what of all that, if he be a fool? Even pleasure and good fortune are not relished without vigour and understanding.

Hæc perinde sunt ut illius animus, qui ea possidet,
Qui uti scit ei bona; illi qui non utitur recte, mala.[1]

"Things to the souls of their possessors square,
Goods, if well us'd, if ill, they evils are.

Whatever the benefits of fortune are, they require a palate fit to relish them. 'Tis enjoyment, and not possession, that renders us happy.

Non domus et fundus, non æris acervus, et auri,
Ægroto domini deduxit corpore febres,
Non animo curas. Valeat possessor oportet,
Qui comportatis rebus bene cogitat uti:
Qui cupit, aut metuit, juvat illum sic domus, aut res,
Ut lippum pictæ tabulæ, fomenta podagram.[2]

"Nor house, nor lands, nor heaps of laboured ore
Can give their fev'rish lord one moment's rest,
Or drive one sorrow from his anxious breast.
The fond possessor must be blest with health
Who rightly means to use his hoarded wealth.
Houses and riches gratify the breast
For lucre lusting, or with fear depress'd,
As pictures glowing with a vivid light,
With painful pleasure charm a blemish'd sight,
As chafing soothes the gout."

Is he a sot, his taste palled and flat?—he no more enjoys what he has than one that has a cold relishes the flavour of Canary; or than a horse is sensible of his rich caparison. Plato is in the right when he tells us that health, beauty, vigour, and riches, and all the other things called goods, are equally evil to the unjust, as good to the just; and the evil on the contrary the same.[3] And therefore, where either the body or the mind are in disorder, to what use serve these external conveniences? seeing that the least prick with a pin, or the least passion of the soul, is sufficient to deprive us of the pleasure of being sole monarch of the world. At the first twitch of the gout, it signifies much, truly, to be called "sire," and "your majesty;"

Totus et argento conflatus, totus et auro,[4]

"Altho' his chests are cramm'd, whilst they will hold,
With untold sums of silver coin and gold,"

does he not forget his palaces and grandeurs? If he be angry, can his being a prince keep him from looking red, and looking pale, and grinding his teeth like a madman? If he be a man of parts, and well born, royalty adds very little to his happiness:

Si ventri bene si lateri est, pedibusque tuis, nil
Divitiæ poterunt regales addere majus.[5]

"If thou art well and sound from head to foot,
A king's revenue can add nothing to't.

He discerns 'tis nothing but counterfeit and gullery. Nay, perhaps he would be of King Seleucus's opinion, "That he that knew the weight of a sceptre would not deign to stoop to take it up, though he saw it lying on the ground;"[6] which he said in reference to the great and painful duty incumbent upon a good king. Assuredly it can be no easy task to rule others, when we find it so hard a matter to govern ourselves. And as to the thing, command, that seems so sweet and charming, considering the imbecility of human judgment, and the difficulty of choice in things that are new and doubtful to us, I am very much of opinion that it is far more pleasant to follow than to lead; and that it is a great settlement and satisfaction of mind to have one path to walk in, that's traced out for us, and to have none to answer for but one's self;

Ut satius multo jam sit parere quietum,
Quam regere imperio res velle.[7]

"So that 'tis better calmly to obey
Than in the storms of state a sceptre sway."

To which we may add that saying of Cyrus, That no man ought to rule but he who, in his own worth, was better than all those he has to govern. But King Hiero, in Xenophon,[8] says farther, That in the enjoyment even of pleasure itself they are in a worse condition than private men; forasmuch as the facility they have of commanding those things at will takes off from the delight; which we, who find the matter more difficult, experience in fruition.

Kings not in such a condition to taste pleasures as private men.

Pinguis amor, nimiumque potens, in tædiæ nobis
Vertitur, et, stomacho dulcis ut esca, nocet.[9]

"Excessive love in loathing ever ends,
As highest sauce the stomach most offends."

Can we think that the singing-boys of the choir take any great delight in their own music? The satiety does rather render it troublesome and tedious to them. Feasts, balls, masquerades, tiltings, delight such as rarely see, and who have long desired to see, them: but having been frequently at such entertainments, the relish of them grows flat and insipid; nor do women so much delight those who make a common practice of the sport. He who will not give himself leisure to be thirsty can never find the true pleasure of drinking. Farces and tumbling tricks are pleasant to the spectators, but mere drudgery to those by whom they are performed. And that this is so we see that princes divert themselves sometimes in disguising their qualities, awhile to depose themselves, and to stoop to the poor and ordinary mode of life of the meanest of their people.

Plerumque gratæ principibus vices,
Mundæque parvo sub lare pauperum
Cœnæ, sine aulæis et ostro,
Sollicitam explicuere frontem.[10]

[1] Terence, *Heaut.* i. 3. 21.
[2] Horace, *Epist.* i. 2. 47.
[3] *Laws*, ii.
[4] Tibullus, i. 2. 70.
[5] Horace, *Epist.* i. 2. 5.
[6] Plutarch, *Whether a wise man should meddle with state affairs.*
[7] Lucret., v. 11. 26.
[8] In the treatise entitled, *Hiero, or the condition of kings.*
[9] Ovid, *Amor.*, ii. 19. 25.
[10] Horace, *Od.* iii. 29. 13.

"Changes have often pleased the great;
And in a cell a homely treat
Of healthy food and cleanly dress'd,
Though no rich hangings grace the rooms,
Or purple wrought in Tyrian looms,
Have smooth'd a wrinkled brow and calmed a ruffled breast."

Nothing is so distasteful and disappointing as abundance. What appetite would not be checked to see three hundred women at its command, as the Grand Seignior has in his seraglio? And what enjoyment of the sport did that ancestor of the Turks reserve to himself, who never went a hawking without seven thousand falconers? And besides this, I fancy that this lustre of grandeur brings with it no little disturbance and uneasiness upon the enjoyment of the most charming pleasures: they are too conspicuous, and lie too open to every one's view. Neither do I know to what end they should any more than us be required to conceal their faults, since what is only reputed indiscretion in us the people brand with the names of tyranny and contempt of the laws in them; and besides their proclivity to vice, it would seem they held it as a heightening pleasure to insult over the laws and to trample upon public observances. Plato, indeed, in his Gorgias, defines a tyrant to be one who in a city has license to do whatever his own will leads him to. And by reason of his impunity, the publication of their vices does oft-times more mischief by its example than the vice itself.[1] Every one fears to be pryed into and overseen; but princes are so, e'en to their very gestures, looks, and thoughts, the people conceiving they have right and title to censure and be judges of them: besides, that faults appear greater, according to the eminency and lustre of the place where they are seated; as a mole or a wart appears greater on the forehead than a wide gash elsewhere. And this is the reason why the poets feign the amours of Jupiter to be performed in the disguises of so many borrowed shapes; and amongst the many amorous practices they lay to his charge there is only one, as I conceive, where he appears in his own majesty and grandeur.

Why great men ought to be more careful of concealing their faults than others.

But let us return to Hiero, who further complains of the inconveniences he found in his royalty, in that he could not go abroad and travel the world at liberty, being as it were a prisoner to the bounds and limits of his own dominion, and that in all his actions he was evermore surrounded with a troublesome crowd. And in truth to see our kings sit all alone at table, environed with so many people prating about them, and so many strangers staring upon them, as there always are, I have often been moved rather to pity than to envy their condition. King Alphonsus was wont to say that in this asses were in a better condition than kings, their masters permitting them to feed at their own ease and pleasure; a favour that kings cannot obtain of their servants; and it would never come into my head that it could be of any great advantage in the life of a man of sense to have twenty people about him when he is at stool; or that the services of a man of ten thousand livres a year, or that has taken Casal or defended Siena, should be either more commodious or more acceptable to him than those of a good groom of the chamber that understands his business. The advantages of sovereignty are little better than imaginary. Every degree of fortune has in it some image of principality. Cæsar calls all the lords of France, having jurisdiction within their own demesnes, *kinglets*.[2] And, in truth, the title of sire excepted, they go pretty far towards kingship; for do but look into the provinces remote from court, as Brittany for example, take notice of the train, the vassals, the officers, the employments, service, ceremony, and state, of a lord that lives retired amidst his own estates and his own tenants, and observe withal the flight of his imagination, there is nothing more royal: he hears talk of his master once a-year as of the king of Persia, and only recognizes him from some remote cousinship his secretary keeps note of in some musty record. And, to speak the truth, our laws are easy enough, so easy that a gentleman of France scarce feels the weight of sovereignty pinch his shoulders above twice in his life. Real and effectual subjection only concerns such amongst us as voluntarily thrust their necks under the yoke, and who design to get wealth and honour by such services. Any man that loves his own fire-side, and can govern his house without falling by the ears with his neighbours, or engaging in suits of law, is as free as the Duke of Venice. *Paucos servitus, plures servitutem tenent.*[3] "Servitude seizes on few, but many seize on her."

Kings confined in the limits of their own country.

The condition of country gentlemen in France in Montaigne's time.

But that which Hiero is most concerned at is that he finds himself stripped of all friendship and deprived of all mutual society, wherein the true and most perfect fruition of human life consists. For what testimony of affection and good will can I extract from him that owes me, whether he will or no, all that he is able to do? Can I form any assurance of his real respect to me from his humble way of speaking and sub-

[1] Plusque exemplo quam peccato nocent. — Cicero, *de Legib.* iii. 14.

[2] As Cæsar does not say anything of the sort respecting the Gauls, M. Coste imagines that our author, by inadvertence, applied to the Gauls what Cæsar wrote of the Germans, *Bello Gall.*, vi. 23, where he says:—"In pace nullus communis est magistratus; sed principes regionum atque pagorum inter suos jus dicunt, controversiasque minunt." Montaigne, however, may have had in his mind that passage of a letter of Cæsar's which Cicero has preserved (*Epist. Fam.*, vii. 5.), where the great general says: "M. Orium, quem mihi commendas, vel *regem* Gallice factam, vel hunc septæ delega."

[3] Seneca, *Epist.* 22.

missive behaviour, which, when they are ceremonies, it is not in his choice to deny? The honour we receive from those that fear us is not honour; those respects are paid to my royalty, and not to me.

> Maximum hoc regni bonum est,
> Quod facta domini cogitur populus sui
> Quam ferre, tam laudare.[1]
>
> "'Tis the great benefit of kings that they
> Who are by law subjected to their sway
> Are bound, in all their princes say or do,
> Not only to submit, but praise it too."

Do I not see that the wicked and the good king, he that is hated and he that is beloved, has the one as much reverence paid him as the other? My predecessor was, and my successor shall be, served with the same ceremony and state. If my subjects do me no offence, 'tis no evidence of any good affection; why should I look upon it as such, seeing it is not in their power if they would? No one follows me, or obeys my commands, upon the account of any friendship betwixt him and me; there can be no contracting of friendship where there is so little relation and correspondence. My own height has put me out of the familiarity of, and intelligence with, men; there is too great disparity and disproportion betwixt us. They follow me upon the account of appearance and custom; or rather my fortune and me, to increase their own. All they say to me, or do for me, is forced and dissembled, their liberty being on all parts restrained by the great power and authority I have over them. I see nothing about me but what is dissembled and disguised.

The Emperor Julian being one day applauded by his courtiers for his exact justice, "I should be proud of these praises," said he, "did they come from persons that durst condemn or disapprove the contrary, in case I should do it."[2] All the real advantages of princes are common to them with men of moderate condition ('tis for the gods to mount winged horses and feed upon ambrosia): they have no other sleep nor other appetite than we; the steel they arm themselves withal is of no better temper than that we also use; their crowns do neither defend them from the rain nor sun.

Diocletian, who wore a crown so fortunate and revered, resigned it to retire himself to the felicity of a private life. And some time after, the necessity of public affairs requiring that he should re-assume his charge, he made answer to those who came to solicit him to it: "You would not offer to persuade me to this, had you seen the fine condition of the trees I have planted in my orchard, and the fair melons I have sowed in my garden."[3]

In the opinion of Anacharsis, the happiest state of government would be where, all other things being equal, precedency should be regulated to the virtues, and repulses to the vices, of men.

When King Pyrrhus prepared for his expedition into Italy, his wise counsellor Cyneas, to make him sensible of the vanity of his ambition: "Well, sir," said he, "to what end do you make all this mighty preparation?" "To make myself master of Italy," replied the king. "And what after that is done?" said Cyneas. "I will pass over into Gaul and Spain," said the other. "And what then?" "I will then go to subdue Africa; and lastly, when I have brought the whole world to my subjection, I will sit down and live content at my ease." "For God's sake, sir!" replied Cyneas, "tell me what hinders you, if you please, from being now in the condition you speak of? Why do you not now at this instant settle yourself in the state you say you aim at, and spare the labour and hazard you interpose?"[4]

The vain ambition of Pyrrhus.

> Nimirum, quia non bene norat quæ esset habendi
> Finis, et omnino quoad crescat vera voluptas.[5]
>
> "The end of being rich he did not know,
> Nor to what height felicity should grow."

I will conclude with an old versicle that I think very pat to the purpose.

> Mores cuique sui fingunt fortunam.[6]
>
> "Himself, not fortune, ev'ry one must blame,
> Since men's own manners do their fortune frame."

CHAPTER XLIII.

OF SUMPTUARY LAWS.

THE way by which our laws attempt to regulate idle and vain expenses in meat and clothes, seems to be quite contrary to the end designed. The true way would be to beget in men a contempt of silks and gold, as vain, frivolous, and useless; whereas, we augment to them the honours, and enhance the value of such things, which is a very absurd mode of creating a disgust. For to enact that none but princes shall eat turbot, shall wear velvet, or gold lace, and to interdict these things to the people, what is it but to bring them into a greater esteem, and to set every man more agog to eat and wear them? Let kings leave off these ensigns of grandeur, they have others enough besides; these excesses are more excusable in any other than a prince. We may learn, by the example of several nations, many better ways of exterior distinction of quality, (which, truly, I conceive to be very requisite in a state) without fostering up for this purpose this corruption and inconvenience. 'Tis strange

Gold and silver more to be despised by a prince than the subjects.

[1] Seneca, *Thyestes*, ii. 1. 30.

[2] Ammianus Marcellinus, xxii. 10.

[3] Aurelius Victor, in the article *Diocletian*.

[4] Plutarch, *Life of Pyrrhus*, c. 7.

[5] Lucret., v. 1434.

[6] Nepos, *Life of Atticus*, ii. 11.

how suddenly, and with how much ease, custom, in these indifferent things, establishes itself, and becomes authority. We had scarce worn cloth a year, at court, for the mourning of Henry the Second, but that silks were already grown into such contempt with every one that a man so clad was presently concluded a cit. Silks were left in share betwixt the physicians and surgeons, and though all other people almost went dressed alike, there was, notwithstanding, in one thing or other, sufficient distinction of the calling and condition of men. How suddenly do greasy chamois doublets become the fashion in our armies, whilst all neatness and richness of habit fall into reproach and contempt? Let kings but take the lead, and begin to leave off this expense, and in a month the business will be done throughout the kingdom without edict or ordinance; we shall all follow. It should be rather proclaimed, on the contrary, that no one should wear scarlet, or goldsmith's work, but whores and tumblers.

When silk clothes first began to be despised in France.

Zeleucus, with such an invention, reclaimed the corrupted manners of the Locrians. His laws were, That no free woman should be allowed more than one maid to follow her, unless she was drunk: nor was to stir out of the city by night, wear jewels of gold about her, or go in an embroidered robe, unless she was a professed public woman. That, pandars excepted, no man was to wear a gold ring, nor be habited in fine cloth, such as that woven in the city of Miletum.[1] By which ignominious exceptions he ingeniously diverted his citizens from superfluities and pernicious pleasures; it was a most useful mode of attracting men by honour and ambition, to their duty and obedience.

The laws of Zeleucus.

Our kings can do what they please in such external reformations; their own inclinations stand in this case for a law: *Quidquid principes faciunt, præcipere videntur.*[2] "What princes themselves do, they seem to enjoin others to do." Whatever is done at court passes for a rule through the rest of France. Let the courtiers but fall out with these abominable breeches, that discover so much of those parts which should be concealed; these unwieldy doublets, that make us look like I know not what; and are so unfit to admit of the use of arms; these long effeminate tresses of hair; this foolish custom of kissing what we present to our equals, and our hands in saluting them; a ceremony in former times only due to princes: and that a gentleman shall appear in a place where he owes respect, without his sword, unbuttoned and untrussed, as though he came from the house-of-office; and that, contrary to the custom of our forefathers, and the particular privilege of the noblesse of this kingdom, we shall stand a long time bare-headed before our princes, in what place soever, and the same to a hundred others, so many tiercelets and quartelets of kings have we got now-a-days; and so with other like degenerate innovations; they will see them all presently vanished and cried down. These are, 'tis true, but superficial errors, but still, of ill consequence; 'tis enough to inform us that the fabric itself is crazy and tottering, when we see the rough-cast of our walls to cleave and split.

The court practice is a rule for the French nation.

Plato, in his laws,[3] esteems nothing of more pestiferous consequence to his city than to give young men the liberty of introducing any change in their habits, gestures, dances, songs and exercises, from one form to another; shifting from this to that, hunting after novelties, and applauding the inventors; by which means manners are corrupted, and old institutions come to be nauseated and despised. In all things, saving only in those that are evil, a change is to be feared; even the change of seasons, winds, viands, and humours. And no laws are in their true credit, but such to which God has given so long a continuance that no one knows their beginning, or that there ever was any other.

New fashions fatal to youth.

CHAPTER XLIV.

OF SLEEP.

Reason directs that we should always go the same way, but not always the same pace. And consequently, though a wise man ought not to give the reins to human passions, so as to let them deviate him from the right path; he may, notwithstanding, without prejudice to his duty, leave it to them to hasten or to slacken his speed, and not fix himself like a motionless and insensible Colossus. Could virtue itself put on flesh and blood, I believe the pulse would beat faster going on to an assault than in going to dinner: that is to say, there is a necessity she should beat, and be moved. I have taken notice, as of an extraordinary thing, of some great men who, in the highest enterprizes and greatest dangers, have kept themselves in so settled a calm as not at all to hinder their usual serenity, or break their sleep. Alexander the Great, on the day assigned for that furious battle betwixt him and Darius, slept so profoundly, and so late in the morning, that Parmenio was fain to enter his chamber, and, coming to his bed-side, to call him several times by name,

The profound sleep of some great personages in their most important affairs.

[1] Diod. Sicul., xii. 20.

[2] Quint. *Declam.* iii.

[3] Book vii.

the time to go to fight being come.[1] The Emperor Otho, having put on a resolution to kill himself, the same night, after having settled his domestic affairs, divided his money amongst his servants, and set a good edge upon a sword he had made choice of for the purpose, and now staying only to be satisfied whether all his friends were retired in safety, he fell into so sound a sleep that the gentlemen of his chamber heard him snore.[2] The death of this emperor has in it many circumstances resembling that of the great Cato, and particularly this; for Cato being ready to dispatch himself, whilst he only stayed his hand in expectation of the return of a messenger he had sent, to bring him news whether the senators he had sent away were put out from the port of Utica, he fell into so sound a sleep that they heard him snore in the next room; and he whom he had sent to the port, having awaked him to let him know that the tempestuous weather had hindered the senators from putting to sea; he dispatched another messenger, and, composing himself again in the bed, settled again to sleep, and did so till, by the return of the last messenger, he had certain intelligence they were gone.[3] We may here further compare him with Alexander, too, in that great and dangerous storm that threatened him by the sedition of the tribunē, Metellus, who, wishing to renew the decree for the calling in of Pompey with his army into the City, at the time of Catiline's conspiracy, was only, and that stoutly, opposed by Cato, so that very sharp language, and bitter menaces, passed between them in the senate about that affair; but it was the next day, in the great square, that the matter was to be decided; where Metellus, besides the favour of the people, and of Cæsar (at that time of Pompey's faction), was to appear, accompanied with a rabble of foreign slaves and fencers; and Cato, only fortified with his own courage and firmness; so that his relations, domestics, and many good people were in great apprehension for him, and to that degree that some there were who passed over the whole night without sleep, eating, or drinking, for the manifest danger they saw him running into; at which his wife and sisters did nothing but weep and torment themselves in his house; whereas he, on the contrary, comforted every one, and, having supped after his usual manner, went to bed, and slept so profoundly till morning that one of his fellow tribunes roused him to go to the encounter.[4] The knowledge we have of the greatness of this man's courage, by the rest of his life, may warrant us surely to judge that his indifference proceeded from a soul so much elevated above such accidents that he disdained to let it take any more hold of his imagination than any other ordinary affair.

Cato's tranquillity just before a popular commotion.

In the naval engagement which Augustus won against Sextus Pompeius in Sicily, just as they were to begin the fight he was so fast asleep that his friends were compelled to wake him to give the signal of battle.[5] And this it was that gave Mark Antony afterwards occasion to reproach him that he had not the courage so much as with open eyes to behold the order of his own squadrons, and that he had not dared to present himself before the soldiers till first Agrippa had brought him news of the victory obtained. But, as to the business of young Marius, who did much worse (for the day of his last battle against Sylla, after he had ordered his army, and given the word and signal of battle, he laid him down under the shade of a tree to repose himself, and fell so fast asleep that the rout and flight of his men could hardly awake him, having seen nothing of the fight), he is said to have been at that time so extremely spent and worn out with labour and want of sleep that nature could hold out no longer.[6] Upon this matter the physicians may determine whether sleep be so necessary that our lives depend upon it: for we read that they killed King Perseus of Macedon, a prisoner at Rome, by keeping him from sleep; but Pliny instances some who have lived long without sleep.[7] Herodotus speaks of nations where the men sleep and wake by half years;[8] and they who write the life of the sage Epimenides affirm that he slept seven and fifty years together.[9]

Profound sleep of Augustus just before a battle.

CHAPTER XLV.

OF THE BATTLE OF DREUX.

Our battle of Dreux[10] was full of extraordinary accidents: but such men as have no great kindness for M. de Guise, nor much favour his reputation, are willing to have him thought to blame, and say that his making a halt, and delaying time with the forces he commanded, whilst Monsieur the Constable, who was general of the army, was raked through and through with the enemies' artillery, is not to be excused; and that he had much better have run the hazard of charging the enemy in flank than staying for the advantage of falling in upon

[1] Plutarch, *Life of Alexander*. 'Twas the same with the great Condé, on the eve of the Battle of Rocroi:—"Le lendemain, à l'heure marquée il fallut reveiller d'un profond sommiel cet autre Alexandre."—Bossuet, *Ora. Funeb. de Condé*.

[2] Plutarch, *in Vitâ*, c. 8. [3] Id. *ib.* c. 19.

[4] Id. *ib.* c. 8.

[5] Suetonius, *in vitâ*, c. 16.

[6] Plutarch, *Life of Sylla*, c. 13.

[7] Pliny mentions but one instance that I find, which is of Mæcenas, who he says for the last three years of his life had not one moment's sleep. *Nat. Hist.* vii. 52.

[8] Herodotus speaks of this only by hearsay, and positively declares he did not believe it. Book iv.

[9] Laertius, *in vitâ*. Pliny, vii. 52.

[10] Fought 1562, in the reign of Charles IX.

Victory the principal aim of the general and every soldier.

the rear, to suffer so great a loss. But, besides what the event demonstrated, he who will consider it without passion or prejudice will easily be induced to confess that the aim and design not of a captain only, but of every private soldier, ought to look at the victory in general; and that no particular occurrences, how nearly soever they may concern his own interest, should divert him from that pursuit. Philopœmen, in an encounter with Machanidas, having sent before a good strong party of his archers to begin the skirmish, the enemy having routed these pursued them post haste in the heat of victory, and in that pursuit passing by the place where Philopœmen was, though his soldiers were impatient to fall on, yet he did not think fit to stir from his post, nor to present himself to the enemy to relieve his men, but, having suffered them to be chased about the field, and cut in pieces before his face, charged in upon their body of foot, when he saw them left naked by their horse; and, notwithstanding that they were Lacedæmonians, yet taking them in the nick, when, thinking themselves secure of the victory, they began to disorder their ranks, he did his business with great facility, and then put himself in pursuit of Machanidas.[1] Which case is very like that of Monsieur de Guise.

Battle of Agesilaus with the Bœotians.

In that fierce battle betwixt Agesilaus and the Bœotians, which Xenophon, who was present at it, reports to be the roughest he had ever seen, Agesilaus waved the advantage that fortune presented to him, to let the Bœotians' battalion pass by, and then to charge them in the rear, how certain soever he made himself of the victory, judging it would rather be an effect of conduct than valour to proceed that way. And therefore, to show his prowess, rather chose, with a wonderful ardour of courage, to charge them in the front; but he was well beaten, and wounded for his pains, and constrained at last to disengage himself and to take the course he had at first neglected, opening his battalion to give way to this torrent of Bœotians, and being past by, taking notice that they marched in disorder, like men that thought themselves out of danger, he then pursued and charged them in flank, yet could not prevail so far as to bring it to so general a rout, but that they leisurely retreated, still facing about upon him, till they were retired into safety.[2]

CHAPTER XLVI.

OF NAMES.

WHAT variety of herbs soever are put together in the dish, yet the whole is called by the one name of a salad. In like manner, under the consideration of names, I will here make a hodge-podge of different articles.

Every nation has certain names that, I know not why, are taken in no good part: as with us John, William,[3] and Benedict. *Item*, in the genealogy of princes, also, there seem to be certain names fatally affected, as the Ptolemies of Egypt, the Henrys of England, the Charleses of France, the Baldwins of Flanders, and the Williams of our ancient Aquitaine, from whence 'tis said the name of Guienne has its derivation; which would seem far-fetched, were there not as crude derivations in Plato himself.[4]

Some names disliked: others fatally affected in the genealogies of some princes.

Item, 'tis a frivolous thing in itself, but nevertheless worthy to be recorded for the strangeness of it, which is writ by an eye-witness, that Henry Duke of Normandy, son of Henry the Second, King of England, making a great feast in France, the concourse of nobility and gentry was so great that being, for sport's sake, divided into troops, according to their names, in the first troop, which consisted of Williams, there were found an hundred and ten knights sitting at the table of that name, without reckoning the simple gentlemen and their servants.

Nobility placed at different tables at a feast, by a resemblance of names.

It is as pleasant to distribute the tables by the names of the guests as it was in the Emperor Geta to distribute the several courses of his meat by the first letters of the meats themselves, where those that began with *b* were served up together, as brawn, beef, bream, bustards, and beccaficos, and so of others.[5]

Dishes of meat served up according to the order of the alphabet.

Item, there is a saying that it is a good thing to have a good name, that is to say, credit and a good repute. But besides this, it is convenient to have a well-sounding name, such as is at the same time easy of pronunciation, and easy to be remembered, by reason that kings and other great persons do by that means the more easily know and the more hardly forget us; and, indeed, of our own servants, we more frequently call and employ those whose names are most ready upon the tongue. I myself have seen that Henry the Second could not for his heart hit of a gentleman's name of our country of Gascony; and moreover was fain to call one of the queen's maids of honour by the general name of her family, her own being so difficult to pronounce or remember. And Socrates thinks it worthy a father's care to give fine names to his children.

It is good to have a name easy to be pronounced.

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[1] Plutarch, *in vitâ*.
[2] Id., *Life of Agesilaus*.
[3] *William*, says the Dictionary of Trevoux, was once applied by way of contempt to persons who were thought slightingly of.

[4] The name of *Guienne* derives not from *Guillaume*, but from *Aquitania*, *Aquitaine*, whence, first, *Aquienne*, then *Guienne*.

[5] Spartian, *Life of Geta*, c. 5.

Item, tis said that the foundation of Nostre Dame la Grande, at Poictiers, took its original hence: that a debauched young fellow, formerly living in that place, having picked up a wench, and, at her first coming in, asking her name, and being answered that it was Mary, he felt himself so suddenly darted through with the awe of religion, and the reverence to that sacred name of the blessed Virgin, that he not only immediately sent the girl away, but became a reformed man, and so continued the remainder of his life. And that, in consideration of this miracle, there was erected upon the place where this young man's house stood, first a chapel dedicated to our Lady, and afterwards the church that we now see standing there. This auricular reproof wrought upon the conscience, and that right into the soul. This that follows insinuated itself merely by the senses. Pythagoras being in company with some wild young fellows, and perceiving that, heated with the feast, they complotted to go violate an honest house, commanded the singing-wench to alter her wanton airs; and by a solemn, grave, and spondaick music, gently enchanted and laid asleep their ardour.[1]

The origin of the foundation of Notre Dame la Grande, at Poictiers.

Item, will not posterity say that our modern reformation has been wonderfully exact, in having not only scuffled with and overcome errors and vice, and filled the world with devotion, humility, obedience, peace, and all sorts of virtue; but to have proceeded so far as to quarrel with the ancient baptismal names of Charles, Louis, and Francis, to fill the world with Methusalems, Ezekiels, and Malachis, of a far more spiritual sound? A gentleman, a neighbour of mine, a great admirer of antiquity, and who was always preferring the excellency of preceding times in comparison with this present age of ours, did not (amongst the rest) forget to magnify the lofty and magnificent sound of the gentlemen's names of those days, Don Grumedan, Quadregan, Agesilan, &c., which but to hear named he conceived to be other kind of men than Pierre, Guillot, and Michel.

Superb and magnificent names of the ancient noblesse.

Item, I am mightily pleased with Jaques Amiot for leaving, throughout a whole French oration, the Latin names entire, without varying and dissecting them, to give them a French termination. It seemed a little harsh and rough at first; but already custom, by the authority of his Plutarch, has overcome that novelty. I have often wished that such as write chronicles in Latin would leave our names as they find them, for in making of Vaudemont *Vallemontanus*, and metamorphosing names to dress them out in Greek or Latin, we know not where we are, and with the persons of the men lose the benefit of the story.

To conclude, 'tis a scurvy custom, and of very ill consequence, which we have in our kingdom of France, to call every man by the name of his manor or seigneury: 'tis the thing in the world that does the most confound families and descents. A younger brother of a good family, having a manor left him by his father, by the name of which he has been known and honoured, cannot handsomely leave it; ten years after his decease it falls into the hand of a stranger, who does the same. Do but judge whereabouts we shall be concerning the knowledge of these men. We need look no farther for examples than our own royal family, where every partition creates a new surname, whilst in the mean time the original of the family is totally lost. There is so great a liberty taken in these mutations that I have not in my time seen any one advanced by fortune to any extraordinary grandeur, who has not presently had genealogical titles added to him, new, and unknown to his father, and who has not been engrafted upon some illustrious stem; and, by good luck, the obscurest families are the most proper for falsification. How many gentlemen have we in France, who, by their own talk, are of royal extraction? More, I think, than of those that will confess they are not.

A custom in France for gentlemen to go by the name of their estates; why blameable.

The obscurest families most liable to be falsified.

Was not this a pleasant passage of a friend of mine? There were a great many gentlemen assembled together about the dispute of one seigneur with another; which other had, in truth, some pre-eminence of titles and alliances above the ordinary run of nobility. Upon the debate of this priority, every one standing up for himself, to make himself equal to him, alleged, one one extraction, another another; one the near resemblance of name; another of arms; another an old worm-eaten patent; and the least of them made himself out great-grandchild to some foreign king. When they came to sit down to dinner, my friend, instead of taking his place amongst them, retiring with the most profound congees, entreated the company to excuse him for having hitherto lived with them at the sancy rate of a companion; but, being now better informed of their quality, he would begin to pay them the respect due to their birth and grandeur, saying it would ill become him to sit down among so many princes. After jesting with them for some time, he made them a thousand reproaches: "Let us, in God's name, satisfy ourselves with what our fathers were contented with, and with what we are. We are great enough, if we rightly understand how to maintain it. Let us not disown the fortune and condition of our ancestors, but lay aside these ridiculous imaginations, that can never be wanting to any one that has the impudence to allege them."

[1] Sextus Empiricus, *adversus Mathem.* vi.

Arms offer no more security than surnames. I bear *Azur semé de trefles d'or, à une patte de lyon de même, armée de gueules, mise en face.* What privilege has this to continue particularly in my house and name? A son-in-law will transport it into another family; or some paltry purchaser will make them his first arms. There is nothing wherein there is more change and confusion.

The uncertainty of coats of arms.

But this consideration leads me perforce into another subject. Let us look a little narrowly into, and, in God's name, examine upon what foundation we erect this glory and reputation, for which the world is turned topsy-turvy. Wherein do we place this renown that we hunt after with such infinite anxiety and trouble? It is, in the end, Peter or William that bears it, takes it into his possession, and whom it only concerns. O, what a valiant faculty is hope, that in a mortal subject, and in a moment, makes nothing of usurping infinity, immensity, eternity, and of supplying her master's indigence, at her pleasure, with all things he can imagine or desire! Nature has here given us a pretty toy to play withal. And this Peter or William, what is it but a sound, when all is done? Or three or four dashes with a pen, so easy to be varied that I would fain know to whom is to be attributed the glory of so many victories, to Guesquin, to Glesquin, or to Gueaquin?[1] And yet there would be something more in the case than in Lucian, that Sigma should serve Tau with a process;[2] for

> Non levia aut ludicra petuntur
> Præmia;[3]
>
> "He seeks no mean rewards;"

the quest is here in good earnest. The point is, which of these letters is to be rewarded for so many sieges, battles, wounds, imprisonments, and services done to the crown of France by this famous constable.

Nicholas Denisot[4] never concerned himself farther than the letters of his name, of which he has altered the whole contexture to build up by anagram the Count d'Alsinois, whom he has endowed with the glory of his poetry and painting. And the historian Suetonius looked only to the meaning of his; and so cashiering his father's surname, *Lenis*, left *Tranquillus* successor to the reputation of his writings. Who would believe that the Captain Bayard should have no honour but what he derives from the great deeds of Peter Terrail;[5] and that Antonio Escalin should suffer himself to his face to be robbed of the honour of so many navigations and commands at sea and land by Captain Poulin and the Baron de la Garde?[6]

Secondly, these are dashes of the pen, common to a thousand people. How many are there in every race of the same name and surname? And how many in several races, ages, and countries? History tells us of three Socrateses, five Platos, eight Aristotles, seven Xenophons, twenty Demetriuses, twenty Theodores; and how many more she was not acquainted with, we may imagine. Who hinders my groom from calling himself Pompey the Great? But, after all, what virtue, what springs are there that convey to my deceased groom, or the other Pompey, who had his head cut off in Egypt, this glorious renown, and these so much honoured flourishes of the pen, so as to be of any advantage to them?

> Id cinerem et manes credis curare sepultos.[7]
>
> "Can we believe the dead regard such things?"

What sense have the two companions in the greatest esteem of men,—Epaminondas, of this glorious verse, that has been so many ages current in his praise;

> Consiliis nostris laus est attrita Laconum;[8]
>
> "One Sparta by my counsels is o'erthrown;"

and Africanus, of this other,

> A sole exoriente, supra Mæoti' Paludes,
> Nemo est qui factis me æquiparare queat.[9]
>
> "From early dawn unto the setting sun,
> There's none can match the deeds that I have done."

The survivors, indeed, tickle themselves with these praises, and, by them incited to jealousy or desire, inconsiderately and according to their own fancy, attribute to the dead this their own feeling; vainly flattering themselves that they shall one day in turn be capable of the same. God knows, however,

> Ad hæc se
> Romanus, Grajusque, et Barbarus induperator
> Erexit; causas discriminis atque laboris
> Inde habuit: tanto major famæ sitis est, quam
> Virtutis![10]

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[1] In Froissart's History, where we find all the most memorable actions of this great man, both before and after his advancement to the dignity of constable, and to his death, he is not named Guesquin, nor Glesquin, nor Gueaquin, but Guesclin. It is true that the same Froissart (tom. II. book 3,) long after, having mentioned his death, tells us that having called him by the name of Glesquin, in presence of William d'Ancenis, a gentleman of Britanny, that gentleman said to him, "That Glay Aquis was the right surname of this famous constable," which he proved to him by a very pleasant story, which has, however, all the air of romance. Menage, however, mentions no fewer than fourteen different ways of spelling the name.

[2] Referring to Lucian's *Judgment of the Vowels.*

[3] *Æneid*, xii. 764.

[4] Painter and Poet, born at Mans, 1515.

[5] Bayard's name.

[6] Antonio Escalin (the real name) was named Poulin, from Poulin, in the Albigeois, where he was born. He took the name of De la Garde from a corporal of that name, who, passing one day through Poulin, with a company of foot-soldiers, took a fancy to him, and carried him off with him to make him his boy. He distinguished himself by his wit, valour, and conduct, in the several employments which he had, as general of the galleys, ambassador to the Porte, and to England, &c., in the reigns of Francis I. and his successors, down to Charles IX.—See Brantome, *Illustrious Men.*

[7] *Æneid*, iv. 34.

[8] This verse, translated from the Greek, by Cicero (*Tus. Quæs.* v. 17), is the first of the four elegiac verses that were engraved on the base of the statue of Epaminondas (Pausanias, ix. 15). In Cicero, however, you find *Attonan*, not *Attrita.*

[9] Cicero, *Tusc. Quæs.* v. 17.

[10] Juvenal, x. 137.

"Fir'd with the love of these, what countless swarms,
Barbarians, Romans, Greeks, have rush'd to arms,
All danger slighted, and all toil defied,
And madly conquer'd, or as madly died!
So much the raging thirst of fame exceeds
The generous warmth which prompts to worthy deeds."

CHAPTER XLVII.

OF THE UNCERTAINTY OF OUR JUDGMENT.

Whether a conquered enemy should be pursued to extremity. Reasons for and against it.

It was well said by the poet,

Ἐπέων δὲ πολὺς νόμος ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα.[1]

"There is every where liberty of talking enough, and enough to be said on both sides."

For example:

Vince Annibal, e non seppe usar poi
Ben la vittoriosa sua ventura.[2]

"The Carthaginian, though renown'd in fight,
Improv'd not all his victories as he might."

Such as would take this side, and condemn the oversight of our leaders, in not pushing home the victory at Moncontour; or accuse the King of Spain[3] of not knowing how to make his best use of the advantage he had against us at St. Quentin, may conclude these oversights to proceed from a soul drunk with success, or from a courage which, being full and over-gorged with this beginning of good fortune, had lost the appetite of adding to it, having already enough to do to digest what it had taken in: he has his arms full, and can embrace no more. Unworthy of the benefit fortune had put into his hands: for what utility does he reap from it, if, notwithstanding, he gives his enemy time to rally? What hope is there that he will dare at another time to attack an enemy re-united and re-composed, and armed anew with despite and revenge, who did not dare to pursue him when routed and unmanned by fear?

Dum fortuna calet, dum conficit omnia terror.[4]

"Whilst Fortune's in a heat, and terror throws
A dismal gloom, confounding all their foes."

But, withal, what better opportunity can he expect than that he has lost? 'Tis not here, as in fencing, where the most hits win: for so long as the enemy is on foot, the game is new to begin; that is not to be called a victory that does not put an end to the war. In the encounter where Cæsar had the worse, near the city of Oricum, he reproached Pompey's soldiers that he had been lost, had their general known how to overcome;[5] and afterwards showed him a very different trick, when he beat him in his turn.

But why may not a man also argue, on the contrary, that it is the effect of a precipitous and insatiate spirit not to know how to restrain its ardour; that it is to abuse the favour of God to exceed the measure he has prescribed them; and that again to throw a man's self into danger, after a victory obtained, is again to expose himself to the mercy of fortune; and that it is one of the highest rules in the art of war not to drive an enemy to despair? Sylla and Marius, in the social war, having defeated the Marsians, seeing yet a body of reserve that, prompted by despair, was coming on like furious beasts to charge in upon them, thought it not convenient to await them. Had not Monsieur De Foix's ardour transported him so precipitously to pursue the remains of the victory of Ravenna, he had not obscured it by his own death. And yet the recent memory of his example served to preserve Monsieur d'Anguien from the same misfortune at the battle of Serisoles. 'Tis dangerous to attack a man you have deprived of all means to escape but by his arms: for necessity teaches violent resolutions: *Gravissimi sunt morsus irritatæ necessitatis.*[6] "Enraged necessity bites deep."

Vincitur haud gratis, jugulo qui provocat hostem.[7]

"The foe that meets the sword sells his life dear."

This it was that made Pharax withhold the King of Lacedæmon, who had won a battle of the Mantineans, from going to charge a thousand Argians, who were escaped in an entire body from the defeat; but rather let them steal off at liberty, that he might not encounter valour whetted and enraged by misehance.[8] Clodomir, King of Aquitaine, after a victory pursuing Gondemar, King of Burgundy, beaten and flying, compelled him to face about, and make head; and his obstinacy deprived him of the fruit of his conquest, for he there lost his life.

Whether soldiers should be richly armed.

In like manner, if a man were to choose whether he would have his soldiers richly accoutred and armed, or armed only for necessary defence; this argument would step in in favour of the first (of which opinion were Sertorius, Philopœmen, Brutus, Cæsar, and others), that it is to a soldier an enflaming of courage, and a spur to glory, to see himself bravely apparelled, and withal affords occasion to be more obstinate in fight, having his arms, which are in a manner his estate and inheritance, to defend; which is the reason, says Xenophon, why those of Asia carried their wives, concubines, with their choicest jewels and greatest wealth, along with them to the wars.[9] But then these arguments would offer on the other side: that a general ought rather to lessen than increase, in his soldiers, their so-

[1] Homer, *Iliad*, xx. 249.
[2] Petrarch, *Son.* 83.
[3] Philip II., who defeated the French near St. Quentin, the 20th of August, 1556, being St. Lawrence's day.
[4] Luc. vii. 734.
[5] Plut. *in vitâ.*
[6] *Declamat. Porc. Latro. apud* Sallust.
[7] Lucan, iv. 275.
[8] Diod. Sic. xii. 26.
[9] *Cyropædia*, iv. 4.

licitude of preserving themselves: that by this means they will be in a double fear of hazarding their persons; as also that it will be a double temptation to the enemy to fight for a victory where so rich spoils are to be obtained. And this very thing has been observed, in former times, notably to encourage the Romans against the Samnites. Antiochus shewing Hannibal the army he had raised, wonderfully splendid, and rich in all sorts of equipage, asked him—"Will the Romans be satisfied with that army?" "Satisfied!" replied the other; "yes, doubtless, were their avarice never so great."[1] Lycurgus not only forbad his soldiers all manner of sumptuousness in their equipage, but moreover to strip their conquered enemies, because, he said, he would have poverty and frugality shine with the rest of the battle.[2]

Whether soldiers should be suffered to brave and insult the enemy.

At sieges, and elsewhere, where occasion draws us near to the enemy, we readily suffer our men to brave, rate, and affront the enemy with all sorts of injurious language; and not without some colour of reason; for it is of no little consequence to take from them all hopes of mercy and composition, in representing to them that there is no fair quarter to be expected from an enemy they have incensed to that degree, nor other remedy remaining, but in victory. And yet Vitellius found himself out in this way of proceeding; for having to do with Otho, weaker in respect of his soldiers, long unaccustomed to war, and effeminated with the delights of the city; he so nettled them at last, with stinging language, reproaching them with cowardice, and the regret of the mistresses and entertainments they had left behind at Rome, that by this means he inspired them with such resolution as no exhortation would have had the power to have done; and himself made them fall upon him, with whom their own captains before could by no means prevail. And, indeed, when they are injuries that touch to the quick, it may very well fall out that he who went but sluggishly to work in the behalf of his prince will fall to it with another sort of mettle, when the quarrel is his own.

Whether generals ought to disguise themselves before a battle.

Considering of how great importance is the preservation of the general of an army, and that the universal aim of an enemy is levelled directly at the head upon which all others depend; the advice seems to admit of no dispute, which we know has been taken by many great captains, of changing their dress, and disguising their persons, upon the point of going to engage. Nevertheless, the inconvenience a man, by so doing, runs into, is not less than that he thinks to avoid: for the captain, by this means, being concealed from the knowledge of his own men, the courage they should derive from his presence and example comes by degrees to cool and to decay; and not seeing the wonted marks and ensigns of their leader,[3] they presently conclude him either dead, or that, despairing of the business, he is gone to shift for himself. Experience shows us that both these ways have been both successful and otherwise. What befel Pyrrhus in the battle he fought against the consul Levinus, in Italy, will serve us to both purposes: for though, by shrouding his person under the arms of Megacles, and making the latter wear his, he undoubtedly preserved his own life, yet by that very means he was withal very near running into the other mischief of losing the battle. Alexander, Cæsar, and Lucullus, loved to make themselves known in battle, by rich accoutrements and arms of a particular lustre and colour. Agis, Agesilaus, and that great Gilippus,[4] on the contrary, used to fight obscurely armed, and without any imperial attendance or distinction.

Whether it is best to fall upon an enemy, or wait for an attack.

Amongst other oversights Pompey is charged withal, at the Battle of Pharsalia, he is condemned for making his army stand still to receive the enemy's charge;[5] "by reason that" (I shall here steal Plutarch's own words, that are better than mine,) "he, by so doing, deprived himself of the violent impression the motion of running adds to the first shock of arms, and hindered the impetus of the combatants, which was wont to give great impetuosity and fury to the first encounter; especially when they come to rush in with their utmost vigour, their courages increasing by the shouts and the career; thereby rendering his soldiers' animosity and ardour, as a man may say, more reserved and cold." This is what Plutarch says;[6] but if Cæsar had come by the worse, why might it not as well have been urged that, on the contrary, the strongest and most steady posture of fighting is that wherein a man stands planted firm, without motion; and they who make a halt upon their march, closing up, and reserving their force within themselves for the push of the business, have a great advantage against those who are disordered, and who have already spent half their breath in running on precipitously to the charge. Besides, that an army

[1] Aulus Gellius. v. 5.
[2] Plutarch, *Apoth. of the Lacedæmonians.*
[3] As at the Battle of Ivry, in the person of Henry the Great.
[4] It is my opinion, observes M. Coste, that one who has been forced to fly his country from a sentence of death, for having robbed the public, can never deserve the title of a great man. As to the infamous robbery committed by this Gilippus, see Diodorus of Sicily. His father, whose name was Clearchus, was in the same scrape. Being cast for his life, he fled, says Diodorus, before the sentence. Thus, adds the historian, did these two personages, who in other respects were both reputed excellent men, throw a scandal upon the rest of their lives and actions, by suffering themselves to be corrupted with sordid avarice.
[5] It is Cæsar himself that lays this blame on Pompey.—*De Bello Civili*, iii. 17.
[6] *Life of Pompey*, c. 19.

being a body made up of so many members, it is impossible for it to move in this fury with so exact a motion as not to break the order of battle, and that the readiest are engaged before their fellows can come up to relieve them. In that disgraceful battle betwixt the two Persian brothers, the Lacædemonian, Clearchus, who commanded the Greeks of Cyrus's party, led them on gently, and without precipitation, to the charge; but coming within fifty paces, put them to full speed, hoping, in so short a career, both to preserve their order, to husband their breath, and, at the same time, to give the advantage of impetuosity both to their persons and their missive arms.[1] Others have regulated this question in charging, thus; "if your enemy come running upon you, stand firm to receive him; if he stand to receive you, run full drive upon him."[2]

Whether it is best for a prince to wait for his enemy in his own territory, or to go and attack him upon his.

In the expedition of the Emperor, Charles the Fifth, into Provence, King Francis was put to choose whether to go meet him in Italy, or to await him in his own dominions; and though he well considered of how great advantage it was to preserve his own territories entire, and clear from the troubles of war, to the end that, being unexhausted of her stores, it might continually supply men and money at need; that the necessity of war requires at every turn to spoil and lay waste the country before them, which cannot very well be done upon one's own; besides which, the country people do not so easily digest such havoc by those of their own party as from an enemy, so that seditions and commotions might by such means be kindled amongst us; that the license of pillage and plunder, which is not to be tolerated at home, is a great ease and refreshment against the fatigues and sufferings of war; and that he who has no other prospect of gain than his bare pay will hardly be kept from running home, being but two steps from his wife and his own house; that he who lays the cloth is ever at the charge of the feast; that there is more alacrity in assaulting than defending: and that the shock of the loss of a battle in our own bowels is so violent as to endanger the disjointing of the whole body, there being no passion so contagious as that of fear, that is so easily believed, or that so suddenly diffuses itself; and that the cities that should hear the rattle of this tempest, that should take in their captains and soldiers, still trembling and out of breath, would be in danger, in this heat and hurry, to precipitate themselves upon some untoward resolution: notwithstanding all this, he chose to recal the forces he had beyond the mountains, and to suffer the enemy to c[illegible]m.

For he might, on the other hand, imagine that, being at home, and amongst his friends, he could not fail of plenty of all manner of conveniences; the rivers and passes he had at his devotion would bring him in both provisions and money in all security, and without the trouble of convoy; that he should find his subjects by so much the more affectionate to him, by how much their danger was more near and pressing; that having so many cities and barriers to secure him, it would be in his power to give battle at his own opportunity and best advantage; and, if it pleased him to delay the time, that under covert, and at his own ease, he might see his enemy founder and defeat himself with the difficulties he was certain to encounter, being engaged in an enemy's country, where before, behind, and on every side, war would be upon him; no means to refresh himself, or to enlarge his quarters, should disease infest them, or to lodge his wounded men in safety. No money, no victuals, but all at the point of the lance; no leisure to repose and take breath; no knowledge of the ways or country, to secure him from ambushes and surprises; and, in case of losing a battle, no possible means of saving the remains.[3] Neither is there want of example in both these cases.

Scipio thought it much better to go and attack his enemy's territories in Africa than to stay at home to defend his own, and fight him in Italy, where he then was; and it succeeded well with him. But, on the contrary, Hannibal, in the same war, ruined himself, by abandoning the conquest of a strange country, to go and defend his own. The Athenians, having left the enemy in their own dominions, to go over into Sicily, were not favoured by fortune in their design; but Agathocles, King of Syracuse, found her favourable to him, when he went over into Africa, and left the war at home.

Thus we are wont to conclude, and with reason, that events, especially in war, do for the most part depend upon fortune, who will not be governed by, nor submit unto, human reason or prudence, according to the poet,

> Et male consultis pretium est; prudentia fallax.
> Nec fortuna probat causas, sequiturque merentes,
> Sed vaga per cunctos nullo discrimine fertur.
> Scilicet est aliud, quod nos cogatque regatque
> Majus, et in proprias ducat mortalia leges.[4]
>
> "Prudence deceitful and uncertain is,
> Ill counsels sometimes hit, where good ones miss;
> Though Fortune sometimes the best cause approves,
> Adverse and wildly she as often roves.
> To that some greater and more constant cause
> Rules and subjects all mortals to its laws."

But, to take the thing right, it should seem that our counsels and deliberations depend as much upon fortune as anything we do, and that she engages our very reason in her uncertainty

[1] Xeno[illegible]8.

[2] [illegible] *Marriage.*

[3] [illegible] reasoning is taken, word for word, from a speech made by Francis I. in council, and preserved by William du Bellay, in his *Memoirs*, Book vi.

[4] Manilius, iv. 95.

and confusion. "We argue rashly and adventurously," says Timæus in Plato, "because, as well as ourselves, our reason has a great share in the temerity of chance."

CHAPTER XLVIII.

OF DESTRIERS.

HERE am I become a grammarian—I, who never learned any language but by rote, and who do not yet know adjective, conjunctive, or ablative. I think I have read that the Romans had a sort of horses, by them called *Funales*, or *Dextrarios*,[1] which were either led-horses, or relay-horses, to be taken fresh upon occasions; and thence it is that we call our horses of service *Destriers:* and our romances commonly use the phrase of *Adestrer* for *Accompagner*, to accompany. They also called those horses *Desultorios Equos*, which were taught to run full speed side by side, without bridle or saddle, so as that the Roman gentlemen, armed at all points, would shift and throw themselves from the one to the other. The Numidian men-at-arms had always a led-horse in one hand, besides that they rode upon, to change in the heat of battle. *Quibus, desultorum in modum, binos trahentibus equos, inter acerrimam sæpe pugnam in recentem equum, ex fesso, armatis transsultare mos erat: tanta velocitas ipsis, tamque docile equorum genus.*[2] "Whose custom it was, leading along two horses, after the manner of the Desultorii, armed as they were, in the heat of fight, to vault from a tired horse to a fresh one; so active were the men, and the horses so doeile." There are many horses trained to help their riders, so as to run upon any one that presents a drawn sword, to fall both teeth and heels upon any that front or oppose them. But it often falls out that they do more harm to their friends than their enemies; besides that you cannot reduce them again into order, when they are once engaged and grappled; so that you remain at the mercy of their quarrel. It happened very unfortunately to Artybius, general of the Persian army, fighting man to man with Onesilus, King of Salamis, to be mounted upon a horse taught in this school; for it was the occasion of his death; the squire of Onesilus cleaving him down with a scythe betwixt the shoulders, as the horse was reared up upon his master.[3] And what the Italians report, that, in the battle of Fornuova, King Charles's horse, with kicks and plunges, disengaged his master from the enemy that pressed upon him, without which he had been slain, seems a strange effect of chance, if it be true.[4] The Mamelukes make their boast that they have the most adroit horses of any cavalry in the world; that by nature and custom they are taught to know and distinguish the enemy, whom they are to fall foul upon with mouth and heels, according to a word or sign given; as also to gather up, with their teeth, darts and lances scattered upon the field, and present them to their riders, according as he orders. 'Tis said of Cæsar, and also of the great Pompey, that, amongst their other excellent qualities, they were both excellent horsemen, and particularly of Cæsar, that, in his youth, being mounted on the bare back of a horse, without saddle or bridle, he could make him run, stop, and turn, with his hands behind him.[5] As Nature designed to make of this personge, and of Alexander, two miracles of military art, you may say she did her utmost to arm them after an extraordinary manner. For every one knows that Alexander's horse, Bucephalus, had a head inclining to the shape of a bull, that he would suffer himself to be mounted nor accoutred by none but his master, and that he was so honoured after his death as to have a city erected to his name. Cæsar had also another, that had fore-feet like the hands of a man, his hoof being divided in the form of fingers, which likewise was not to be ridden by any but Cæsar himself; who, after his death, dedicated his statue to the goddess Venus.[6]

Horses to change in the height of speed.

The horses of the Mamelukes very dexterous.

Cæsar and Pompey good horsemen.

Alexander's horse.

Cæsar's horse.

I do not willingly alight when I am once on horseback; for it is the place where, whether well or sick, I find myself most at ease. Plato recommends it for health,[7] and also Pliny says it is good for the stomach and the joints.[8] Let us pursue the matter a little further, since we have entered upon it.

Riding a very wholesome exercise.

We read, in Xenophon, a law forbidding any one, who was master of a horse, to travel on foot.[9] Trogus and Justin say,[10] that the Parthians were wont to perform all offices and

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[1] Suetonius (Life of Tiberius), and Statius (Thebaid vi. 461.), have employed the term *funalis* in this sense; but *dextrarius* is a barbarism used only by the authors of the middle ages.

[2] Livy, xxiii. 29.

[3] Herodot. v. 111.

[4] In the narrative which Philip de Comines has given of this battle (viii. 6.), in which he himself was present, he tells us of wonderful performances by the horse on which the king was mounted. The name of the horse was Savoy, and it was the most beautiful horse he had ever seen. During the battle the king was personally attacked, when he had nobody near him but a valet de chambre, a little fellow, and not well armed. "The king," says Philip de Comines, "had the best horse under him in the world, and therewith he stood his ground bravely, till a number of his men, not a great way from him, arrived at the critical minute, when the Italians ran away." This does not seem very contradictory to what the [illegible], that, had it not been for his horse, King Charles [illegible] been lost.

[5] Plutarch, *Life of Cæsar*.

[6] Suetonius, *Life of Cæsar*.

[7] *Laws*, vii.

[8] Book xxviii. 24.

[9] *Cyropædic*, iv. 3.

[10] Justin, xvi.

The Parthians almost always on horseback.

ceremonies, not only in war, but also all affairs, whether public or private, make bargains, confer, entertain, take the air, and all on horseback; and that the greatest distinction betwixt freemen and slaves amongst them was that the one rode on horseback and the other went on foot: an institution of which King Cyrus was the founder.

There are several examples in the Roman History (and Suetonius more particularly remarks it in Cæsar[1]) of captains who, in pressing occasions, commanded their cavalry to alight, both by that means to take from them all hopes of flight, as also for the advantage they hoped for in this sort of fight. *Quo, haud dubie, superat Romanus:* "Wherein the Romans did, questionless, excel;" says Livy.[2] The first thing they did to prevent insurrections in the nations of new conquest was to take from them their arms and horses: and therefore it is that we so often meet in Cæsar: *Arma proferri, jumenta produci, obsides dari jubet.*[3] "He commanded the arms to be produced, the horses brought out, and hostages to be given." The Grand Seignior, to this day, suffers not a Christian or a Jew to keep a horse of his own throughout his empire.

Inconvenience of fighting on horseback.

Our ancestors, particularly at the time they had war with the English, in all their greatest engagements and pitched battles fought for the most part on foot, that they might have nothing but their own strength and courage to trust to in a quarrel of so great concern as life and honour. You stake (whatever Chrysanthes in Xenophon says to the contrary) your valour and your fortune upon that of your horse; his wound or death brings you into the same danger; his fear or fury shall make you rash or cowardly; if he have an ill mouth, or will not answer to the spur, your honour must answer it.[4] And, therefore, I do not think it strange that those battles were more firm and furious than those that are fought on horseback:

> Cedebant pariter, pariterque ruebant
> Victores victique; neque his fuga nota, neque illis:[5]
>
> "By turns they quit their ground, by turns advance,
> Victors and vanquished, in the various field,
> Nor wholly overcome, nor wholly yield:"

their battles were much better contested: now-a-days there are nothing but routs;—*Primus clamor atque impetus rem decernit.*[6] "The first shout, or the first charge, settles the business." And the arms we make use of in so great a hazard should be as much as possible at our own command; wherefore I should advise to choose them of the shortest, and such of which we are able to give the best account. A man may repose more confidence in a sword he holds in his hand than in a bullet he discharges out of a pistol, wherein there must be a concurrence of several executions to make it perform its office, the powder, the stone, and the wheel, if any of which fail, it endangers your fortune. The blow a man strikes himself, is much surer than that which the air carries for him:

> Et quo ferre velint, permittere vulnera venfis:
> Ensis habet vires; et gens quæcumque virorum est,
> Bella gerit gladiis.[7]
>
> "Far off with bows
> They shoot, and where it lists the wind bestows
> Their wounds; but the sword-fight does strength require,
> All manly nations the sword-fight desire."

But of that weapon I shall speak more fully when I come to compare the arms of the ancients with our own; the astonishment of the ear excepted, which every one grows familiar with in a little time, I look upon it as a weapon of very little execution, and hope we shall one day lay it aside. That missile weapon which the Italians formerly made use of, both with fire and without, was much more terrible. They called a certain kind of javelin, armed at the point with an iron three feet long, that it might pierce through and through an armed man, *phalarica*, which they sometimes in the field threw by hand, sometimes from engines, for the defence of beleagured places; the shaft whereof being rolled round with flax, wax, rosin, oil, and other combustible matter, took fire in its flight, and, lighting upon the body of a man, or his target, took away all the use of arms and limbs. And yet, coming to close fight, I should think they would also endamage the assailant, and that the field being covered with these flaming truncheons, would produce a common inconvenience to the whole crowd:

The use of the phalarica, a weapon of the ancient Italians.

> Magnum stridens contorta phalarica venit,
> Fulminis acta modo.[8]
>
> "A knotted lance, large, heavy, strong,
> Which roared like thunder as it whirled along."

They had, moreover, other devices which custom made them perfect in, but which seem incredible to us who have not used them, by which they produced the effects of our powder and shot. They darted their heavy spears with so great force as oft-times transfixed two targets, and two armed men at once, and pinned them together. Neither was the effect of their slings less certain or speedy. *Saxis globosis... funda, mare apertum incessentes... caronas modici circuli, magno ex intervallo loci, assueti trajicere, non capita modo hostium vulnerabant, sed quem locum destinassent.*[9] "Culling round stones from the shore for their slings, and with them practising at a great distance to

[1] Suetonius, *Life of Cæsar*, c. 60.
[2] Livy, ix. 22.
[3] *De Bell. Gall.* vii. 11.
[4] *Cyropædia*, iv. 3, 8.
[5] *Æneid*, ix. 756.
[6] Livy, xxv. 45.
[7] Lucr., viii. 384.
[8] *Æneid*, ix. 705.
[9] Livy, xxxviii. 29.

throw through a circle of very small circumference, they would not only wound an enemy in the head, but hit any other part at pleasure." Their pieces of battery had not only the execution, but the thunder of our cannon:—*Ad ictus mœnium cum terribili sonitu editos, pavor et trepidatio cepit.*[1] "At the battering of the walls, which is performed with a dreadful noise, the defenders began to fear and tremble." The Gauls, our kinsmen, in Asia, abominated these treacherous missile arms, it being their use to fight with greater bravery, hand to hand. *Non tam patentibus plagis moventur . . . ubi latior quam altior plaga est, etium gloriosius se pugnare putant: iidem, quum aculeus sagittæ aut glandis abditæ introrsus tenui vulnere in speciem urit . . . tum in rabiem et pudorem, tam parvo perimentis pestis versi, prosternunt corpora humi.*[2] "They are not so much concerned at large wounds; when a wound is wider than deep, they think they have fought with greater glory; but when they find themselves tormented with a slight wound with the point of a dart, or some concealed glandulous body, then, transported with fury and shame, to perish by so mean a messenger of death, they fall to the ground;" a representation something very like a musket-shot. The ten thousand Greeks, in their long and famous retreat, met with a nation who very much galled them with great and strong bows, carrying arrows so long that, taking them up, one might return them back like a dart, and with them pierce a buckler and an armed man through and through.[3] The engines that Dionysius invented at Syracuse, to shoot vast massy darts, and stones of a prodigious size, with impetuosity,[4] and at a great distance, came very near to our modern inventions.

But don't let us forget the pleasant posture of one Maistre Pierre Pol, a doctor of divinity, whom Monstrelet reports always to have rode through the streets of Paris, aside upon his mule, like a woman. He says also, elsewhere, that the Gascons had terrible horses that would wheel in their full speed, which the French, Picards, Flemings, and Brabanters looked upon as a miracle, "having never seen the like before;" these are his very words.[5] Cæsar speaking of the Suabians:[6] "in the charges they make on horseback," says he, "they often throw themselves off to fight on foot, having taught their horses not to stir in the mean time from the place, to which they presently run again upon occasion; and, according to their custom, nothing is so unmanly and so base as to use saddles or pads, and they despise such as make use of them; insomuch that, though but a very few in number, they fear not to attack a great many." That which I have formerly wondered at, to see a horse made to perform all his airs with a switch only, and the reins upon his neck, was common with the Massilians, who rode their horses without saddle or bridle.

The Massilians, a people of Africa, ride on horses without saddle or bridle.

> Et gens, quæ nudo residens Massylia dorso,
> Ora levi flectit, frænorum nescia, virga.[7]
> Et Numidæ infræni cinguntⁿ.[8]
>
> "Massilians, who unsaddled horses ride,
> And with a switch, not knowing bridles, guide
> The rapid steed; and fierce Numidians, too,
> That use no rein, begirt us round."

Equi sine frœnis; deformis ipse cursus, rigida cervice, et extento capite currentium.[9] "The career of a horse without a bridle must needs be ungraceful, his neck being extended stiff, and his nose thrust out."

King Alphonso,[10] he who first instituted the order of the *Chevaliers de la Bande*, or, *de l' Escharpe*, amongst other rules of the order, gave them this, That they should never ride mule or mulet, upon a penalty of a mark of silver, which I read lately in Guevara's letters, of which, whoever gave them the title of Golden Epistles, had another kind of opinion than I have. "The Courtier"[11] says that, till his time, it was a disgrace to a gentleman to ride one of those creatures. But the Abyssinians, on the contrary, as they are nearer advanced to the person of Prester John, their prince, affect to ride large mules for the greater dignity and grandeur.

To ride on mules honourable or dishonourable in different countries.

Xenophon tells us[12] that the Assyrians were fain to keep their horses fettered in the stable, they were so fierce and vicious; and that it required so much time to loose and harness them that, to avoid any disorder this tedious preparation might bring upon them, in case of surprise, they never sat down in their camp till it was first well fortified with ditches and ramparts. His Cyrus, who was so great a master of equestrian exercises, made his horses pay their shot, and never suffered them to have anything till first they had earned it by the sweat of some kind of work. The Scythians, when in the field, and in scarcity of provisions, used to let their horses'

The blood and urine of horses serve for nourishment in case of need.

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[1] Livy, xxxviii. 5.
[2] Id. *ib.* 31.
[3] Xenophon, *Anab.*, v. ii.
[4] The *Catapulta*, which Ælian, in his *Various Histories*, vi. 12., assigns the invention of to Dionysius himself. Diodorus Siculus, xiv. 12., merely says that it was invented at Syracuse in the time of Dionysius the Elder. Pliny, vii. 56, states that this engine was first used by the Syro-Phœnicians.
[5] Moustrelet, vol. i. c. 66, who to the Gascons adds the Lombards, whom Montaigne forgot, or purposely omitted.
[6] All the editions, up to Coste's, have it, *Swedes*, which must be an error of the press. Cæsar's expression is *Suevorum gens*. Sweden was not known to the Romans in Cæsar's time, which Montaigne must have known very well.
[7] Lucan, iii. 82.
[8] Æneid, iv. 41.
[9] Livy, xxxv. 11.
[10] Alphonso XI. of Leon and Castile, died 1350.
[11] *Il Cortigiano*, by Balthasar Castiglione, published 152[illegible]. The passage cited by Montaigne is at the beginning of [illegible] second book.
[12] *Cyropædia*, iii. 3.

blood, which they drank, and sustained themselves by that diet:

Venit et epoto Sarmata pastus equo.[1]

"Hither the Scythian also steers his course,
Gorged with the juices of his bleeding horse."

Those of Crete, being besieged by Metellus, were in so great necessity for drink that they were fain to quench their thirst with their horses' urine.[2]

How the Turkish armies subsist.

And to show how much cheaper the Turkish armies support themselves than ours do, 'tis said that, besides that the soldiers drink nothing but water and eat nothing but rice and salt flesh pulverised (of which every one may easily carry about with him a month's provision), they can feed upon the blood of their horses as well as the Muscovites and Tartars, and salt it for their use.

Horses as much esteemed by the Americans as by the Spaniards themselves.

These new discovered Indians, when the Spaniards first landed amongst them, had so great an opinion both of the men and horses that they looked upon them equally as gods, or at least animals ennobled above their own nature: insomuch that some of them, after they were subdued, coming to the soldiers to sue for peace and pardon, and to bring them gold and provisions, failed not to offer the same to the horses, with the same kind of harangue to them which they had made to the men, interpreting their neighing for a language of truce and friendship.

In the other Indies to ride upon an elephant was anciently the highest honour; the second to ride in a coach with four horses; the third to ride upon a camel, and the last and lowest to be carried or drawn by one horse only.[3] One of our late writers tells us that he has been in a country in those parts where they ride upon oxen with pads, stirrups, and bridles, and that he found this equipage very much to his ease.

Quintus Fabius Maximus Rutilianus,[4] in a battle with the Samnites, seeing his cavalry, after three or four charges, had failed of breaking into the enemies' main body, took this course—to make them unbridle all their horses, and spur their horses with all their might, so that, having nothing to check their career, they might through weapons and men open the way for his foot, who by that means gave them a bloody defeat. The same command was given by Quintus Fulvius Flaccus against the Celtiberians: *Id cum majore vi equorum facietis, si effrœnatos in hostes equos immittitis; quod sæpè Romanos equites cum laude fecisse suâ memoriæ proditum est. . . . . Détractisque frœnis, bis ultro citroque cum magna strage hostium, infractis omnibus hastis, transcurrerunt.*[5] "You will do your business with greater advantage of your horses' strength if you spur them unbridled upon the enemy, as it is recorded the Roman horse to their great glory have often done. . . . . And their bits being pulled off without breaking a lance, they charged through and through with great slaughter of the enemy."

Mare's milk the delight of the Tartars.

The Duke of Muscovy was anciently obliged to pay this reverence to the Tartars, that when they sent any embassy to him he went out to meet the ambassadors on foot, and presented them with a goblet of mare's milk (a beverage of greatest esteem among them); and if, in drinking, a drop fell by chance upon the horse's mane, he was bound to lick it off with his tongue.[6] The army that Bajazet had sent into Russia was overwhelmed with so dreadful a tempest of snow that, to shelter and preserve themselves from freezing, many ripped up and embowelled their horses, to creep into their bellies and enjoy the benefit of that vital heat. Bajazet, after that furious battle wherein he was overthrown by Tamerlane,[7] was in a hopeful way of securing his own person by the fleetness of an Arabian mare he had under him, had he not been constrained to let her drink her fill at the ford of a river in his way, which rendered her so heavy and indisposed that he was afterwards easily overtaken by those that pursued him. They say, indeed, that to let a horse stale takes him off his mettle; but I should rather have thought that drinking would have refreshed her and revived her spirits.

Crœsus, marching his army over a common near Sardis, met with an infinite number of serpents, which the horses devoured with great appetite, and which Herodotus says[8] was a bad omen to his affairs.

We call a horse *cheval entier* that has his mane and ears entire, and no other will pass muster. The Lacedæmonians having defeated the Athenians in Sicily, returning triumphant from the victory into the city of Syracusa, amongst other bravadoes caused all the horses they had taken to be shorn and led in triumph.[9] Alexander fought with a nation called Dahæ; a people whose discipline it was to march two and two together, armed and on horseback, to the war; but being in fight, one always alighted, and so they fought one while on horseback and another on foot, one after another, by turns.[10]

Horses clipped to be led in triumph.

I do not think that for good and graceful riding any nation excels the French, though a good horseman, according to our way of speaking, seems rather to respect the courage of the

[1] Martial, *Spectac.* lib. iii. 4.
[2] Val. Max. vii. 6. *Ext.* i.
[3] Arrian, *Hist. Ind.* c. 17.
[4] Father *Rutilianus.* See Livy, vii. 30.
[5] xl. 40.
[6] The *Chronicle of Muscovy*, by Peter Petrejus, a ... printed in High Dutch, at Leipsic, in 1620, in 4to., part ii. p. 159. This species of slavery began about the middle of the thirteenth century, and lasted near 260 years.
[7] In 1401.
[8] Book i. c. 78.
[9] Plutarch, *Life of Nicias*, c. 10.
[10] Quintus Curtius, vii. 7.

man than his horsemanship and address in riding. The most knowing in that art that ever I knew, that had the best seat and the best method in taming a horse, was Monsieur de Carnavalet, who served our King Henry the Second in this respect. I have seen a man ride with both his feet upon the saddle, take off the saddle, and at his return take it up again, refit and remount it, riding all the while full speed; having gallopped over a cap, make at it very good shots backward with his bow, take up anything from the ground, setting one foot down and the other in the stirrup, with twenty other apes' tricks, which he got his living by.

Instances of the wonderful dexterity of riders.

There has been seen in my time at Constantinople two men upon a horse, who, in the height of his speed, would throw themselves off and into the saddle again by turn; and one who bridled and saddled his horse with nothing but his teeth. Another, who betwixt two horses, one foot upon one saddle and another upon the other, carrying another man upon his shoulders, would ride full career; the other standing bolt upright upon him, making excellent shots with his bow. Several who would ride full speed with their heels upwards and their heads upon the saddle, betwixt the rows of scimitars fixed in the harness. When I was a boy the Prince of Sulmona, riding a rough horse at Naples to all his airs, held reals under his knees and toes as if they had been nailed there, to shew the firmness of his seat.

CHAPTER XLIX.

OF ANCIENT CUSTOMS.

I SHOULD willingly pardon our people for admitting no other pattern or rule of perfection than their own peculiar manners and customs, it being a common vice not of the vulgar only, but almost of all men, to look upon their own country's fashions as the best. I am content when they see Fabricius or Lælius, that they look upon their countenance and behaviour as barbarous, seeing they are neither clothed nor fashioned according to our mode. But I find fault with their especial indiscretion in suffering themselves to be so imposed upon and blinded by the authority of the present custom, as every month to alter their opinion, if custom so require, and that they should so vary their judgment in their own particular concern. When they wore the belly-pieces of their doublets as high as their breast, they stiffly maintained that they were in their proper place. Some years after they were slipped down between their thighs, and then they laughed at the former fashion as uneasy and intolerable. The new fashion in use makes them absolutely condemn the old with so great a warmth, and so universal a contempt, that a man would think there was a kind of madness crept in amongst them, that infatuates their understandings to this strange degree. Now seeing that our change of fashions is so prompt and sudden that the inventions of all the tailors in the world cannot furnish out new whim-whams enough, there will often be a necessity that the old despised ones must again come in vogue, and again fall into contempt; and that the same judgment must, in the space of fifteen or twenty years, take up not only different, but contrary, opinions, with an incredible lightness and inconstancy. There is not any of us so discreet that suffers not himself to be gulled with this contradiction, and both in external and internal sight to be insensibly blinded.

The French very changeable in their dress.

I will here muster up some old customs that I have in memory; some of them the same with ours, others different, to the end that, bearing in mind this continual variation of human things, we may have our judgments clearer and more firmly settled.

The use amongst us of fighting with rapier and cloak, was in practice amongst the Romans also: *Sinistras sagis involvunt, gladiosque distringunt*,[1] "They wrapped their cloaks round the left arm, and wielded the sword with the right," says Cæsar; and he mentions an old vicious custom of our nation, which continues yet amongst us, which is to stop passengers we meet upon the road, to compel them to give an account who they are, and to take it for an injury and just cause of quarrel if they refuse to do it.[2]

The practice of the ancient Romans to fight with rapier and cloak.

At the bath, which the ancients made use of every day before they went to dinner, and, indeed, as frequently as we wash our hands, they at first only bathed their arms and legs,[3] but afterwards, and by a custom that has continued for many ages in most nations of the world, they bathed stark naked in mixed and perfumed water, so that it became a mark of great simplicity of life to bathe in pure water. The most delicate and affected perfumed themselves all over three or four times a day. They often caused all their hair to be pulled out, as the women of France have some time since taken up a fancy to do their foreheads,

The ancients bathed every day before dinner.

Quod pectus, quod crura tibi, quod brachia vellis,[4]
"How dost thou twitch thy breast, thy arms and thighs,"

though they had ointments proper for that purpose.

Psilotro nitet, aut acida latet oblita creta;[5]
"This in wild-vine shines; or else doth talk
Her rank pores up in a dry crust of chalk."

1 Cæsar, *De Bello Civili*, i. 75.
2 Id., *De Bello Gallico*, iv. 5.
3 Senec., *Epist.* 86.
4 Mart. ii. 62, 1.
5 Id., vi. 93, 9.

They delighted to lie soft, and allowed it for a great testimony of hardiness to lie upon a mattrass;[1] they all lying upon beds, much after the manner of the Turks in this age.

Inde toro pater Æneas sic orsus ab alto.[2]

"Then thus Æneas from his bed of state."

And 'tis said of the younger Cato, that, after the battle of Pharsalia, being entered into a melancholic disposition at the ill posture of the public affairs, he took his food always sitting, assuming a strict and austere course of life.[3] It was also their custom to kiss the hands of great persons by way of honouring and caressing them: and meeting with their equals, they always kissed in salutation, as do the Venetians:

Gratatusque darem cum dulcibus oscula verbis;[4]

"And kindest words I would with kisses mix."

In petitioning or saluting any great man, they used to lay their hands upon his knees. Pasicles, the philosopher, brother of Crates, instead of laying his hand upon the knee, laid it upon the private parts, and being roughly repulsed by him to whom he addressed himself, "What!" said he; "is not that part your own, as well as the other?"[5] They used to eat their fruit as we do, after dinner. They cleaned themselves after stool with a sponge, which is the reason that *spongia* is a smutty word in Latin; which sponge was also fastened to the end of a stick, as appears by the story of him who, as he was led along to be thrown to the wild beasts in the sight of the people, asked leave to do his business, and, having no other way to dispatch himself, forced the sponge and stick down his own throat, and choaked himself.[6] They used to terge after coition with perfumed wool:—

At tibi nil faciam; sed lota mentula lana.[7]

They placed in the streets of Rome certain vessels and little tubs for passengers to make water in:

Puri sæpe lacum *propter, se, ac dolia curta,*
Somno devincti, credunt extollere vestem.[8]

They had collation betwixt meals. There were in summer persons who made a business of selling snow to cool the wine; and some there were who made use of snow in winter, not thinking their wine cool enough even at that season of the year. The men of quality had their cup-bearers and carvers, and their buffoons to make them sport; they had their meat served up in winter upon a sort of chafing dishes which were set upon the table, and had portable kitchens (of which I myself have seen some), wherein all their service was carried after them.

They cooled their wine with snow.

They had portable kitchens;

Has vobis epulas habete, lauti:
Nos offendimur ambulante cœna.[9]

"Those feasts to you may pleasure be,
But walking suppers suit not me."

In summer they had a contrivance to bring fresh and clear rills through their lower rooms, wherein were great store of living fish which the guests took out with their own hands to be dressed, every man according to his own liking.[10] Fish has ever had this pre-eminence, and keeps it still, that even great men pretend to be cooks in their favour; and indeed, the taste is more delicate than that of flesh, at least to me. But in all sorts of magnificence, debauchery, and voluptuous inventions of effeminacy and expense, we do, in truth, all we can to equal them (for our wills are as corrupt as theirs), but we want power to reach them; we are no more able to parallel them in their vicious, than in their virtuous, qualities; for both the one and the other proceed from a vigour of soul which was, without comparison, greater in them than in us; and souls by how much the weaker they are, by so much have they less power to do very well, or very ill.

and fish-pools in their lower rooms.

The place of honour amongst them was the middle. The name going before or following after, either in writing or speaking, had no signification of grandeur, as is evident by their writings. They as readily said "Oppius and Cæsar," as "Cæsar and Oppius;" and "me and thee" indifferently with "thee and me." This is the reason that made me formerly take notice in the life of Flaminius, in our French translation of Plutarch, of one passage, where it seems as if the author, speaking of the jealousy of glory betwixt the Ætolians and Romans, as to the winning of a battle they had with their joint forces obtained, made it of some importance that in the Greek songs they had put the Ætolians before the Romans; if there be no amphibology in the words of the French version.

The most honourable place among the Romans.

The ladies in their baths made no scruple of admitting men amongst them, and moreover made use of their serving-men to rub and anoint them:

The men and women bathed together.

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1 "Laudare solebat Attalus culcitram quæ resisteret corpori. Talis ator etiam senex," says Seneca, *Epist.* 108.
2 *Æneid*, ii. 2.
3 Plutarch, *Life of Cato of Utica*, c. 15.
4 Ovid, *De Ponto*, iv. 9, 13.
5 Diog. Laertius, vi. 89.
6 Senec., *Epist.* 70.
7 Martial, ii. 58, 11.
8 Lucretius, iv. 1024.
9 Martial, vii. 48. See also Seneca, *Epist.* 78.
10 Or, "Every man in his place," according to some editions. Beckford, in his account of a visit to the Convent of Alcobaca, gives a description of one of these interior fish-pools that he met with there.

Inguina succinctus nigra tibi servus aluta
Stat, quoties calidis nuda foveris aquis.[1]

"Whene'er her body in the bath she laves,
Her naked limbs are 'nointed by men slaves."

They powdered themselves with a certain powder, to moderate perspiration.

The ancient Gauls, says Sidonius Apollinaris,[2] wore their hair long before, and quite short behind, a fashion that begins to be revived by this vicious and effeminate age.

The Romans paid their watermen at embarking.

The Romans used to pay the watermen their fare at their first stepping into the boat, which we never do till after landing:

Dum æs exigitur, dum mula ligatur,
Tota abit hora.[3]

"Whilst the fare's paying, and the mule is tied,
A whole hour's time, at least, away doth slide."

The women used to lie on that side the bed next the wall; and for that reason they called Cæsar, *Spondam Regis Nicomedis*.[4]

They took breath in their drinking, and watered their wine:

Quis puer ocius
Restinguet ardentis falerni
Pocula prætereunte lympha?[5]

"To cool our wine, the boy shall bring
Fresh water from the limpid spring."

And the roguish looks and gestures of our lacqueys were also in use amongst them.

O Jane! a tergo quem nulla ciconia pinsit,
Nec manus auriculas imitata est mobilis altas,
Nec linguæ, quantum sitiat canis Appula, tantum.[6]

"O Janus! happy in thy double face!
Safe and protected from unseen grimace!
From pecking finger, and from gibes and sneers,
Provok'd by wagging hands, like asses' ears,
From lolling tongue, such as the Appulian hound,
Panting with thirst, drops almost to the ground."

The Argian and Roman ladies always mourned in white,[7] as ours did formerly; and should do still, were I to govern in this point. But there are whole books might be made on this subject.

CHAPTER L.

OF DEMOCRITUS AND HERACLITUS.

The judgment active in every thing.

The judgment is an utensil proper for all subjects, and will have an oar in every thing: which is the reason that, in these Essays, I take hold of all occasions. If I light on a subject I do not very well understand, I try, however, sounding it at a distance; and, if I find it too deep for my stature, I keep me on the firm shore. And this knowledge, that a man can proceed no further, is one effect of its virtue; aye, and one on which it prides itself the most. Sometimes, in an idle and frivolous subject, I try to find out matter whereof to compose a body, and then to prop and support it. Another while I employ it in a noble subject, one that has been tossed and tumbled by a thousand hands, wherein a man can hardly possibly introduce any thing of his own, the way being so beaten on every side that he must of necessity walk in the steps of another. In such a case, 'tis the work of the judgment to take the way that seems best, and, of a thousand paths, to determine that this or that was the best chosen. I leave the choice of my arguments to Fortune, and take that she first presents me; they are all alike to me; I never design to go through any of them; for I never see all of any thing: neither do they who so largely promise to shew it others. Of a hundred members and faces that every thing has, I take one—one while to look it over only, another while to ripple up the skin, and sometimes to pinch it to the bones; I give a stab, not so wide, but as deep as I can; and most frequently like to take it in hand by some less-used light. Did I know myself less, I might, perhaps, venture to handle something or other to the bottom, and to be deceived in my own inability, but sprinkling here one word, and there another, patterns cut from several pieces, and scattered without design, and without engaging myself too far, I am not responsible for them, or obliged to keep close to my subject, without varying it at my own liberty and pleasure, and giving up myself to doubt and uncertainty, and to my own governing method, ignorance.

The mind is discovered in all its motions.

All motion discovers us. The very same soul of Cæsar, that made itself so conspicuous in marshalling and commanding the battle of Pharsalia, was also seen as solicitous and busy in the softer affairs of love. A man judges of a horse not only by seeing him caracol and exhibit airs in the riding-school, but by his walk, nay, and by seeing him stand in the stable.

Amongst the functions of the soul there are some of a lower and meaner form, and he who does not see her in those inferior offices, as well as those of nobler note, is never fully acquainted with her; and peradventure she is best discovered where she moves her own natural pace. The winds of the passions take most hold of her in her highest flights; and the rather, by reason that she wholly applies herself to, and exercises her whole virtue upon, each particular subject, and never handles more than one thing at a time, and that not according to it, but according to herself. Things in respect to themselves have peradventure their weight, measure, and condition; but when we once take them into us, the soul forms them

It gives things what shape and colour it pleases.

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1 Martial, vii. 35.
2 *Carm.* v. 239.
3 Horace, *Sat.* i. 5, 13.
4 Suetonius, *Life of Cæsar*, c 49. *Sponda* is the Latin word for the inner side of the bed.
5 Horace, *Od.* ii. 11, 18.
6 Persius, i. 58.
7 Herod. iv. 2, 6.

as she pleases. Death is terrible to Cicero, coveted by Cato, and indifferent to Socrates. Health, conscience, authority, knowledge, riches, beauty, and their contraries, do all strip themselves at their entering into us, and receive a new robe, and of another fashion, from the soul; brown, bright, green, dark; sharp, sweet, deep, or superficial, as best pleases each particular soul, for they are not agreed upon any common standard of forms, rules, or proceedings; every one is a queen in her own dominions. Let us therefore no more excuse ourselves upon the external qualities of things, it belongs to us to give ourselves an account of them. Our good or ill has no other dependence but on ourselves. 'Tis there that our offerings and our vows are due, and not to fortune: she has no power over our manners; on the contrary, they draw and make her follow in her train, and cast her in their own mould. Why should not I judge Alexander, roaring and drinking at the rate he sometimes used to do? Or, if he played at chess, what string of his soul was not touched by this idle and childish game? I hate and avoid it because it is not play enough—that it is too grave and serious a diversion; and I am ashamed to lay out as much thought and study upon that as would serve to much better uses. He did not more pump his brains about his glorious expedition into the Indies; and another, that I will not name, took not more pains to unravel a passage upon which depends the safety of all mankind. To what a degree then does this ridiculous diversion molest the soul, when all her faculties shall be summoned together upon this trivial account? And how fair an opportunity she herein gives every one to know, and to make a right judgment of, himself? I do not more thoroughly sift myself in any other posture than this. What passion are we exempted from in this insignificant game? Anger, spite, malice, impatience, and a vehement desire of getting the better in a matter wherein it were more excusable to be ambitious of being overcome: for to be eminent, and to excel above the common rate in frivolous things, is nothing becoming in a man of quality and honour. What I say in this example may be said in all others. Every particle, every employment of man, does exhibit and accuse him equally with any other.

Montaigne's opinion of chess.

The game may help us to know ourselves.

Democritus and Heraclitus were two philosophers, of which the first, thinking human condition ridiculous and vain, never appeared abroad but with a jeering and laughing countenance: whereas Heraclitus, commiserating that condition of ours, appeared always with a sorrowful look and tears in his eyes.

Democritus and Heraclitus, their different humours.

> Alter
> Ridebat, quoties à limine moverat unum
> Protuleratque pedem; flebat contrarius alter.[1]
>
> "One always, when he o'er his threshold stept,
> Laugh'd at the world, the other always wept."

I am clearly for the first humour; not because it is more pleasant to laugh than to weep, but because it is more contemptuous, and expresses more condemnation than the other; for I think we can never be sufficiently despised to our desert. Compassion and bewailing seem to imply some esteem of, and value for, the thing bemoaned: whereas the things we laugh at are by that expressed to be of no moment. I do not think that we are so unhappy as we are vain, or have in us so much malice as folly: we are not so full of mischief as inanity, nor so miserable as we are vile and mean. And therefore Diogenes, who passed away his time in rolling himself in his tub, and made nothing of the great Alexander, esteeming us no better than flies, or bladders puffed up with wind, was a sharper and more penetrating, and consequently, in my opinion, a juster judge than Timon, surnamed the Man-hater; for what a man hates he lays to heart. This last was furious against mankind, passionately desired our ruin, and avoided our conversation as dangerous, and proceeding from wicked and depraved natures: the other valued us so little that we could neither trouble nor infect him by our contagion, and left us to herd with one another, not out of fear, but contempt of our society, concluding us as incapable of doing good as ill.

Diogenes and Timon the Man-hater.

Of the same strain was Statilius's answer when Brutus courted him to the the conspiracy against Cæsar:— "He was satisfied that the enterprise was just, but he did not think mankind so considerable as to deserve a wise man's concern."[2] According to the doctrine of Hegesias, who said, "a wise man ought to do nothing but for himself, forasmuch as he only is worthy of it;"[3] and to that of Theodorus, "That it is not reasonable a wise man should hazard himself for his country, and endanger wisdom for a set of fools."[4] Our condition is as ridiculous as risible.

Why Statilius would not enter into the conspiracy against Cæsar.

CHAPTER LI.

ON THE VANITY OF WORDS.

A RHETORICIAN of times past said, That his profession was to make little things appear

[1] Juven. 10. 28.

[2] Plutarch, *Life of M. Brutus*, c. 3.

[3] Laertius, *in vitâ*.

[4] Id. *Ib.*

great. This also a shoemaker can do; he can make a great shoe for a little foot.[1] They would, in Sparta, have sent such a fellow to be whipped for making profession of a lying and deceitful art; and I fancy that Archidamus, who was king of that country, was a little surprised at the answer of Thucydides, when enquiring of him which was the better wrestler, Pericles or he, he replied, "That is hard to affirm; for when I have thrown him, he always persuades the spectators that he had no fall, and carries away the prize.[2]" They who paint and plaister up women, filling up their wrinkles and deformities, are less to blame, for it is no great loss not to see them in their natural complexion. Whereas these make it their business to deceive not our sight only, but our judgments, and to adulterate and corrupt the very essence of things. The republics that have maintained themselves in a regular and well-modelled government, such as those of Lacedæmon and Crete, had orators in no very great esteem.[3] Aristo did wisely define rhetoric to be "a science to persuade the people;[4]" Socrates and Plato[5] "an art to flatter and deceive." And those who deny it in the general description, verify it throughout in their precepts. The Mahometans will not suffer their children to be instructed in it, as being useless; and the Athenians, perceiving how pernicious the practice of it was, it being in their city of universal esteem, ordered the principal part, which is to move affections, to be taken away, with the exordiums and perorations. 'Tis an engine invented to manage and excite a disorderly and tumultuous rabble, and is never made use of but like physic, in a diseased state. In those governments where the vulgar or the ignorant, or both together, have been all-powerful, as in Athens, Rhodes, and Rome, and where the public affairs have been in a continual tempest of commotion, to such places have the orators always flocked. And, in truth, we find few persons in those republics who have pushed their fortunes to any great degree of eminence without the assistance of eloquence. Pompey, Cæsar, Crassus, Lucullus, Lentulus, and Metellus, have therein found their chiefest aid in mounting to that degree of authority to which they did at last arrive; making it of greater use to them than arms, contrary to the opinion of better times; for L. Volumnius, speaking publicly in favour of the election of Q. Fabius and Pub. Decius to the consular dignity:—"These are men," said he, "born for war, and great in execution; in the combat of the tongue altogether to seek; spirits truly consular. The subtle, eloquent, and learned are only good for the city to make prætors of, to administer justice."[6]

The art of rhetoric deceitful.

Eloquence flourished most at Rome, when the public affairs were in the worst condition, and the republic most disquieted with civil wars, as a free and untilled soil bears the worst weeds. By which it should seem that a monarchical government has less need of it than any other; for the stupidity and facility of the common people, which render them subject to be turned and twined, and led by the ears by this charming harmony of words, without weighing or considering the truth and reality of things by the force of reason;—this facility, I say, is not easily found in a single person, and it is also more easy, by good education and advice, to secure him from the impression of this poison. There never was any famous orator known to come out of Persia or Macedon.

When eloquence was most flourishing at Rome.

I have entered into this discourse upon the occasion of an Italian I lately received into my service, who was clerk of the kitchen to the late Cardinal Caraffa till his death. I put this fellow upon an account of his office; where he fell to discourse of this palate-science with such a settled countenance and magisterial gravity, as if he had been handling some profound point of divinity. He made a learned distinction of the several sorts of appetites, of that which a man has before he begins to eat, and of those after the second and third service; the means simply to satisfy the first, and then to raise and quicken the other two; the ordering of the sauces, first in general, and then proceeded to the qualities of the several ingredients and their effects. The difference of sallads, according to their seasons, which of them ought to be served up hot, and which cold; the manner of their garnishment and decoration, to render them yet more acceptable to the eye. After which he entered upon the order of the whole service, full of weighty and important considerations:

The palate-science pleasantly ridiculed.

Nec minimo sane discrimine refert,
Quo gestu lepores, et quo gallina secetur;[7]

"Nor with less criticism did observe
How we a hare, and how a hen, should carve."

And all this set out with lofty and magnificent words, the very same we make use of when we discourse of the government of an empire: which learned lecture of my man brought this of Terence to my memory:

Hoc salsum est, hoc adustum est, hoc lautum est parum:
Illud rectè; iterum sic memento: sedulo
Moneo, quæ possum, pro mea sapientia.
Postremo, tanquam in speculum, in patinas, Demea,
Inspicere jubeo, et moneo, quid facto usus sit.[8]

[1] This is a saying of Agesilaus. See Plutarch, *Apothegms of the Lacedæmonians*.

[2] Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, c. 5.

[3] Sextus Empiricus, *Advers. Mathem.*, ii.

[4] Quintilian, ii. 16.

[5] In the *Gorgias*.

[6] Livy, x. 22.

[7] Juvenal, v. 123.

[8] Terence, *Adelphi*, iii. 3. 7.

"This is too salt, this burnt; this is too plain,
That's well, remember to do so again.
Thus do I still advise to have things fit,
According to the talent of my wit.
And then, my Demea, I command my cook,
That into ev'ry dish he pry and look,
As if it were a mirror, and go on
To order all things as they should be done."

And yet even the Greeks themselves did very much admire and highly applaud the order and disposition that Paulus Æmilius observed in the feast he made for them at his return from Macedon.[1] But I do not here speak of effects; I speak of words only.

The language of architects.

I do not know whether it may have the same operation upon other men that it has upon me, but when I hear our architects thunder out their bombast words of pilasters, architraves, and cornices, of the Corinthian and Doric orders, and such like stuff, my imagination is presently possessed with the palace of Apollidonius;[2] when, after all, I find them but the paltry pieces of my own kitchen-door.

Of grammarians.

And to hear men talk of metonymies, metaphors, and allegories, and other grammar words, would not a man think they signified some rare and delicate and exotic form of speaking? yet these are terms which apply to the chatter of your chamber-maid.

Too lofty titles given to offices, and illustrious surnames misapplied to persons of mean talents.

And this other is a gullery of the same stamp, to call the offices of our kingdom by the lofty titles of the Romans, though they have no similitude of function, and still less authority or power. And this, also, which I doubt will one day turn to the reproach of our present age, unworthily and indifferently to confer upon any we think fit the most glorious surnames with which antiquity honoured but one or two persons in several ages.

Plato carried away the surname of Divine by so universal a consent that never any one repined at it, or attempted to take it from him. And yet the Italians, who pretend, and with good reason, to more sprightly wits and sounder judgments than the other nations of their time, have lately honoured Aretin with the same title; in whose writings, except it be a tumid phrase set out with some smart periods, ingenious indeed, but farfetched and fantastic, and some degree of eloquence, I see nothing above the ordinary writers of his time, so far is he from approaching the ancient divinity. And we make nothing of giving the surname of Great to princes that have nothing in them above a popular grandeur.

[1] Plutarch, *Life of Paulus Æmilius*, c. 15.

[2] The reader who desires to be acquainted with the marvels of this palace, and with Apollidonius who built it by magic art, must read the first chapter of the second book of *Amadis de Gaul*, and the second chapter of the fourth book.

[3] Val. Max. iv. 4, 6.

[4] Plutarch, *in vitâ*, c. 3.

CHAPTER LII.

OF THE PARSIMONY OF THE ANCIENTS.

Attilius Regulus, general of the Roman army in Africa, in the height of all his glory and victories over the Carthaginians, wrote to the Republic to acquaint them that a certain peasant, whom he had left in charge of his estate, which was in all but seven acres of land, was run away with all his instruments of husbandry, entreating, therefore, that they would please to call him home, that he might take order in his own affairs, lest his wife and children should suffer. Whereupon the Senate appointed another to manage his business, caused his losses to be made good, and ordered his family to be maintained at the public expense.[3]

The elder Cato, returning consul from Spain, sold his war-horse, to save the money it would have cost in bringing him back by sea into Italy; and, being governor of Sardinia, made all his visitations on foot, without other attendant than one officer of the republic, to hold up the train of his gown, and carry a censer for sacrifices; and, for the most part, carried his mail himself. He bragged that he had never worn a gown that cost above ten crowns, nor had ever sent above ten-pence to the market for one day's provisions; and that, as to his country-houses, he had not one that was roughcast on the outside.[4]

Scipio Æmilianus, after two triumphs and two consulships, went an embassy with no more than seven servants in his train.[5] 'Tis said that Homer had never more than one, Plato three, and Zeno, founder of the sect of Stoics, none at all.[6] Tiberius Gracchus was allowed but fivepence-halfpenny a day when employed on a mission about the public affairs, and being at that time the greatest man of Rome.[7]

CHAPTER LIII.

OF A SAYING OF CÆSAR.

If we would sometimes bestow a little consideration upon ourselves, and employ that time in examining our own abilities which we spend in prying into other men's actions, and discovering things without us, we should soon perceive of how infirm and decaying materials this fabric of ours is composed. Is it not a singular testimony of imperfection that we cannot establish our satisfaction in any one thing, and that even our own fancy and desire should deprive us of the

Man's imperfection demonstrated by the inconstancy of his desires.

[5] Val. Max. iv. 3, 13.

[6] Seneca, *Consolat. ad Helviam*, c. 12.

[7] Plutarch, in the Life of Tiberius Gracchus, cap. 4. But here Montaigne misemploys this passage, which makes nothing for his purpose; for Plutarch there says, expressly, that this little sum was allowed to Tiberius Gracchus purely to vex and mortify him.

power to choose what is most proper and useful for us? A very good proof of this is the great dispute that has ever been amongst the philosophers of finding out what is man's sovereign good—a dispute that continues yet, and will eternally continue, without solution or agreement.

Dum abest quod avemus, id exuperare videtur
Cætera; post aliud, cum contigit illud, avemus,
Et sitis æqua tenet.[1]

"Still with desire through Fancy's regions tost,
We seek new joys, and prize the absent most."

Whatever it is that falls within our knowledge and possession, we find it satisfies not, and we still pant after things to come, and unknown; and these because the present do not satiate us; not that, in my judgment, they have not in them wherewith to do it, but because we seize them with a weak and ill-regulated hold.

Nam cum vidit hic, ad victum quæ flagitat usus,
Et per quæ possent vitam consistere tutam,
Omnia jam ferme mortalibus esse parata;
Divitiis homines, et honore, et laude potentes
Affluere, atque bona natorum excellere fama;
Nec minus esse domi cuiquam tamen anxia corda,
Atque animum infestis cogi servire querelis:
Intellexit ibi vitium vas efficere ipsum,
Omniaque, illius vitio, corrumpere intus,
Quæ collata foris et commoda quæque venirent.[2]

"For when he saw all things that had regard
To life's subsistence for mankind prepar'd,
That men in wealth and honours did abound,
That with a noble race their joys were crown'd;
That yet they groan'd, with cares and fears oppress'd,
Each finding a disturber in his breast;
He then perceiv'd the fault lay hid in man,
In whom the bane of his own bliss began."

Our appetite is irresolute and fickle, it can neither keep nor enjoy any thing as it should. Man, concluding it to be the fault of the things he is possessed of, fills himself with, and feeds himself upon, the idea of things he neither knows nor understands, to which he devotes his hopes and his desires, paying them all reverence and honour, according to the saying of Cæsar: *Communi fit vitio naturæ, ut invisis, latitantibus atque incognitis rebus magis confidamus, vehementiùsque exterreamur.*[3] "'Tis the common vice of nature that we have the most confidence in and the greatest fear of, things unseen, concealed, and unknown."

CHAPTER LIV.

OF VAIN SUBTLETIES.

THERE are a sort of little knacks and frivolous subtleties from which men sometimes expect to derive reputation and applause; as the poets, who compose whole poems with every line beginning with the same letter. We see the shapes of eggs, globes, wings, and hatchets, cut out by the ancient Greeks by the measure of their verses, making them longer or shorter, to represent such or such a figure. Much in this manner did he spend his time who made it his business to compute into how many several ways the letters of the alphabet might be transposed, and found out that incredible number mentioned in Plutarch. I am mightily pleased with the humour of him who, having a man brought before him that had learned to throw a grain of millet with such dexterity as never to miss the eye of a needle; and being afterwards desired to give something for the reward of so rare an attainment, pleasantly, and in my opinion ingeniously, ordered several bushels of the same grain to be delivered to him, that he might not want wherewithal to exercise so famous an art.[4] 'Tis a strong evidence of a weak judgment when men approve of things for their being rare and new, or where virtue and usefulness are not conjoined to recommend them.

Poetry of an odd fancy.

I come just now from playing with my own family at who could find out the most things that were in use only in the two extremes: as *Sire*, which is a title given to the greatest person in the nation, the king, and also to the vulgar, as pedlars and mechanics, but never to any degree of men between. The women of great quality are all called *Madam*, inferior gentlewomen, *Mademoiselle*, and the meaner sort of women, *Madam*, as the first. The canopy of state over tables is not permitted but in the palaces of princes and in taverns. Democritus said that gods and beasts had sharper senses than men, who are of a middle form.[5] The Romans wore the same habit at funerals and at feasts.

Instances of things that are kept up by the two extremities.

It is certain that extreme fear and extreme ardour of courage do equally trouble and relax the stomach. The nickname of Trembling, with which they surnamed Sancho XII., King of Navarre, informs us that valour will cause a trembling in the limbs as well as fear. Those who were arming him or some other of a like nature, tried to compose him, by representing as less the danger he was going to engage himself in: "You understand me ill," said he; "for could my flesh know the danger my courage will presently carry it into, it would sink down to the ground." The faintness that surprises us from frigidity or dislike in the exercises of Venus are also occasioned by a *too* violent desire and an immoderate heat. Extreme cold and extreme heat boil and roast. Aristotle says that sows of lead melt and ran with cold in the extremity of winter as well as with a vehement heat.[6]

The very same effect produced by fear and by extraordinary courage.

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[1] Lucret. iii. 1095.
[2] Lucret. v. 9.
[3] *De Bello Civil.* ii. 4.
[4] *Alexander the Great.* See Quintilian, ii. 20; who, however, mentions small peas, not millet.
[5] Plutarch, *de Placitis. Philos.* iv. 10.
[6] Aristotle, *de Mirab. Auscul.*, whose expressions, however, do not convey exactly Montaigne's interpretation of them.

Desire and satiety fill all the gradations above and below pleasure with pain. Stupidity and wisdom meet at the same centre of sentiment and resolution in the suffering of human mishaps: the wise control and triumph over ill, the others know it not. These last are, as a man may say, on this side of misfortune, the others are beyond them; who, after having well weighed and considered their qualities, measured and judged them what they are, by virtue of a vigorous soul, leap out of their reach. They disdain and trample them under foot, having a solid and well fortified soul, against which the darts of fortune coming to strike, they must of necessity rebound and blunt themselves, meeting with a body upon which they can fix no impression; the ordinary and middle conditions of men are lodged betwixt these two extremes, consisting of such who perceive evils, feel them, and are not able to support them. Infancy and decrepitude meet in the imbecility of the brain; avarice and profusion in the same thirst and desire of getting.

Wisdom and ignorance attain to the same ends.

A man may say, with some colour of truth, that there is an abecedarian ignorance that precedes knowledge, and a doctoral ignorance that comes after it; an ignorance which knowledge creates and begets, as she dispatches and destroys the first. Of simple understandings, little inquisitive, and little instructed, are made good Christians, who by reverence and obedience implicitly believe, and are constant in their belief. In the moderate understandings, and the middle sort of capacities, error of opinions is forgot. They follow the appearance of the first sense, and have some colour of reason on their side, to impute our walking on in the old beaten path to simplicity and stupidity,—I mean in us who have not informed ourselves by study. The higher and nobler souls, more solid and clear-sighted, make up another sort of true believers, who by a long and religious investigation have obtained a clearer and more penetrating light into the Scriptures, and have discovered the mysterious and divine secret of our ecclesiastical polity. And yet we see some who have arrived to this last stage in the second, with marvellous fruit and confirmation, as to the utmost limit of Christian intelligence, and enjoying their victory with great spiritual consolation, humble acknowledgment of the divine favour, exemplary reformation of manners, and singular modesty. I do not intend with these to rank some others, who, to clear themselves from all suspicion of their former errors, and to satisfy us that they are sound and firm to us, render themselves extremely indiscreet and unjust in the carrying on our cause, and by that means blemish it with infinite reproaches of violence and oppression. The simple peasants are good people, and so are the philosophers, or, as we call them now-a-days, men of strong and clear reason, whose souls are enriched with an ample provision of useful science. The mongrels, who have disdained the first form of the ignorance of letters, and have not been able to attain the other (sitting betwixt two stools, as I and a great many more of us do), are dangerous, foolish, and troublesome; these are they that disturb the world. And therefore it is that I, for my own part, retreat as much as I can towards my first and natural station whence I so vainly attempted to advance.

Two kinds of ignorance.

The fitness of plain understandings to Christianity.

Men of the greatest minds the completest Christians.

The mere peasant and the philosopher good men.

The vulgar and purely natural poetry has in it certain proprieties and graces, by which she may come into some comparison with the greatest beauty of poetry perfected by art; as is evident in our Gascon villanelles, and the songs that are brought us from nations that have no knowledge of any manner of science, nor so much as the use of writing. The indifferent and middle sort of poetry betwixt the two is despised, of no value, honour, or esteem.

Popular poetry comparable to the most perfect.

But seeing that the ice being once broke, and a path laid open to the fancy, I have found, as it commonly falls out, that what we make choice of for a rare and difficult subject, proves to be nothing so, and that after the invention is once warm it finds out an infinite number of parallel examples. I shall only add this one—that were these Essays of mine considerable enough to deserve a criticism, it might then, I think, fall out that they would not much take with common and vulgar capacities, nor be very acceptable to the rarer and more eminent; for the first would not understand them enough, and the last too well; and so they might hover in the middle region.

Middling poetry intolerable.

Montaigne's opinion of his Essays.

CHAPTER LV.

OF SMELLS.

It has been reported of others, as well as of Alexander the Great,[1] that their sweat exhaled an odoriferous smell, occasioned by some very uncommon and extraordinary constitution, of which Plutarch and others have been inquisitive into the cause. But the ordinary constitution of human bodies is quite otherwise, and their best condition is to be exempt from smells. Nay, the sweetness even of the purest breaths has nothing in it of greater perfection than to be without any

Alexander's sweat had an agreeable smell.

[1] Plutarch, *in vitâ*, c. 1.

offensive smell, like those of healthful children; which made Plautus say,—

Mulier tum bene olet, ubi nihil olet [1]

"The best odour in a woman is not to smell at all."

Foreign perfumes create a suspicion.

And such as make use of exotic perfumes are with good reason to be suspected of some natural imperfection, which they endeavour by these odours to conceal.[2] Whence the ancient poets said that to smell well was to stink.

Rides nos, Coracine, nil olentes:
Malo, quam bene olere, nil olere.[3]

"Because thou, Coracinus, still dost go
With musk and ambergrease perfumed so,
We under thy contempt, forsooth, must fall;
I'd, rather than smell sweet, not smell at all."

And elsewhere,

Posthume, non bene olet, qui bene semper olet.[4]

"He does not, in reality, smell well
Who always of perfumes does smell."

I am, nevertheless, a great lover of pleasant smells, and as much abominate the ill ones, which also I reach at a greater distance, I think, than other men:

Namque sagacius unus odoror,
Polypus, an gravis hirsutis cubet hircus in alis,
Quam canis acer, ubi lateat sus.[5]

Of smells, the most simple and natural seem to me the most pleasing. And let the ladies look to this, for 'tis chiefly their concern. In an age of the darkest barbarism, the Scythian women, after bathing, were wont to powder and crust the face, and the whole body, with a certain odoriferous drug, growing in their country; which being washed off, when they were about to have familiarity with men, made them perfumed and sleek. 'Tis not to be believed how strangely all sorts of odours cleave to me, and how apt my skin is to imbibe them. He that complains of Nature, that she has not furnished mankind with a vehicle to convey smells to the nose, had no reason; for they convey it themselves; especially in me, for my very mustachios, which are large, perform that office; if I but touch them with my gloves or handkerchief, the smell will remain a whole day: they show where I have been. The close, luscious, devouring, glowing kisses of youthful ardour left, in my former days, a sweetness upon my lips for several hours after. And yet I have ever found myself very little subject to epidemic diseases, that are caught either by conversing with the sick, or bred by the contagion of the air; I have escaped from those of my time, of which there have been several sorts in our cities and armies. We read of Socrates that, though he never departed from Athens during the frequent plagues that infested that city, he was the only man that was never infected.[6]

Physicians might (I believe), if they would, extract more uses from odours than they do; for I have often observed that they cause an alteration in me, and work upon my spirits according to their several virtues; which makes me approve of what is said, namely, that the use of incense and perfumes in churches, so ancient, and so universally received in all nations and religions, was intended to cheer us, and to rouse and purify the senses, the better to fit us for contemplation.

The origin of the use of incense in churches.

I could have been glad, the better to judge of it, to have tasted of the culinary art of those cooks who had so rare a way of seasoning exotic odours with the relish of meats; as it was particularly observed in the service of the King of Tunis,[7] who, in our days, landed at Naples, to have an interview with Charles the emperor. His meats were stuffed with odoriferous drugs, to that degree of expense that the cookery of one peacock and two pheasants amounted to a hundred ducats, to dress them after their fashion. And when the carver came to cut them up, not only the dining-room, but all the apartments of his palace, and the adjoining streets, were filled with a fragrant vapour, which was some time dissipating.

Meat seasoned with odoriferous drugs.

My chief care in choosing my lodging is always to avoid a thick and stinking air; and those beautiful cities, Venice and Paris, very much lessen the kindness I have for them, the one by the offensive smell of her marshes, and the other of that of her dirt.

CHAPTER LVI.

OF PRAYERS.

I PROPOSE formless and undetermined fancies, like those who publish subtle questions to be after disputed upon in the schools, not to establish truth, but to seek it; I submit them to the better judgments of those whose office it is to regulate, not my writings and actions only, but moreover my very thoughts. Let what I here set down meet with correction or applause, it shall be of equal welcome and utility to me, myself before-hand condemning it for absurd and impious, if anything shall be found, through

[1] *Mostellaria*, i. 3. 116. The text has "*racle* olet."

[2] "Still to be neat, still to be dress't,
As you were going to a feast,
Still to be powder'd, still perfum'd,
Lady, it is to be presum'd,
Though art's hid causes are not found,
All is not sweet, all is not sound,"
says Ben Jonson.

[3] Martial, vi. 55. 4.

[4] Martial, ii. 12. 14.

[5] Horace, *Epod.* 12, 4. The meaning of the quotation is expressed generally in the preceding sentence.

[6] Laertius, *in vitâ.*

[7] Muley-Hassan, who landed at Naples in 1543, to implore for a second time the aid of Charles V. against his revolted subjects. The emperor, however, was not there. In chap. 8, of the second book, Montaigne, in again referring to this personage, calls him *Muleasses.*

ignorance or inadvertency, set down in this rhapsody, contrary to the holy resolutions and prescripts of the Apostolical and Roman Catholic Church, in which I was born, and in which I will die.[1] And yet, always submitting to the authority of their censure, who have an absolute power over me, I thus temerariously venture at every thing, as upon this present subject.

I don't know whether I am deceived or not; but since, by a particular favour of the Divine bounty, a certain form of prayer has been prescribed and dictated to us, word for word, from the mouth of God himself, I have ever been of opinion that we ought to have it in more frequent use than we have, and, if I were worthy to advise, at sitting down to, and rising from, our tables, at our rising and going to bed, and in every particular act wherein prayer is wont to be introduced, I would have Christians always make use of the Lord's prayer; if not that prayer alone, yet, at least, that prayer always. The Church may lengthen or alter prayers according to the necessity of our instruction, for I know very well that it is always the same in substance, and the same thing. But yet such a preference ought to be given to that prayer that the people should have it continually in their mouths; for it is most certain that all necessary petitions are comprehended in it, and that it is infinitely proper for all occasions. 'Tis the only prayer I use in all places and circumstances, and what I still repeat instead of changing; whence it also happens that I have no other by heart but that.

Pa'er-noster, a prayer which Christians ought constantly to use.

It just now comes into my mind whence we should derive that error of having recourse to God in all our designs and enterprises, to call him to our assistance in all sorts of affairs, and in all places where our weakness stands in need of support, without considering whether the occasion be just, or otherwise; and to invoke his name and power, in what condition soever we are, or action we are engaged in, how vicious soever. He is, indeed, our sole and only protector, and can do all things for us: but, though he is pleased to honour us with his paternal care, he is, notwithstanding, as just as he is good and mighty, and does oftener exercise his justice than his power, and favours us according to that, and not according to our petitions.

Men ought not to call upon God indifferently upon all occasions.

Plato, in his Laws, makes out three sorts of belief injurious to the gods; "that there is none; that they concern not themselves about human affairs; and that they never reject or deny anything to our vows, offerings, and sacrifices." The first of these errors, according to his opinion, did never continue rooted in any man, from his infancy to his old age; the other two, he confesses, men might be obstinate in.

God's justice and his power are inseparable, and 'tis therefore in vain we invoke his power in an unjust cause. We must have our souls pure and clean, at that moment at least wherein we pray to him, and purified from all vicious passions, otherwise we ourselves present him the rods wherewith to chastise us. Instead of repairing any thing we have done amiss, we double the wickedness and the offence, when we offer to him, to whom we are to sue for pardon, an affection full of irreverence and hatred. Which makes me not very apt to applaud those whom I observe to be so frequent on their knees, if the actions nearest the prayer do not give me some evidence of reformation.

The soul must be quite pure when it prays to God.

Si, nocturnus adulter
Tempora Sanctonico velas adoperta cucullo.[2]

"With night-adulteries disgraced and foul,
Thou shad'st thy guilty forehead with a cowl."

And the practice of a man that mixes devotion with an execrable life seems in some sort even more to be condemned than that of a man conformable to his own propension, and dissolute throughout: and for that reason it is that our church denies admittance to, and communion with, men obstinate and incorrigible in any kind of wickedness. We pray only by custom, and for fashion's sake; or rather, we read and pronounce our prayers aloud, which is no better than a hypocritical show of devotion. And I am scandalized to see a man make the sign of the cross thrice at the benedicite, and as often at another's saying grace (and the more, because it is a sign I have in great veneration and constant use, even when I yawn), and to dedicate all the other hours of the day to acts of malice, avarice, and injustice: one hour to God, the rest to the devil, as if by commutation and consent. 'Tis a wonder to me actions so various in themselves succeed one another with such an uniformity of method as not to interfere nor suffer any alteration, even upon the very confines and passes from the one to the other. What a prodigious conscience must that be that can be at quiet within itself, whilst it harbours under the same roof, with so agreeing and so calm a society, both the crime and the judge!

Praying to God, only for fashion sake, blameable.

A man whose whole meditation is continually working upon nothing but lechery, which he knows to be so odious to God, what can he say when he comes to speak to him? He reforms, but immediately falls into a relapse. If the object of the divine justice, and the presence of his maker, did, as he pretends, strike and chastise his soul, how short soever the repentance might be, the very fear of offending that infinite majesty would so often present itself to his imagination that he would soon see himself master of those vices that are most

[1] Montaigne, in his life-time, was accused, on account of this chapter, of being touched with the heresy of Baius; but the Inquisition took no notice of the matter.

[2] Juvenal, viii. 144.

What we must think of the prayers of those who obstinately persist in vicious habits.

natural and habitual in him. But what shall we say of those who settle their whole course of life upon the profit and emolument of sins which they know to be mortal! How many trades and vocations have we admitted and countenanced amongst us, whose very essence is vicious! And he that opening himself to me voluntarily told me that he had all his lifetime professed and practised a religion, in his opinion, damnable and contrary to that which he had in his heart, only to preserve his credit and the honour of his employments, how could his courage suffer so infamous a confession! What can men say to the divine justice upon this subject! Their repentance consisting in a visible and manifest reformation and restitution, they lose the colour of alleging it both to God and man. Are they so impudent as to sue for remission without satisfaction and without penitence? I look upon these as in the same condition with the first: but the obstinacy is not there so easy to be overcome. This contrariety and volubility of opinion, so sudden and violent as they pretend, is a kind of miracle to me. They present us with the state of an indigestible anxiety and doubtfulness of mind.

It seemed to me a fantastic and ridiculous imagination in those who, these late years past, used to reproach every man whom they knew to be of any extraordinary parts, and at the same time made profession of the Roman Catholic religion, that it was but outwardly; maintaining, moreover, to do him honour, forsooth, that, whatever he might pretend to the contrary, he could not but in his heart be of their reformed opinion. An untoward disease, that a man should be so rivetted to his own belief as to fancy that no man can believe otherwise than as he does; and yet worse in this, that they should entertain so vicious an opinion of such parts as to think that any man so qualified should prefer any present advantage of fortune before the hope of eternal happiness, or the fear of eternal damnation. They may believe me: could anything have tempted my youth, the ambition of the danger and difficulties in the late commotions had not been the least motives.

How, and by whom, David's Psalms ought to be sung.

It is not without very good reason, in my opinion, that the church interdicts the promiscuous, indiscreet, and irreverent use of the holy and divine Psalms, with which the Holy Ghost inspired King David. We ought not to mix God in our actions but with the highest reverence and caution. That poetry is too sacred to be put to no other use than to exercise the lungs and to delight our ears. It ought to come from the soul, and not from the tongue. It is not fit that a 'prentice in his shop, amongst his vain and frivolous thoughts, should be permitted to pass away his time, and divert himself with such sacred things. Neither is it decent to see the Holy Bible, the rule of our worship and belief, tumbled up and down a hall or a kitchen. They were formerly mysteries, but are now become sports and recreations. 'Tis a study too serious and too venerable to be cursorily or slightly turned over. The reading of the Scripture ought to be a temperate and premeditated act, and to which men should always add this devout preface, *sursum corda*, preparing even the body to so humble and composed a gesture and countenance as shall evidence their veneration and attention. Neither is it a book for every one to handle, but the study of select men set apart for that purpose, and whom Almighty God has been pleased to call to that office and sacred function: the wicked and ignorant blemish it. 'Tis not a story to tell, but a history to reverence, fear, and adore. Are not they then amusing persons who think they have rendered it palpable to the people by translating it into the people's tongue? Does the understanding of all therein contained only stick at words? Shall I venture to say, farther, that, by coming so near to understand a little, they are much wider of the whole scope than before? A total ignorance, and wholly depending upon the exposition of other and qualified persons, was more instructive and salutary than this vain and verbal knowledge, the nurse of temerity and presumption.

And I believe, farther, that the liberty every one has taken to disperse the sacred Writ into so many idioms, carries with it a great deal more of danger than utility. The Jews, Mahometans, and almost all others, have espoused and revere the language wherein their laws and mysteries were first conceived, and have expressly, and not without colour of reason, forbid the version or alteration of them into any other. Are we assured that in Biscay and in Brittany there are competent judges enough of this affair to establish this translation into their own language? The universal church has not a more difficult and solemn judgment to make. In preaching and speaking 'tis different; for here the interpretation is vague, unrestrained, variable, and disconnected.

One of our Greek historians does justly accuse the age he lived in for that the secrets of the Christian religion were dispersed into the hands of every mechanic, to expound and argue upon according to his own fancy; and that we ought to be much ashamed, we who by God's especial favour enjoy the purest mysteries of piety, to suffer them to be profaned by the ignorant rabble; considering that the Gentiles expressly forbade Socrates, Plato, and the other sages, to inquire into, or so much as to mention, the things committed only to the priests of Delphos; saying moreover that the factions of princes, upon theological subjects, are armed not with zeal, but with fury; that zeal springs from the divine wisdom and justice, and governs itself with prudence and moderation; but *degenerates* into hatred and envy, producing tares and nettles instead of corn and wine, when conducted by human

passions. And it was truly said by another, who, advising the Emperor Theodosius, told him that disputes did not so much rock the schisms of the church asleep as it roused and animated heresies; that therefore all contentions and logical disputations were to be avoided, and men absolutely to acquiesce in the prescripts and formulas of faith established by the ancients. And the Emperor Andronicus[1] having overheard some great men at high words in his palace with Lapodius, about a point of ours of great importance, rebuked them severely, and even threatened to cause them to be thrown into the river if they did not desist. The very women and children, now-a-days, take upon them to school the oldest and most experienced men about the ecclesiastical laws: whereas the first of those of Plato forbids them to inquire so much as into the reason of civil laws, which were to stand instead of divine ordinances. And allowing the old men to confer amongst themselves, or with the magistrate, about those things, he adds, provided it be not in the presence of young or profane persons.

A bishop[2] has left, in writing, that, at the other end of the world, there is an island, by the ancients called Dioscorides, abundantly fertile in all sorts of trees and fruits, and of an exceeding healthful air, the inhabitants of which are Christians, having churches and altars adorned only with crucifixes, without any other images; great observers of fasts and feasts; exact payers of their tithes to the priest; and so chaste that none of them is permitted to have to do with more than one woman in his life. As to the rest, so content with their condition that, environed with the sea, they know nothing of navigation; and so simple that they understand not one syllable of the religion they profess, and wherein they are so devout. A thing incredible to such as do not know that the pagans, who are so zealous idolators, know nothing more of their gods than their bare names and their statues. The ancient beginning of *Menalippus*, a tragedy of Euripides, ran thus:

> Jupiter, for that name alone,
> Of what thou art, to me is known.

Theology stands best by itself.

I have seen also, in my time, some men's writings found fault with for being purely human and philosophical, without any mixture of divinity; and yet he would not be without reason on his side who should, on the contrary, say that divine doctrine, as Queen and Regent of the rest, better keeps her state apart; that she ought to be sovereign throughout, not subsidiary and suffragan; and that, peradventure, grammatical, rhetorical, and logical examples may elsewhere be more suitably chosen, and also the arguments for the stage, and public entertainments, than from so sacred a matter;[3] that divine reasons are considered with greater veneration and attention when by themselves, and in their own proper style, than when mixed with, and adapted to, human discourses; that it is a fault much more often observed, that the divines write too humanly, than that the humanists write not theologically enough. Philosophy, says St. Chrysostom, has long been banished the holy schools as a handmaid altogether useless, and thought unworthy to peep, so much as in passing by the door, into the sanctum of the divine doctrine; the human way of speaking is of a much lower form, and ought not to clothe herself with the dignity, majesty, and authority of divine eloquence. I leave him, *verbis indisciplinatis*,[4] to talk of fortune, destiny, accident, good, and evil, the gods, and other such like phrases, according to his own humour; I, for my part, propose fancies merely human and my own simply as human fancies, and separately considered, not as determined by an ordinance from heaven, incapable of doubt or dispute; matter of opinion, not matter of faith; things which I discourse of according to my own capacity, not what I believe according to God; after a laical, not clerical, and yet always a very religious, manner, as children propose their essays, instructable, not instructing.

And it were as rational to affirm that an edict enjoining all people but such as are public professors of divinity to be very reserved in writing of religion would carry with it a colour of utility and justice; and me, amongst the rest, to hold my prating. I have been told that even those who are not of our church do nevertheless, amongst themselves, expressly forbid the name of God to be used in common discourse; not so much as by way of interjection, exclamation, assertion of a truth, or comparison; and I think them in the right. And upon what occasion soever we call upon God to accompany and assist us, it ought always to be done with the greatest reverence and devotion.

God's name ought not to be used in common discourse.

There is, as I remember, a passage in Xenophon, where he tells us that we ought so much the more seldom to call upon God, by how much it is hard to compose our souls to

God ought to be seldom prayed to, and why.

[1] *Andronicus Comnena.* See Nicetas, ii. 4., who, however, does not say a word about Lapodius.

[2] Osorius, Bishop of Silves, in Algarves, author of the work entitled *de Rebus gestis Emmanuelis Regis Lusitaniæ*. But it is from the Sieur Goulart, his translator, and not from Osorius himself, that Montaigne has quoted what he tells us about the inhabitants of the island *Dioscorides*. The first edition of the *Essays*, published in 1580, contains nothing upon the subject, for Goulart's translation did not appear till 1581. When our author says that the Dioscoridans "were so chaste that none of them were permitted to have to do with more than one woman in their lives," he misapprehends the meaning of Goulart, who says, conformably to the Latin of Osorius (*unam tantum uxorem ducunt*), that they marry only one wife, simply indicating that polygamy was not permitted among them, they being Christians. The modern name of this island is Socotora (in the Red Sea), a name which retains some vestiges of its ancient appellation. See Bayle's *Dict.*, in the article *Dioscorides*.

[3] Plutarch, *On Love.*

[4] "In vulgar and unhallowed terms." St. August., *De Civit. Dei*, x. 29. See note to c. 33.

such a degree of calmness, penitency, and devotion as it ought to be in at such a time, otherwise our prayers are not only vain and fruitless, but vicious in themselves. "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us;"—what do we mean by this, but that we present him a soul free from all rancour and revenge? And yet we make nothing of invoking God's assistance in our vices, and inviting him to our unjust designs.

Quæ, nisi seductis, nequeas committere divis.[1]

"Which only to the gods apart,
Thou hast the daring to impart."

The covetous man prays for the conservation of his vain and superfluous riches; the ambitious for victory, and the conduct of his fortune; the thief calls God to his assistance to deliver him from the dangers and difficulties that obstruct his wicked designs, or returns him thanks for the facility he has met with in robbing a poor peasant. At the door of a house they are going to scale, or break into by force of a petard, men fall to prayers for success, having their heads and hopes full of cruelty, avarice, and lust.

Hoc igitur, quo tu Jovis aurem impellere tentas,
Dic agendum Staio: proh Jupiter! ô bone, clamet,
Jupiter! at sese non clamet Jupiter ipse?[2]

"This, then, intended for Jove's private ear,
Take courage, and let honest Staius hear.
Defend us, mighty Jove! will he exclaim,
And will not Jove cry out in his own name?"

Marguerite, Queen of Navarre, tells of a young prince (whom, though she does not name, is easily enough, by his great quality, to be known), who, going upon an amorous assignation to lie with an advocate's wife of Paris, his way thither being through a church, he never passed that holy place, going to, or returning from, this godly exercise, but he always kneeled down to pray. In what he would implore the divine favour, his soul being full of such virtuous meditations, I leave others to judge. Yet this she instances for a testimony of singular devotion.[3] But this is not the only proof we have that women are not altogether fit to treat of theological matters.

A true prayer, and religious reconciling of ourselves to God, cannot enter into an impure soul, subjected at the time to the dominion of Satan. He who calls God to his assistance, whilst in the pursuit of vice, does as if a cutpurse should call a magistrate to help him, or like those who introduce the name of God to the attestation of a lie.

Tacito mala vota susurro
Concipimus.[4]

"In whispers oft we guilty prayers do make."

There are few men who durst publish to the world the prayers they make to God:[5]

Haud cuivis promptum est, murmurque, humilesque susurros
Tollere de templis, et aperto vivere voto.[6]

"Few are there in the temple's daily crowd
Who scorn such tricks, and think and wish aloud."

And this is the reason why the Pythagoreans would have them always public, to be heard by every one, to the end they might not prefer indecent or unjust petitions, as he did,

"Clare cum dixit, Apollo!
Labra movet, metuens audiri: "pulchra Laverna,
Da mihi fallere, da justum sanctumque videri;
Noctem peccatis, et fraudibus objice nubem."[7]

"Who with loud voice pronounc'd Apollo's name;
But when the following prayers he preferr'd,
Scarce moves his lips for fear of being heard.
'Beauteous Laverna, my petition hear;
Let me with truth and sanctity appear:
Oh! give me to deceive, and with a veil
Of darkness and of night, my crimes conceal!'"

The gods did severely punish the wicked prayers of Œdipus in granting them. He had prayed that his children might amongst themselves determine the succession to his throne by arms; and was so miserable as to see himself taken at his word. We should not pray that all things fall out as our will would have them, but that our will should subserve what is just and right.

We seem in truth to make use of our prayers as a kind of gibberish, and as those do who employ holy words in sorceries and magical operations; and as if we made account the benefit we are to reap from them depended upon the contexture, sound, and jingle of words, or upon the composing of the countenance. For having the soul contaminated with concupiscence, not touched with repentance, or comforted by any late reconciliation with Almighty God, we go to present him such words as the memory suggests to the tongue, and hope thence to obtain the remission of our sins. There is nothing so easy, so gentle, and so favourable, as the divine law: she calls and invites us to her, guilty and abominable as we are; extends her arms, and receives us into her bosom, foul and polluted as we at present are, and are for the future to be. But then, in return, we are to look upon her with a pleased eye, we are to receive this pardon with gratitude and submission, and, for that instant at least wherein we address ourselves to her, to have the soul angry with its faults, and at defiance with those passions that seduced her to offend. Neither the gods nor good men (says Plato[8]) will accept the present of a wicked man.

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[1] Persius, ii. 4.
[2] Ib. ii. 21.
[3] *Heptameron*, Day 3, Novel 25, where, however, the prince is represented as stopping to pray only on his return; a discriminating devotion.
[4] Lucan, v. 104.
[5] "How great," says Seneca, (*Epist.* 10.) "is the folly of mankind! they whisper the most execrable prayers to the Gods, and if any mortal lend an ear they are silent for fear men should know what they mutter to the Deity."
[6] Persius, ii. 6.
[7] Horace, *Ep.* i. 16. 59.
[8] *Laws*, iv.

Immunis aram si tetigit manus,
Non sumptuosa blandior hostia,
Mollivit aversos Penates,
Farre pio, et saliente mica.[1]

"The pious off'ring of a piece of bread,
If by pure hands upon the altar laid,
Than costly hecatombs will better please
Th' offended gods, and their just wrath appease."

CHAPTER LVII.

OF AGE.

I CANNOT approve of the proportion we settle upon ourselves, and the space we allot to the duration of life; I see that the sages contract it very much, in comparison of the common opinion. "What," said the younger Cato to those who would stay his hand from killing himself, "am I now of an age to be reproached that I go out of the world too soon?" And yet he was but eight and forty years old.[2] He thought that to be a mature and competent age, considering how few arrive to it. And such as, soothing their thoughts with what they call the course of nature, promise to themselves some years beyond it, might have some reason to do so, could they be privileged from the infinite number of accidents to which they are by natural subjection exposed, and which may at any moment interrupt this natural course they look forward to. What an idle conceit it is to expect to die of a decay of strength, which is the last effect of the extremest age, and to propose to ourselves no shorter lease of life than that, considering it is a kind of death of all others the most rare, and very hardly seen? We call that only a natural death, as if it were contrary to nature, to see a man break his neck with a fall, be drowned in shipwreck, or snatched away with a pleurisy or the plague, and as if our ordinary condition of life did not expose us to these and many more inconveniences. Let us no more flatter ourselves with these fine-sounding words: we ought rather to call that natural which is common and universal.

Age of Cato when he killed himself.

To die of old age is a death rare, extraordinary, and singular, and therefore so much less natural than the others. 'Tis the last and extremest sort of dying, and the more remote the less to be hoped for. It is indeed the boundary of life, beyond which we are not to pass: which the law of nature has pitched for a limit not to be exceeded. But to last till then is withal a privilege she is rarely seen to give us. 'Tis a lease she only signs by particular favour, it may be, to one only, in the space of two or three ages; and then with a pass to boot, to carry him through all the traverses and difficulties she has strewed in the way of this long career. And therefore my opinion is that when once forty years old, we should consider it as an age to which very few arrive: for, seeing that men do not usually proceed so far, it is a sign that we are pretty well advanced; and since we have exceeded the ordinary bounds, which make the just measure of life, we ought not to expect to go much farther. Having escaped so many precipices of death, whereinto we have seen so many other men fall, we should acknowledge that so extraordinary a fortune as that which has hitherto rescued us from those imminent perils, and kept us alive beyond the ordinary term of living, is not likely to continue long.

To die of old age a thing singular and extraordinary.

'Tis a fault in our very laws to contain this error, that a man is not capable of managing his estate till he be five and twenty years old, whereas he will have much ado to manage his life so long. Augustus cut off five years from the ancient Roman standard, and declared that to be thirty years old was sufficient for a judge.[3] Servius Tullius relieved the knights of above seven and forty years of age from the fatigues of war;[4] Augustus dismissed them at forty-five. Though methinks men should hardly be sent to the fire-side till five and fifty, or sixty years of age. I should be of opinion that our employment should be as long as possible extended for the public good: I find the fault on the other side, that they do not employ us early enough. This emperor was arbiter of the whole world at nineteen, and yet would have a man to be thirty before he could decide a dispute about a gutter.

The defect of the laws, in making it so late in life before they admit men to the management of their estates.

For my part I believe our souls are adult at twenty as much as they are ever like to be, and as capable then as ever. A soul that has not by that time given evident earnest of its force and virtue will never after come to proof. Natural parts and excellences produce what they have of vigorous and fine within that term, or never:

Souls adult at twenty years of age.

Si l'espine nou picque quand nai,
A pene que picque jamai,[5]

as they say in Dauphiny. Of all the great human actions I ever heard or read of, of what sort soever, I have observed, both in former ages and our own, more performed before thirty than after; and oft-times in the lives of the same men. May I not confidently instance in those of Hannibal and his great competitor Scipio? The better half of their lives they lived upon the glory they had

What age is capable of the finest actions.

[1] Horace, *Od.* iii. 23. 17.
[2] Plutarch, *in vitâ*, c. 20.
[3] Suetonius, *in vitâ*, c. 12.
[4] Aulus Gellius, x. 28.
[5] "If the thorn pricks not when it first shoots, it hardly ever will at all."

acquired in their youth; great men after, 'tis true, in comparison of others, but by no means in comparison of themselves. As to myself, I am certain that since that age both my understanding and my constitution have rather decayed than improved, retired rather than advanced. 'Tis possible that with those who make the best use of their time knowledge and experience may grow up and increase with their years; but the vivacity, quickness, steadiness, and other qualities, more our own, of much greater importance, and much more essential, languish and decay.

> Ubi jam validis quassatum est viribus ævi
> Corpus, et obtusis ceciderunt viribus artus,
> Claudicat ingenium, delirat linguaque, mensque.[1]
>
> "When once the body's shaken by time's rage,
> The blood and vigour ebbing into age,
> No more the mind its former strength displays,
> But every sense and faculty decays."

Sometimes the body first submits to age, sometimes the soul; and I have seen men enough who had got a weakness in their brains before either in their legs or stomach: and by how much the more it is a disease of no great pain to the infected party, and of obscure symptoms, so much greater the danger is.

And for this reason it is that I complain of our laws; not that they keep us too long to our work, but that they set us to work too late. Methinks, considering the frailty of life, and the many natural and ordinary wrecks to which it is exposed, we should not give so large a portion of it to idleness, either in childhood or in apprenticeship to the world.

[1] Lucret., iii. 452.

THE SECOND BOOK.

CHAPTER I.

OF THE INCONSISTENCY OF OUR ACTIONS.

THOSE who make it their business to observe human actions never find themselves so much puzzled in any thing as how to reconcile and set them before the world in a self-consistent light and reputation; for they are generally such strange contradictions in themselves that it seems almost impossible they should proceed from one and the same person. One while we find young Marius the son of Mars, and another time the son of Venus.[1] Pope Boniface the Eighth, it is said, crept into the papal throne like a fox, reigned like a lion, and died like a dog. And who could believe it to be the same Nero, that perfect image of all cruelty, who, in the beginning of his reign, having the sentence of a condemned man brought to him to sign, cried out, "O, that I had never been taught to write!"[2] So much it went to his heart to condemn a man to death. The history of every nation is so full of such examples, and all men are able to produce so many to themselves, either from their own conduct or observation, that I often wonder to see men of sense give themselves the trouble of sorting these pieces, and endeavouring to reconcile such contradictions; especially when irresolution appears to me to be the most common and manifest vice of our nature; witness the famous verse of the comedian Publius:

Irresolution the most common vice of our nature.

> Malum consilium est, quod mutari non potest.[3]
>
> "That counsel's bad that will admit no change."

[1] Plutarch, *in vitâ.*
[2] Seneca, *De clementiâ.*

There seems indeed some possibility of forming a judgment of a man from the habitual features of his life, but, considering the natural instability of our manners and opinions, I have often thought even the best authors a little mistaken in so obstinately endeavouring to mould us into any consistent and solid contexture. They choose some general air, and according to that arrange and interpret all the actions of a man, of which, if some be so stiff and stubborn that they cannot bend or turn them to any uniformity to the rest, they then, without further ceremony, impute them to dissimulation. Augustus has, nevertheless, escaped those gentlemen; for there was in him so apparent, so sudden, and so continued a variety of action, throughout the whole course of his life, that he has slipt away clear from the boldest judges. For my part, I am with much more difficulty induced to believe in a man's consistency than in any other virtue in him; while there is nothing I so readily believe as his inconsistency: and whoso will meditate upon the matter closely and abstractedly will agree with me. Out of all antiquity 'twould be difficult to produce a dozen men who have formed their lives to one certain and fixed course, which is the principal design of wisdom; for, says one of the ancients,[4] to comprise it all in one word, and to contract all the rules of human life into one, "It is to *will*, and not to *will*, always the same thing: I shall not descend," continues he, "to add, provided the *will* be just, for, if it be not so, it is

The difficulty of determining the characters of men in general.

[3] *Ex Publii mimis.* Apud. Aul. Gell. xvii. 14.
[4] Seneca, *Epist.* 20.

impossible it should be always one." I have, indeed, formerly learnt that vice is nothing but irregularity and want of measure, and therefore 'tis impossible to fix consistency to it. 'Tis a saying of Demosthenes,[1] "that the beginning of all virtue is consultation and deliberation; the end and perfection, consistency." If, by reason, we were to resolve on any certain course, we should pitch upon the best, but nobody has thought of it:

Quod petiit, spernit; repetit, quod nuper omisit;
Æstuat, et vitæ disconvenit ordine toto.[2]

"He now despises what he late did crave,
And what he last neglected now would have:
He fluctuates, and flies from that to this,
And his whole life a contradiction is."

The inconsistency of our conduct, on what founded.

Our ordinary practice is to follow the inclinations of our appetite, which way soever they guide us, whether to the right or to the left, upwards or downwards, just according as we are wafted by the breath of occasion. We never meditate what we would have till the instant we have a mind to it; and change like that little creature which takes its colour from what it is laid upon. What we but just now proposed to ourselves, we immediately alter, and presently return to it again; 'tis nothing but shifting and inconstancy:

Ducimur, ut nervis alienis mobile lignum.[3]

"Like tops with leathern thongs we're whipped about."

We do not go, we are driven; like things that float, now leisurely, then with violence, according to the gentleness or fierceness of the current;

Nonne videmus,
Quid sibi quisque velit nescire, et quærere semper;
Commutare locum, quasi onus deponere possit?[4]

"Day after day we see men toil to find
Some secret solace to an anxious mind,
Shifting from place to place, if here or there
They might set down the burthen of their care."

Every day produces a new whim, and our humours keep motion with time:

Tales sunt hominum mentes, quali pater ipse
Jupiter auctiferas lustravit lumine terras.[5]

"Such are the motions of th' inconstant soul,
As are the days and weather fair or foul."

We fluctuate betwixt various notions; we will nothing freely, nothing absolutely, nothing constantly.[6] In any one that has prescribed and laid down determinate rules and laws to himself for his own conduct, we should perceive an equality of manners, an order, and an infallible relation of one thing or action to another, shine through his whole life (Empedocles[7] observed this contradiction in the Agregentines, that gave themselves up to delights as if every day was to be their last, and built as if they were to live for ever); and a judgment would not then be hard to make. And this is shown in the younger Cato: he who has touched one note, has touched all. 'Tis a harmony of very agreeing sounds, that cannot jar. But with us 'tis quite contrary, every particular action requires a particular judgment. The surest way, in my opinion, would be to take our measures from the nearest allied circumstances, without engaging in a longer inquisition, or without concluding any other consequence.

I was told, in the civil disorders of our unhappy kingdom, that a maid-servant, hard by the place where I then was, had thrown herself out of a window to avoid being forced by a ragamuffin soldier that was quartered in the house. She was not killed by the fall, and therefore, redoubling her attempt, would have cut her own throat, but was hindered; though not before she had wounded herself dangerously. She herself confessed that the soldier had not as yet importuned her otherwise than by courtship, solicitation, and presents; but that she was afraid that in the end he would have proceeded to violence: all which she delivered with such a countenance and language, and withal embrued in her own blood, the testimony of her virtue, that she appeared quite another Lucretia; and yet I have since been well assured that, both before and after, she was no very difficult piece. As in the tale,—"Be as handsome a man, and as fine a gentleman as you will, never build too much upon your mistress's inviolable chastity; for, having been repulsed by her, you do not know but she may have a much better stomach to your groom."[8]

Antigonus, having taken one of his soldiers into a degree of favour and esteem for his virtue and valour, gave his physicians strict charge to cure him of an inward distemper which had a long time tormented him; and observing that after his cure he went much more coldly to work than before, he asked him what had so altered and cowed him? "You, yourself, sir," replied the other, "by having eased me of the pains that made me weary of my life."[9] One of Lucullus's soldiers having been rifled by the enemy, performed a brave exploit against him by way of revenge, by which he recovered his loss and more. Lucullus, who from that action had conceived a very advantageous opinion of the man, endeavoured, with all the persuasions and fine promises he could think of,

Verbis, quæ timido quoque possent addere mentem,[10]

"With words that might a coward's heart inspire,"

[1] In the Funeral Oration, attributed to Demosthenes, on the warriors slain at Chæronæa.
[2] Horace, *Epist.* 1. i. 98.
[3] Horace, *Sat.* ii. 7, 82.
[4] Lucret. iii. 1070.
[5] These two verses, preserved by St. Augustin *(de Civit. Dei.* v. 9), are a translation by Cicero from the *Odyssey*, xviii. 135. He is supposed to have quoted them in his *Academics*, in reference to what Aristotle says of the Human Soul, by which author also these verses are quoted in his treatise *On the Soul*, iii. 3.
[6] Seneca, *Epist.* 52.
[7] Diog. Laertius, *in vitâ.* Ælian attributes the remark to Plato, *Var. Hist.* xii. 29.
[8] The Host's Tale, in Ariosto.
[9] Plutarch, *Life of Pelopidas*, c. 1.
[10] Horace, *Epist.* ii. 2, 36.

to engage him in an enterprise of danger; but "No," said the fellow; "employ some miserable devil that has lost all his money."

Quantumvis rusticus, ibit,
Ibit eo, quo vis, qui zonam perdidit, inquit.[1]

"An't please you, captain, let another trudge it,
The man may venture who has lost his budget,"

and flatly refused to go.

When we read that Mahomet having furiously reprimanded Chasan, Aga of the Janisaries, who seeing the Hungarians break into his battalion, had behaved himself very ill in the business, and that Chasan, instead of any other answer, rushed furiously, alone, with his scimitar in his hand, into the first body of the enemy, where he was presently cut to pieces, we are not to look upon this as so much a generous design to vindicate himself from the reproach of cowardice as a change of mind; not so much natural valour as sudden vexation. The man you see to-day so adventurous and brave, you must not think it strange to find him as great a poltroon to-morrow: anger, necessity, company, wine, or the sound of the trumpet may have roused his spirits; this is no valour formed and established by meditation; but accidentally created by those circumstances, and therefore it is no wonder, if by contrary circumstances, it appears quite another thing. These supple variations and contradictions in us have given some people occasion to believe that man has two souls; others two distinct powers which always accompany and incline us, one towards good, and the other towards evil, according to its own nature and propension; so sudden a variety of inclination not being to be imagined to flow from one and the same fountain.

For my part, I must own that the puff of every accident not only carries me along with it, according to its own proclivity, but that moreover I discompose and trouble myself by the instability of my own posture; and whoever will look narrowly into his own breast will hardly find himself twice in the same condition. I give my soul sometimes one face, and sometimes another, according to the side I turn her to. If I speak variously of myself, it is because I consider myself variously. All contrarieties are there to be found in one corner or another, or after one manner or another. Bashful, insolent; chaste, lustful; talkative, silent; laborious, delicate; ingenious, heavy; melancholic, pleasant; lying, sincere; learned, ignorant; liberal, covetous, and prodigal; I find all this in myself, more or less, according as I turn myself about; and whoever will sift himself to the bottom will be conscious, even by his own judgment, of this volubility and discordance. I have nothing to say of myself entirely, simply, and solidly, without mixture and confusion, nor, in a word; *distinguo* is the universal part of my logic.

Though I always intend to speak well of the good, and rather interpret in a good sense such things as may be so, yet such is the strangeness of our condition that we are sometimes pushed on to do well, even by vice itself, if well doing were not judged by the intention only. One gallant action, therefore, ought not to conclude a man valiant; if a man was brave indeed, he would be always so, and upon all occasions. If it were a habit of virtue, and not a sally, it would render a man equally resolute in all accidents; the same alone as in company, the same in lists as in battles; for, let people say what they please, there is not one valour for the street, and another for the field. He would bear a sickness in his bed as bravely as a wound in the trenches, and no more fear death in his own house than at an assault. We should not then see the same man charge into a breach with a brave assurance, and afterwards torment himself, and whine like a woman, for the loss of a law-suit, or the death of a child. When being a coward in arms, he is firm under poverty; when he starts at the sight of a barber's razor, but rushes fearless among the swords of the enemy, the action is commendable, not the man. Many of the Greeks, says Cicero, cannot endure the sight of an enemy, and yet are courageous in sickness; the Cimbrians and Celtiberians quite the contrary. *Nihil enim potest esse æquabile, quod non à certa ratione proficiscatur.*[2] "Nothing can be uniform that does not proceed from solid reason." No valour could be more extreme in its kind than that of Alexander; but it was but one kind; nor was that kind full enough throughout, or universal. As peerless as it was, it had yet some blemishes; and of this his being so often at his wits' end upon every light suspicion of his captains conspiring against his life, and the behaving himself in such enquiries with so much vehemency and injustice, and with a fear that subverted his natural reason, is one striking instance. The superstition also with which he was so much tainted carries along with it some image of pusillanimity; and the excess of his penitence for the murder of Clytus is likewise another testimony of the unevenness of his courage.—All we do is a mere cento, as a man may say, of odds and ends,[3] and we would acquire honour by a false title. Virtue will not be followed but for herself; and, if we sometimes borrow her mask for some other occasion, she presently pulls it off again. 'Tis a strong and lively tincture, which, when the soul has once thoroughly imbibed it, will not out again but with the piece. And therefore to make a right

A good action to be judged of by the intention only.

Virtue only to be courted for its own sake.

[1] Horace, *Epist.* ii. 2. 39.
[2] *Tusc. Quæs.* iv. 27.
[3] In the edition of 1588, corrected by the Author, the following passage is inserted:—"Voluptatem contemnant; in dolore sunt molles; gloriam negligunt; franguntur infamiâ."

judgment of a man, we are long and very observingly to follow his trace. If consistency does not there stand firm upon her own proper base, *Cui vivendi via considerata atque provisa est*;[1] "If the course of life is not plainly marked out;" if the variety of occurrences makes him to alter his pace (his path I mean, for the pace may be faster or slower), let him go; such a one runs before the wind, *a vau le vent*, as the Talbot motto has it.

'Tis no wonder, says one of the ancients,[2] that chance has so great a dominion over us, since it is by chance we live. It is not possible for any one who has not designed his life for some certain end to dispose of particular actions. It is not possible for any one to fit the pieces together who has not the whole form already contrived in his imagination. To what use are colours to him, or to what end should he provide them, that knows not what he is to paint? No one lays down a certain plan of life; we only deliberate it by pieces. The archer ought first to know at what he is to aim, and then accommodate his arm, bow, string, shaft, and motion to it. Our opinions deviate and wander, because not levelled to any determinate end. No wind serves him who has no destined port. I cannot acquiesce in the judgment given by one in the behalf of Sophocles,[3] who concluded him capable of the management of domestic affairs, against the accusation of his son, from having seen one of his tragedies.

Neither do I think the conjecture of the Parians, sent to regulate the Milesians, sufficient for such a consequence as they drew from it. Coming to visit the island, they took notice of such grounds as were best cultivated, and such country houses as were best governed; and having taken the names of the owners, when they had assembled the citizens, they appointed those farmers for the new governors and magistrates, concluding that they who had been so provident in their own private concerns would be so of the public too.[4] We are all unformed lumps, and of so various a contexture that every moment every piece plays its own game, and there is as much difference betwixt us and ourselves as betwixt us and others. *Magnam rem puta unum hominem agere.*[5]—"'Tis a great matter to be always the same man." Since ambition can teach men valour, temperance, and liberality, and even justice; seeing that avarice can inspire a shop-boy, bred and nursed up in obscurity and ease, with courage enough to expose himself, far from the fire-side, to the mercy of the angry waves, in a frail boat; that, further, she can teach discretion and prudence; and that even Venus can infuse boldness and resolution into boys under the discipline of the rod, and inflame the hearts of tender virgins not out of leading-strings, with masculine courage;

> Hac duce, custodes furtim transgressa jacentes,
> Ad juvenem tenebris sola puella venit;[6]
>
> "With Venus' aid, while sleep the guard disarms,
> She stole by night to her young lover's arms;"

'tis not sound understanding to judge us simply by our outward action; we must penetrate the very soul, and there discover by what springs the motion is guided; but that being a high and hazardous undertaking, I could wish that fewer would attempt it.

CHAPTER II.

OF DRUNKENNESS.

THE world is nothing but variety and disproportion; vices are all alike, as they are vices, and 'tis thus, perhaps, the Stoics understand it; but, though they are equally vices, yet they are not all equal vices; and that he who has transgressed the bounds by a hundred paces,

There are some vices more enormous than others.

> Quos ultra, citraque nequit consistere rectum,[7]
>
> "Whence we cannot deviate without going wrong,"

should not be in a worse condition than he who has transgressed them but ten, is not to be believed; or that sacrilege is not worse than stealing a cabbage:

> Nec vincit ratio hoc, tantumdem ut peccet, idemque,
> Qui teneros caules alieni fregerit horti,
> Et qui nocturnus divum sacra legerit.[8]
>
> "Nor seems it reason he as much should sin
> That steals a cabbage plant, as he who in
> The dead of night a temple breaks, and brings
> Away from thence the consecrated things."

There is in this as great diversity as in anything whatever. The confounding of the order and measure of sins is dangerous; murderers, traitors, and tyrants gain too much therein; it is not reasonable they should solace their consciences, because another man is idle or lascivious, or less assiduous at his devotion than he ought to be. Every one lays weight upon the sins of his companions, and lightens his own. In my opinion, our very instructors themselves range them very ill. As Socrates said, that the principal office of wisdom was to distinguish good from evil, we, the best of whom are always vicious, ought also to say of knowledge that it is to distinguish betwixt vice and vice, without which, and that very exactly performed too, the virtuous and the wicked will remain confounded and undistinguishable.

The confounding of sins is a dangerous thing.

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[1] Cicero, *Paradox.*, v. i.
[2] Senec. *Epist.* 71.
[3] Cicero, *De Senectute*, c. 7.
[4] Herod. v. 29.
[5] Senec. *Epist.* 120.
[6] Tibullus, ii. 1. 71.
[7] Horace, i. 1. 107.
[8] Id. *ib.* 3. 115.

Now among the rest, drunkenness seems to me to be a gross and brutish vice. The soul has more to do in all the rest, and there are some vices that have something, if a man may say so, of the high and generous in them. There are vices wherein there is a mixture of knowledge, diligence, valour, prudence, dexterity, and cunning; this is totally corporeal and earthly. The thickest-skulled nation this day in Europe is that where it is the most in fashion. Other vices discompose the understanding; this totally overthrows it, and stuns the body.

Drunkenness a stupid, brutish vice.

Cum vini vis penetravit, . . .
Consequitur gravitas membrorum, præpediuntur
Crura vacillanti, tardescit lingua, madet mens,
Nant oculi; clamor, singultus, jurgia, gliscunt.[1]

"When fumes of wine have fill'd the swelling veins,
Unusual weight throughout the body reigns;
The legs, so nimble in the race before,
Can now exert their wonted pow'r no more;
Falters the tongue, tears gush into the eyes,
And hiccoughs, noise, and jarring tumults rise."

The worst condition of man is that wherein he loses the knowledge and government of himself. And 'tis said, amongst other things upon that subject, that as the must, fermenting in a vessel, works up to the top whatever it has in the bottom, so wine, in those who have drunk beyond the measure, vents the most inward secrets.

Tu sapientium
Curas, et arcanum jocoso
Consilium retegis Lyæo.[2]

"And, sportive, strip from grave disguise
The cares and secret counsels of the wise."

Josephus tells us[3] that, by giving an ambassador, whom the enemy had sent to him, his full dose of liquor, he wormed out his secrets. And yet Augustus, committing the most inward secrets of his affairs to Lucius Piso, who conquered Thrace, never found him guilty of blabbing in the least; no more than Tiberius did Cossus, with whom he intrusted his whole counsels, though we know they were both so given to drink that they have often been carried home, both one and the other, drunk out of the senate-house.[4]

Hesterno inflatum venas, de more, Lyæo.[5]

"And swollen their veins, as wont, with wine of yesterday."

And the design of killing Cæsar was as safely communicated to Cimber, though he was often drunk, as to Cassius, who drank nothing but water; and upon this, Cimber once said merrily, "Shall I, who cannot bear wine, bear with a tyrant?"[6] We see our Germans, though never so drunk, know their post, remember the word, and perform their duty:

Nec facilis victoria de madidis, et
Blæsis, atque mero titubantibus.[7]

"Nor find it easy victory to command
O'er men so drunk they scarce can speak or stand."

I could not have believed there had been so profound, senseless, and dead a degree of drunkenness, had I not read in history that Attalus, having, in order to put a notable affront upon Pausanias, who for this cause afterwards killed Philip, King of Macedon, who, by his excellent qualities, gave sufficient testimony of his education in the house and company of Epaminondas, invited him to supper, and made him drink to such a pitch that he could dispose of his body as that of a common prostitute to the grooms and meanest servants of the house. And I have been told by a lady whom I highly honour and esteem, that near Bourdeaux, towards Castres, where she lives, a countrywoman, a widow of excellent character, perceiving in herself the first symptoms of breeding, innocently told her neighbours that, if she had a husband, she should think herself with child; but the causes of suspicion every day more and more increasing, and at last growing up to a manifest proof, the poor woman was reduced to the necessity of causing it to be proclaimed at her parish church that whoever had done that deed and would frankly confess it, she did not only promise to forgive, but moreover to marry him, if he liked the offer; upon which a young fellow that served her in the quality of a labourer, encouraged by this proclamation, declared, that one holy-day he found her, having taken too much of the bottle, so fast asleep in the chimney-corner, and in so indecent a posture, that he made use of her without waking her; they still live together man and wife.

It is certain that antiquity has not much decried this vice: the writings of several philosophers speak very tenderly of it; and even amongst the Stoics there are some who advise to give one's-self sometimes the liberty to drink to a debauch, to recreate and refresh the soul.

Drunkenness not much declaimed against by the ancients.

Hoc quoque virtutum quondam certamine magnum
Socratem palmam promeruisse ferunt.[8]

"And Socrates the wise, they say of yore,
Amongst boon-blades the palm of drinking bore."

That censor and reprover of others, Cato, was reproached with being a toper:

Narratur et prisci Catonis
Sæpe mero caluisse virtus.[9]

"——— of old
Cato's virtue, we are told,
Often with a bumper glowed."

Cyrus, that so renowned king, among his other qualities, by which he claimed to be preferred

1 Lucret. iii. 475.
2 Horace, *Od.* iii. 21, 14.
3 In his *Life*, p. 1016.
4 Seneca, *Epist.* 83.
5 Virgil, *Eclog.* vi. 15. The text has it, "Inflatum hesterno venas ut semper, Iaccho."
6 Seneca, *Epist.* 83. The words in this author are, "Ego *quemquam* feram qui vinum ferre non possum?" But he has spoiled Cimber's jest for not having had the courage to give Cæsar the name of a tyrant, as Montaigne does.
7 Juvenal, xv. 47.
8 Pseudo Gallus, i. 47.
9 Horace, *Od.* iii. 21, 11.

before his brother Artaxerxes, urged this excellency, that he could drink a great deal more than he.[1] And in the best governed nations this trial of skill in drinking was very much in use. I have heard Silvius, an excellent physician of Paris, say that, lest the digestive faculties of the stomach should grow idle, it were not amiss once a month to rouse and spur them on by this excess, lest they should grow dull and resty; and 'tis written that when the Persians were to consult upon any important affair they first warmed themselves well with wine.[2]

Drinking to a debauch in use amongst the best governed nations.

My taste and constitution are greater enemies to this vice than I am; for, besides that I easily submit my belief to the authority of ancient opinions, I look upon it as a mean and stupid vice, but less malicious and hurtful than the others, almost every one of which more directly jostles public society. And if we cannot please ourselves but it must cost us something, as they hold, I conceive this vice costs a man's conscience less than any of the rest: besides, it is of no difficult preparation, nor is what we look for hard to be found; a consideration not altogether to be despised. A man well advanced both in dignity and age, among three principal comforts, which he said still remained to him of life, told me this of drinking was one; and where would a man more justly find it than among the natural conveniences? But he did not take it right; for delicacy and a curious choice in wines is therein to be avoided. If you ground your pleasure upon drinking the best, you condemn yourself to the penance of drinking the worst.

Drunkenness a vice not so bad as some others.

Delicacy to be avoided in wine.

Your taste must be more indifferent and free: a delicate palate does not suit a good toper. The Germans drink almost indifferently of all wines with delight: their business is to pour down, and not to taste; and 'tis so much the better for them, their pleasure is so much the more constant and nearer at hand. On the other hand, not to drink after the French fashion, but at meals, and then very moderately too, is too much to restrict the bounty of the god of wine: there is more time and constancy required than so. The ancients spent whole nights in this exercise, and oft-times added the day following to piece it out; we ought therefore to take greater liberty than we do, and stick closer to our work. I have seen a great lord of my time, a man of high enterprise and famous success, who, without setting himself to it, and after his ordinary rate of drinking at meals, swallowed down not much less than five quarts of wine, and at his going away appeared but too wise and discreet, to the detriment of our affairs. The pleasure we design an esteem for during the course of our lives, ought to have a greater share of our time dedicated to it. We should, like journeymen and labourers, refuse no occasion, and omit no opportunity, of drinking, and always have it in our minds. But methinks we every day abridge and curtail the use of wine; and the breakfast, drinking, and collations, I used to see in my father's house when I was a boy, were in those days more usual and frequent than at present. Is it that we pretend to reformation? Truly no: but it may be we are more addicted to Venus than our fathers were. They are two exercises that hinder one another in their vigour. Lechery has weakened our stomach on the one side, and on the other sobriety renders us more amorous and vigorous for the exercise of love.

'Tis not to be imagined what strange stories I have heard my father tell of the chastity of that age wherein he lived. He might very well talk so, being both by art and nature cut out and finished for the service of ladies. He spoke little and well, ever mixing his language with some illustration out of modern authors, especially Spanish; and amongst them Marcus Aurelius was very frequent in his mouth.[3] His behaviour was grave, humble, and modest; he was very solicitous of neatness and decency in his person and dress, whether a-foot or on horseback. He was exceedingly punctual to his word, and of a conscience and religion tending rather towards superstition than otherwise. For a man of little stature, very strong, well proportioned, and well knit; of a pleasing countenance, inclining to brown, and very adroit in all noble exercises. I have yet in the house to be seen canes full of lead, with which, they say, he exercised his arms for throwing the bar or the stone; and shoes with leaden soles, to make him afterwards lighter for running or leaping. Of his vaulting he has left little miracles behind him; and I have seen him, when past threescore, laugh at our agilities, throw himself in his furred gown into the saddle, make the tour of a table upon his thumbs, and scarce ever mount the stairs up to his chamber without taking three or four steps at a time. But as to what I was speaking of before, he said there was scarce one woman of quality of ill fame in a whole province: would tell of strange privacies, and some of them his own, with

A character of the author's father.

Marvellous chastity of the age wherein the author's father lived.

[1] Plutarch, *Life of Artaxerxes*, c. 2.

[2] Herod. i. 133.

[3] Mery Causaubon, who mentions this book, in a short advertisement prefixed to his English translation of the genuine work of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius, tells us this book was writ originally in Spanish, and translated into Italian, French, English, &c. "The author," he adds, "would fain have his work pass for a faithful translation of the treatise of Marcus Aurelius; but there is nothing in the whole book which shows that the *learned* Spaniard who composed it had seen the treatise of this wise emperor." This Spaniard is Guevara, who does not deserve the title of *learned*, which is here given him by Mery Causaubon. The reader may see the character of his wit and works in Bayle's *Dictionary*, under the title of *Guevara*.

virtuous women, without any manner of suspicion. And, for his own part, solemnly swore he was a virgin at his marriage; and yet it was after a long practice of arms beyond the mountains, of which war he has left us a written journal under his own hand, wherein he has given a precise account, from point to point, of all passages, both relating to the public and to himself. And he was married moreover at a well advanced maturity, in the year 1528, the three and thirtieth year of his age, upon his way home from Italy. But let us return to our bottle.

Drinking the last pleasure which man is capable of enjoying.

The incommodities of old age, which stand in need of some refreshment and support, might with reason beget in me a desire of this faculty, it being, as it were, almost the last pleasure which the course of years deprives us of. The natural heat, say the good fellows, first seats itself in the feet, that concerns infancy; from thence it mounts to the middle region, where it makes a long abode, and produces, in my opinion, the only true pleasures of corporal life; all other pleasures sleep in comparison. Towards the end, like a vapour that still mounts upwards, as it exhales, it arrives at the throat, where it makes its last stop. I cannot nevertheless understand how men come to extend the pleasure of drinking beyond thirst, and to forge in the imagination an appetite artificial and against nature. My stomach would not proceed so far; it has enough to do with what it takes for necessity. My constitution is not to care to drink, but as it follows eating, and to wash down my meat, and for that reason my last draught is always the greatest. And as in old age we have our palates furred with phlegms, or depraved by some other ill constitution, the wine does not taste so well till the pores are washed and laid open: at least, I seldom relish the first glass much. Anacharsis[1] wondered that the Greeks drank in greater glasses towards the end of a meal than at the beginning; which was, I suppose, for the same reason. The Germans do the same, who then begin the battle.

The use of wine denied to children, and permitted to grown men.

Plato[2] forbids children to drink wine till eighteen years of age, or to get drunk till forty; but after forty gives them leave to please themselves, and to mix somewhat liberally in their feasts the influence of Dionysius,[3] that good deity, who restores young men their good humour, and old men their youth, who mollifies the passions of the soul, as iron is softened by fire; and in his laws allows such merry meetings, provided they have a discreet chief to govern and keep them in order, as good and useful: drunkenness being, says he, a true and certain trial of every one's nature, and withal fit to inspire old men with mettle to divert themselves in dancing and music: things of great use, but which they dare not attempt when sober. He moreover says that wine is able to supply the soul with temperance and the body with health. Nevertheless these restrictions, in part borrowed from the Carthaginians, please him: that they use it sparingly in expeditions of war;[4] that every judge and magistrate abstain from it when engaged in the duties of his post or in the consultation on the public affairs;[5] that such part of the day is not to be embezzled with it, as is due to other employments; nor that night in which a man intends to get a child.

Restrictions required in the use of wine.

'Tis said that the philosopher Stilpo, when oppressed with age, purposely hastened his end, by drinking pure wine.[6] The same thing, but not of his own design, dispatched also the philosopher Arcesilaus,[7] weakened by years.

Pure wine an enemy to old age.

But 'tis an old and pleasant question, whether the soul of a man can be overcome by the strength of wine?

Si munitæ adhibet vim sapientiæ?[8]

"And each grave thought for frolic airs resign?"

To what vanity does the good opinion we have of ourselves push us? The most regular and most perfect soul in the world has but too much to do to keep itself upright, from being overthrown by its own weakness. There is not one of a thousand that is right and settled so much as one minute in his life; and it may very well be doubted whether, according to her natural condition, it can ever be otherwise. But to join consistency to it is her utmost perfection; I mean though nothing should jostle and discompose her, which a thousand accidents may do. 'Tis to much purpose, indeed, that the great poet Lucretius keeps such a clutter with his philosophy, when behold he is ruined with a love-draught. Is it to be imagined that an apoplexy will not knock down Socrates as well as a porter? Some have forgotten their own names by the violence of a disease, and a slight wound has turned the judgment of others topsy-turvy. Let a man be as wise as he will, he is still a man; and than that, what is there more frail, more a mere nothing? Wisdom does not force our natural dispositions:

The most regular souls liable to be disordered by various accidents.

[1] Laertius, *in vitâ*.
[2] *Laws*, ii.
[3] One of the names of Bacchus.
[4] This construction of "using sparingly" does not convey Plato's meaning. What he says is, "that he approves the Carthaginian law, which orders that no sort of wine be drunk in the camp, nor anything but water." *Laws*, towards the end.
[5] Or, as it is said, more properly, in Plato, during the year of their magistracy.
[6] Laertius, *in vitâ*.
[7] Id. *in vitâ*.
[8] Hor. *Od.* iii. 28. 4. Montaigne, however, has given rather a parody on the text than a quotation. The original stands, *Munitæque adhibe vim sapientiæ*.

Sudores itaque, et pallorem existere toto
Corpore, et infringi linguam, vocemque aboriri,
Caligare oculos, sonere aures, succidere artus,
Denique concidere, ex animi terrore, videmus :[1]

" Paleness and sweat the countenance confounds,
The tongue 's deliver'd of abortive sounds ;
The eyes grow dim, ears deaf, the knees grow lame,
And do refuse to prop the trembling frame ;
And lastly, out of fear of mind, we all
Things see into a dissolution fall :"

he must shut his eyes against the blow that threatens him ; he must tremble upon the brink of a precipice, like a child : nature having reserved these light works of her authority, not to be forced by our reason and stoical virtue, to teach man his mortality and little power. He turns pale with fear, red with shame, and groans with the cholic, if not very loud and despairingly, at least with a hoarse and broken voice :

Humani à se nihil alienum putet.[2]

" Let him not think he's free from human ties."

The poets, that feign all things at pleasure, dare not acquit their greatest heroes of tears :

Sic fatur lacrymans, classique immittit habenas.[3]

" He said, and wept, then spread his sails."

'Tis sufficient for a man to curb and moderate his inclinations ; for totally to suppress them is not in him to do. Even our Plutarch, that excellent and perfect judge of human actions, when he sees Brutus and Torquatus kill their own children, begins to doubt whether virtue could proceed so far, and to question whether these persons had not rather been stimulated by some other passion.[4] All actions exceeding the ordinary bounds are liable to sinister interpretation : forasmuch as our taste does no more affect what is above than what is below it.

Let us leave that other sect, which makes an express profession of haughty superiority :[5] but when, even in that sect,[6] reputed the most quiet and gentle, we hear these rhodomontades of Metrodorus : *Occupavi te, Fortuna, atque cepi ; omnesque aditus tuos interclusi, ut ad me adspirare non posses ;*[7] " Fortune, I have forestalled thee, and so fast shut up all the avenues thou canst not come at me ;" when Anaxarchus, by the command of Nicocreon, tyrant of Cyprus, was put into a stone mortar and pounded with iron mallets, ceases not to say, " Strike, batter, 'tis not Anaxarchus, 'tis but his sheath that you pound ;"[8] when we hear our martyrs cry out to the tyrant in the middle of the flame, " This side is roasted, fall to and eat ; it is enough done, begin to cook the other ;"[9] when we hear the child in Josephus, torn piece-meal with biting pincers, defying Antiochus, and crying out with a firm and assured voice, " Tyrant, thou losest thy labour, I am still at ease ; where is the pain, where are the torments with which thou didst so threaten me ? Is this all thou canst do ? My constancy torments thee more than thy cruelty does me. O pitiful coward ! thou faintest, and I grow stronger ; make me complain, make me bend, make me yield, if thou canst ; encourage thy satellites, cheer up thy executioners ; see, see, they faint and can do no more ; arm them, flesh them anew, spur them up ;"[10] really a man must confess that there is some excitement and fury, how holy soever, that does at that time possess those souls. When we come to these stoical sallies, " I had rather be furious than voluptuous," *Μανειην μᾶλλον ἢ ἡσθειην*, a saying of Antisthenes : when Sextius tells us, " He had rather be fettered with affliction than pleasure :" when Epicurus takes upon him to play with his gout, and, refusing health and ease, with gaiety of heart defies torment, and despising the lesser pains, as disdaining to contend with them, covets and calls out for sharper, more violent, and more worthy of him ;[11]

Spumantemque dari, pecora inter inertia, votis
Optat aprum, aut fulvum descendere monte leonem ;[12]

" Impatiently he views the feeble prey,
Wishing some nobler beast to cross his way,
And rather would the tusky boar attend,
Or see the tawny lion downward bend ;"

who can but conclude that these are sallies of a courage that has broken loose from its place ? Our soul cannot from her own seat reach so high ; 'tis necessary she must leave it, raise herself up, and, taking her bridle in her teeth, transport her man so far that he shall afterwards himself be astonished at what he has done. As in war the heat of battle sometimes pushes the gallant soldiers to perform things of so infinite danger as, after having recollected themselves, they themselves are the first to wonder at ; as poets, too, are often struck with admiration of their own writings, and know not the track through which they made so fine a career : this is in them called ardour, fury. Plato says—" 'Tis to no purpose for a sober man to knock at the door of the *Muses* ;"[13] and Aristotle says—" That no excellent soul is exempt from a mixture of folly ;"[14] and he has reason to call all transports, how commendable soever, folly, when they surpass our own judgment and understanding : because wisdom is a regular government of the soul, which is carried on with measure and proportion, and for which she is answerable to herself. Plato argues thus, " That the faculty of prophecy is above us ; that

[1] Lucret. iii. 155.
[2] Terence, *Heautont.* i. 1. 25. Montaigne has altered the text, to adapt it to his sentence.
[3] *Æneid*, vi. 1.
[4] Plut. *Life of Publicola.*
[5] That of the Stoics, or of Zeno, its founder.
[6] That of Epicurus.
[7] Cicero. *Tusc. Quæs.* v. 9.
[8] Diog. Laert. *in vitâ.*
[9] This is what Prudentius makes St. Laurence say in his book entitled *περι στεφάνων*, concerning crowns, *Hymn* ii. ver. 401, &c.
[10] *De Maccab.* c. 8.
[11] Seneca, 66 and 92.
[12] *Æneid*, iv. 158.
[13] Seneca, *de Tranquillitate*, c. 15, from the *Ion.*
[14] *Problem*, sec. 30. Cicero, *Tusc. Quæs.* i. 33. Seneca, *ut supra.*

we must be out of ourselves when we meddle with it, and our prudence must either be obstructed by sleep, or sickness, or lifted from her place by some celestial rapture.[1]

CHAPTER III.

THE CUSTOM OF THE ISLE OF CEA.

To philosophize, what.

If, according to the common definition, to philosophize is to doubt, much more ought writing at random, and playing the fool, as I do, to be reputed doubting; for it is the business of novices and freshmen to enquire and dispute, and that of the chairman to determine. My moderator is the authority of the divine will, which governs us without contradiction, and which is seated above these vain and human contests.

Philip[2] having entered the Peloponnesus in arms, some one said to Damindas that the Lacedæmonians were likely to be very great sufferers if they did not reconcile themselves to his favour. "Coward!" replied he, "what can they suffer that do not fear to die?" It was asked of Agis, which way a man might live free? "By despising death," said he. These, and a thousand other sayings, to the same purpose, evidently refer to something more than a patient waiting the stroke of death when it shall come; for there are many misfortunes in life far worse to suffer than death itself. Witness the Lacedæmonian boy, taken by Antigonus, and sold for a slave, who, being by his new master commanded to some base employment: "Thou shalt see," says the boy, "whom thou hast bought; it would be a shame for me to serve, being within reach of liberty;" and, having so said, threw himself from the top of the house. Antipater severely threatening the Lacedæmonians, in order to make them acquiesce in a certain demand of his: "If thou threaten us with more than death," replied they, "we shall the more willingly die." And to Philip, having writ them word that he would frustrate all their enterprises: "What! wilt thou also hinder us from dying?" This is the meaning of the sentence, "That the wise man lives as long as he ought, not so long as he can;"[3] and that the most obliging present Nature has made us, and which takes from us all colour of complaint of our condition, is to have delivered into our own custody the keys of life. She has only ordered one door into life, but a hundred thousand of it. We may be straitened for earth to live upon, but earth sufficient to die upon can never be wanting; as Bojocalus answered the Romans.[4] Why dost thou complain of this world? it detains thee not. If thou livest in pain, thy own cowardice is the cause. There remains no more to die, but to be willing to die:

Many misfortunes worse to suffer than death.

Death depend upon the will.

> Ubique mors est; optime hoc cavit Deus.
> Eripere vitam nemo non homini potest;
> At nemo mortem: mille ad hanc aditus patent.[5]
>
> "Tender of human woes, indulgent fate
> Has left to death an ever-open gate:
> There's not a person on the earth but may
> Take any fellow-creature's life away;
> And any man that will may yield his breath;
> There are a thousand ways that lead to death."

Neither is it a recipe for one disease; death does not merely relieve us of one particular malady, 'tis the infallible cure of all, an assured port that is never to be feared, and very often to be sought: it comes all to one point, whether a man gives himself his end, or stays to receive it; whether he pays before his day, or stay till his day of payment comes. Whencesoever it comes, it is still his; in what part soever the thread breaks, there's the end of the clue; the most voluntary death is the finest. Life depends upon the will of others, death upon our own. There is nothing in which we ought not to accommodate ourselves to our own humour so much as in that. Reputation is not concerned in such an enterprize; and it 's a folly to be diverted by any such apprehensions. Living is slavery, if the liberty of dying be away. The ordinary method of cure is carried on at the expense of life; they torment us with caustics, incisions, and amputations of limbs, interdicting aliments, and exhausting our blood; one step further, and we are cured indeed. Why is not the *jugular* vein as much at our disposal as the *median*?[6] For a desperate disease, a desperate cure. Servius, the grammarian, having the gout, could advise of no better remedy than to apply poison to his legs to deprive them of their sense; let them be gouty if they will, so they are but insensible of pain. God gives us leave enough, when he is pleased to reduce us to such a condition that to live is far worse than to die. 'Tis weakness to truckle under infirmities, but 'tis madness to cherish them. The Stoics say[8] that it is living according to nature in a wise man to take his leave of life even in the height of prosperity, provided he does it opportunely; and in a fool to prolong it though he be miserable, if he is not indigent of those things which are reputed the necessaries of life. As I do not offend the law provided against thieves when I embezzle my own money and cut my own purse, nor that against incendiaries, when I burn my own wood; so am I not under the lash of those made against murderers, for having deprived myself of my

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[1] In the *Timæus*.
[2] This and the four following instances are taken from Plutarch, *Apothegms of the Lacedæmonians*.
[3] Seneca, *Epist.* 70.
[4] Tacitus, *Annal.* xiii. 56.
[5] Seneca, *Thebaid*, i. 1, 151.
[6] Seneca, *Epist.* 69 and 70; whence the greater part of these remarks are taken.
[7] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xxv. 3. Suetonius, *de Illust Gramma.* c. 2.
[8] Cicero, *de Finibus*, iii. 18.

own life. Hegesias said that as the condition of life did, so the condition of death ought to depend upon our own choice.[1] And Diogenes meeting the philosopher Speusippus, so blown up with an inveterate dropsy that he was fain to be carried in a litter, and being by him saluted with "Health to thee, Diogenes;" "No health to thee," replied the other, "who consentest to live in such a condition." And in truth, not long after, Speusippus, weary of so languishing a state of life, killed himself.[2]

Suicide prohibited by God, and to be punished in the other world.

But this does not pass without admitting a dispute: for many are of opinion that we cannot quit this garrison of the world without express command of him who has placed us in it; and that it belongs to God alone, who has placed us here, not for ourselves only, but for his glory and the service of others, to dismiss us when it shall best please him, and not for us to depart without his license; that we are not born for ourselves only, but for our country also, the laws of which require an account from us, upon the score of their own interest, and have an action of manslaughter good against us; or, if these fail to take cognizance of the fact, we are punished in the other world as deserters of our duty:

Proxima deinde tenent mœsti loca, qui sibi lethum
Insontes peperere manu, lucemque perosi
Projecere animas.[3]

"The next in place and punishment are they
Who prodigally threw their souls away—
Fools, who, repining at their wretched state,
And loathing anxious life, suborned their fate."

There is more constancy in suffering the chain we are tied in than in breaking it, and more evidence of fortitude in Regulus than in Cato. 'Tis indiscretion and impatience that pushes us on. No misfortunes can make true virtue turn her back; she seeks and requires pain and grief as her aliment. The menaces of tyrants, racks, and tortures, serve only to animate and rouse her;

Duris ut ilex tonsa bipennibus
Nigræ feraci frondis in Algido,
Per damna, per cædes, ab ipso
Ducit opes, animumque ferro;[4]

"Are like an oak upon the wooden top
Of shaded Algidus, bestrew'd with leaves,
Which, as keen axes its green honours lop,
Through wounds, through losses, no decay can feel,
Collecting strength and spirit from the steel."

And, as the other says,

Non est, ut putas, virtus, pater,
Timere vitam; sed malis ingentibus
Obstare, nec se vertere, ac retro dare.[5]

"That fear to live is virtue, you contend,
This point, my father, you can ne'er defend;
That 's virtue which can evils great withstand,
And not retreat, nor shift to either hand."

Or as this:

Rebus in adversis facile est contemnere mortem:
Fortius ille facit, qui miser esse potest.[6]

"The wretched well may laugh at death, but he
Is braver far can live in misery."

'Tis cowardice, not virtue, to lie squat in a furrow under a tomb, to evade the blows of fortune. Virtue never stops, nor goes out of her path for the greatest storm that blows:

Si fractus illabatur orbis
Impavidum ferient ruinæ.[7]

"Nor would the wreck his mind appal,
Should the whole world to swift destruction fall."

And for the most part, the flying of other inconveniencies brings us to this; endeavouring to evade death, we run into the jaws of it:

Hic, rogo, non furor est, ne moriare, mori?[8]

"Can there be greater madness, pray reply,
Than that one should for fear of dying die?"

like those who, for fear of a precipice, throw themselves headlong into it:

Multos in summa pericula misit
Venturi timor ipse mali: fortissimus ille est,
Qui promptus metuenda pati, si cominus instent,
Et differre potest.[9]

"The fear of future ills oft makes men run
Into far worse than those they strive to shun;
But he deserves the noblest character,
Dares boldly stand the mischiefs he doth fear,
When they confront him, and appear in view,
And can defer at least, if not eschew."

Usque adeo, mortis formidine, vitæ
Percipit humanos odium, lucisque videndæ,
Ut sibi consciscant mœrenti pectore lethum;
Obliti fontem curarum hunc esse timorem.[10]

"Death unto that degree doth some men fright,
That, causing them to hate both life and light,
They kill themselves, thus seeming not aware
That this same fear 's the fountain of their care."

Plato, in his Laws,[11] assigns an ignominious sepulture to him who has deprived his nearest and best friend, namely himself, of life and his destined course of years, being neither compelled so to do by public judgment, by any sad and inevitable accident of fortune, nor by any insupportable disgrace, but merely pushed on by the cowardice and imbecility of a timorous soul. And the opinion that makes so little of life is ridiculous; for it is our being, 'tis all we have. Things of a nobler and more elevated being may indeed accuse this of ours; but it is against nature for us to contemn and make little account of ourselves; 'tis a disease particular to man, and not seen in any other creatures, to hate and despise itself. It is a vanity of the same stamp, to desire to be something else than what we are. The effects of such a desire do not touch us, forasmuch as it is contradicted and hindered in itself. He that desires to be changed from man into angel does nothing for himself; he would be never the

1 Laertius, *in vitâ.*
2 Id. *ib.*
3 *Æneid*, vi. 434.
4 Horace, *Od.* iv. 4, 57.
5 Seneca, *Thebaid*, i. verse 190.
6 Martial, xi. 56, 15.
7 Hornce, *Od.* iii. 3. 7.
8 Martial, ii. 86. 2.
9 Luc. vii. 104.
10 Lucret. iii. 79.
11 *Book* ix.

better for it;" for being no more, who would there be to rejoice, or even be sensible of this benefit for him?

Debet enim, misere cui forte, ægreque futurum est,
Ipse quoque esse in eo tum tempore, cum male possit
Accidere.[1]

"For whosoe'er in misery is to live,
Must BE whene'er that misery shall arrive."

Security, indolence, impassibility, and the privation of the evils of life, which we pretend to purchase at the price of dying, are of no manner of advantage to us. That man evades war to very little purpose that can have no fruition of peace. And for as little does he avoid toil who cannot enjoy repose.

What are the justest reasons for suicide.

Amongst those of the first of these two opinions, there has been great debate; what occasions are sufficient to justify the determination to kill one's-self, which they call εὔλογον ἐξαγωγην,[2] "a reasonable handsome exit;" for though they say that men may die from trivial causes, seeing those that detain us in life are of no very great weight; yet there is to be some limit to this. There are fantastic and senseless humours that have prompted not only particular men, but whole nations, to destroy themselves, of which I have elsewhere given some examples; and we further read of the Milesian virgins that by an insane compact they hanged themselves, one after another, 'till the magistrate took order in it, enacting that the bodies of such as should be found so hanged should be drawn by the same halter, stark naked through the city.[3] When Therycion expected Cleomenes to dispatch himself, by reason of the ill posture of his affairs, and having evaded the death of most honour in the battle he had lost, to accept of this, the second in honour to it, and not to give the conquerors opportunity to make him undergo either an ignominious death or an infamous life; Cleomenes, with a courage truly stoic and Lacedæmonian, rejected his counsel as unmanly and poor: "That," said he, "is a remedy that can never be wanting, and which a man never should make use of whilst there is an inch of hope remaining;" telling him "that it sometimes showed firmness and valour to live; that he would that even his death should be of use to his country; and that he would make of it an act of honour and virtue."[4] Therycion thought himself in the right, and did his own business; and Cleomenes after did the same, but not till he had first tried the utmost malevolence of fortune.

All the inconveniencies in the world are not considerable enough that a man should die to evade them; and, besides there being so many sudden changes in human things, it is hard rightly to judge when we are at the end of our hope:

Sperat et in sæva victus gladiator arena
Sit licet infesto pollice turba minax.[5]

"The fencer conquer'd in the lists hopes on,
Though the turn'd thumb commands him to be gone."

All things, says the old adage, are to be hoped for by a man whilst he lives. "Aye," replies Seneca, "but why should this rather be always running in a man's head that fortune can do all things for the living man, than this, that fortune has no power over him that knows how to die?"[6] We see Josephus when engaged in near and apparent danger, a whole people being risen up against him, and no visible means of escape, and being, as himself says,[7] in this extremity counselled by one of his friends to dispatch himself, yet do well to maintain himself in hope; for fortune, beyond all human expectation, so changed the face of things that he saw himself delivered without any manner of inconvenience. Whereas Brutus and Cassius, on the contrary,

Deaths fatal by having been precipitant.

threw away the remains of the Roman liberty, of which they were the sole protectors, by the precipitation and temerity wherewith they killed themselves before the proper time and occasion. Monsieur d'Anguien, at the Battle of Serisolles, twice attempted to cut his throat, despairing of the fortune of the day, which went, indeed, very untowardly on that side of the field where he was engaged, and by that precipitation was very near depriving himself of the joy and honour of so glorious a victory.[8] I have seen a hundred hares escape out of the very teeth of the greyhounds; *Aliquis carnifici suo superstes fuit.* "Some have survived their intended executioners."

Multa dies, variusque labor mutabilis ævi
Retulit in melius; multos alterna revisens
Lusit, et in solido rursus fortuna locavit.[9]

"Good unexpected, evils unforeseen,
Appear in turns as fortune shifts the scene.
Some, raised aloft, come tumbling down amain,
Then fall so hard they bound and rise again."

What causes may induce a man to kill himself.

Pliny says there are only three sorts of diseases to escape any of which a man has good title to destroy himself; the worst of which is the stone in the bladder, when the urine is suppressed.[10] Seneca says those only

[1] Lucret. iii. 874.

[2] This was the expression of the Stoics; see Diogenes Laertius, viii. 130.

[3] Plutarch, *On the virtuous deeds of Women.*

[4] Id. *Lives of Agis and Cleomenes*, c. 14.

[5] Pentadius, *De Spe. apud Virgil. catalecta.*

[6] Seneca, *Epist.* 70.

[7] In his *Life*, p. 1009.

[8] Montluc's *Commentaries.* The battle was fought in 1544.

[9] *Æneid*, xi. 425.

[10] "In the quarto edition of these Essays, in 1588," remarks M. Coste, "Pliny is said to mention two more, viz., a pain in the stomach, and the head-ache, which, he says, lib. xxv. cap. 3, were the only three distempers, almost, for which men killed themselves. As to their right of killing themselves, he does not mention a word of it here; and I cannot conceive why Montaigne, who, at first, entered thoroughly into Pliny's sense, by saying that, according to this author, 'it was the custom for men to kill themselves, in order to be rid of any one of these three distempers, made him say afterwards that they had a right to kill themselves for this very end.'"

which for a long time discompose the functions of the soul. Some there have been who, to avoid a worse, have chosen a death of their own liking. Democritus, general of the Ætolians, being brought prisoner to Rome, found means to make his escape by night; but being closely pursued by his keepers, rather than suffer himself to be retaken, he fell upon his own sword and died.[1] Antinous and Theodotus, their city of Epirus being reduced by the Romans to the last extremity, gave the people counsel to kill themselves; but, the advice of giving themselves up to the enemy prevailing, they went to seek death, rushing furiously upon the enemy, with an intention to strike home, but not to defend a blow.[2] The Island of Gozo[3] being forced some years ago by the Turks, a Sicilian, who had two beautiful daughters marriageable, killed them both with his own hand, and their mother, running in to save them, to boot; which having done, sallying out of the house with a cross-bow and a harquebuss, with those two shots he killed two of the Turks nearest to his door, and drawing his sword charged furiously in amongst the rest, where he was suddenly enclosed and cut to pieces; by that means delivering his family and himself from slavery and dishonour. The Jewish women, after having circumcised their children, threw themselves down a precipice to avoid the cruelty of Antigonus. I have been told of a gentleman in one of our prisons, whose friends being informed he would certainly be condemned, to avoid the ignominy of such a death, suborned a priest to tell him that the only means of deliverance was to recommend himself to such a saint under such and such vows, and fast eight days together without taking any manner of nourishment, what weakness or faintness soever he might find in himself during the time. He followed their advice, and by that means destroyed himself before he was aware, not dreaming of death or any danger in the experiment. Scribonia advising her nephew Libo to kill himself, rather than to attend the stroke of justice, told him "that it was to do other people's business to preserve his life, to put it after into the hands of those who, within three or four days, would come and fetch him to execution; and that it was to serve his enemies to keep his blood to gratify their malice."[4] We read in the Bible that Nicanor,[5] the persecutor of the law of God, having sent his soldiers to seize upon the good old man Razias, surnamed, in honour of his virtue, the Father of the Jews; the good man seeing no other remedy, his gates burnt down, and the enemies ready to seize him, choosing rather to die generously than to fall into the hands of his wicked adversaries, and suffer himself to be cruelly butchered by them, contrary to the honour of his rank and quality, he stabbed himself with his own sword; but the blow, from haste, not having been given home, he ran and threw himself from the top of a wall headlong among them, who separating themselves and making room, he pitched directly upon his head. Notwithstanding which, feeling yet in himself some remains of life, he renewed his courage, and, starting up upon his feet, all bloody and wounded as he was, and making his way through the crowd, ran to a neighbouring precipice, but, not being able to reach the edge, through one of his wounds, he drew out his bowels, which, tearing and pulling to pieces with both his hands, he threw amongst his pursuers, all the while attesting and invoking the divine vengeance upon them.

Acts of violence committed on the chastity of women.

Of violence offered to the conscience, that against the chastity of woman is, in my opinion, the most to be avoided, forasmuch as there is a certain pleasure naturally mixed with it; and for that reason the dissent cannot be sufficiently perfect and entire, so that the violence seems to be mixed with a little consent of the forced party. The Ecclesiastical History marks with favour several examples of devout persons who have embraced death to secure them from the outrages prepared by tyrants against their religion and honour. Of Pelagia[6] and Sophronia,[7] both canonized, the first precipitated herself with her mother and sisters into the river, to avoid being forced by some soldiers, and the last also killed herself to escape being ravished by the Emperor Maxentius.

It may peradventure be an honour to us in future ages, that a learned author of this present time, and a Parisian, too, takes a great deal of pains to persuade the ladies of our age, rather to take any other course than to enter into the horrid meditation of such an act of despair. I am sorry he had never heard (that he might have inserted it amongst his other stories) the saying of a woman, which was told me at Toulouse, who had passed through the handling of some soldiers,—"God be praised," said she, "that once at least in my life I have had my fill without sin!" Truly, these cruelties are very unworthy the French sweetness and good-nature; and indeed, God be thanked, our air is very well purged of it since this good advice. 'Tis enough that they say *No*, in doing it, according to the rule of the good Marot.[8]

Death preferable to a miserable life.

History is every where full of such as, in a thousand ways, have for death exchanged a painful and irksome life. Lucius Aruntius killed himself, to fly, he said, both the future and the past.[9] Granius Silvanus and Statius Proximus, after having been pardoned by Nero,

[1] Livy, xxxvii. 36.
[2] Id. xlv. 26.
[3] A small island to the west of Malta, and not fifty from it.
[4] Seneca, *Epist.* 70.
[5] Maccabees, ii. 14, 37.
[6] St. Ambrose, *de Virg.* iii.
[7] Rufinus, *Hist. Eccles.* viii. 27.
[8] In an epigram, entitled "Yea and Nay," which begins "Un doux Nenny avec un doux Sourire," i. e. "One soft nay, nay, with a sweet smile."
[9] Tacit. *Annal.* vi. 48.

killed themselves;[1] either disdaining to live by the favour of so wicked a man, or that they might not be troubled at some other time to obtain a second pardon, considering his facility to suspect, and credit accusations against, worthy men. Spargapizez, the son of Queen Thomyris, being a prisoner of war to Cyrus, made use of the first favour Cyrus shewed him, in commanding him to be unbound, to kill himself, having sought no other benefit of liberty but only to be avenged of himself for the disgrace of being taken.[2] Bogez, governor in Eiona for King Xerxes, being besieged by the Athenian army under the conduct of Cimon, refused the conditions offered, that he might return safe into Asia with all his wealth, unable to survive the loss of a place his master had given him to keep; wherefore, having defended the city to the last extremity, nothing being left to eat, he first threw the gold, and whatever else the enemy could make booty of, into the river Strymon, and, after causing a great pile to be set on fire, and the throats of all his wives, children, concubines, and servants, to be cut, he threw their bodies into the fire, and at last leaped into it himself.[3]

Ninachetuen, an Indian lord, so soon as he heard the first whisper of the Portuguese vice-roy's determination to dispossess him, without any apparent cause, of the command in Malaca, to transfer it to the King of Campar, took this resolution with himself. He caused a scaffold, longer than broad, to be erected, supported by columns, royally adorned with tapestry, and strewed with flowers and abundance of perfumes; all which being thus prepared, in a robe of cloth of gold, set full of jewels of great value, he came out into the street, and mounted the steps to the scaffold, at one corner of which he had a lighted pile of aromatic wood. Everybody ran to see to what end these unusual preparations were made: when Ninachetuen, with a manly but discontented countenance, began to remonstrate how much he had obliged the Portuguese nation, and with what fidelity he had carried himself in his charge; that having so often, with his sword in his hand, manifested, in the behalf of others, that honour was much more dear to him than life, he was not to abandon the concern of it for himself. That, fortune denying him all the means of opposing the affront designed to be put upon him, his courage at least enjoined him to free himself from the sense of it, and not to serve for a table-talk to the people, nor for a triumph to men less deserving than himself; which having said, he leaped into the fire.

Remarkable death of an Indian of quality.

Sextilia, the wife of Scaurus, and Paxea, the wife of Labeo, to encourage their husbands to evade the dangers that pressed upon them, wherein they had no other share than from mere conjugal affection, voluntarily gave up their own lives, to serve them, in this extreme necessity, for company and example.[4] What they did for their husbands, Cocceius Nerva did for his country, with less utility, though with equal affection. This great lawyer, flourishing in health, riches, reputation, and favour with the emperor, had no other cause to kill himself but the sole compassion of the miserable estate of the Roman Republic.[5] Nothing can add to the grace of the death of the wife of Fulvius, a favourite of Augustus. Augustus having discovered that he or his wife had blabbed an important secret he had entrusted him withal, one morning that he came to his court received him very coldly. He returned home full of despair, and sorrowfully told his wife that, being fallen into this misfortune, he was resolved to kill himself. To which she replied, "'Tis but reason you should, seeing that, having so often experienced the incontinency of my tongue, you could not take caution against it. But let me kill myself first;" and, without any more dispute, ran herself through the body with a sword.[6]

Two women who put themselves to death, to encourage their husbands to do the same.

Vibius Virius, despairing of the safety of his city besieged by the Romans, and likewise of their mercy, in the last deliberation of his city's senate, after many remonstrances conducing to that end, concluded that the most noble means to escape fortune was by their own hands:—telling them that the enemy would have them in honour, and Hannibal would be sensible how many faithful friends he had abandoned; inviting those who approved of his advice to go take a good supper he had ready at home, where, after they had eaten well, they would drink together of what he had prepared; a beverage, said he, that will deliver our bodies from torments, our souls from injury, and our eyes and ears from the sense of so many hateful mischiefs as the conquered are to suffer from angry and implacable conquerors. "I have," said he, "taken order for fit persons to throw our bodies in a funeral pile before my door so soon as we are dead." Many approved this high resolution, few adopted it: seven-and-twenty senators followed him, who, after having tried to drown the thought of this fatal determination in wine, ended the feast with the mortal mess, and embracing one another, after they had jointly deplored the misfortune of their country, some retired home to their own houses, others stayed to be burned with Vibius in his funeral pile; and were all of them so long a dying, the vapour of the wine having prepossessed the veins, and by that means deferring the effect of the poison, that some of them

[1] Tacit. *Annal.* xv. 71.
[2] Herod. i. 213.
[3] Id. vii. 107.
[4] Tacit. *Annal.* vi. 29.
[5] Id. 49.
[6] Plutarch, *On Talking too much.*

were within an hour of seeing the enemy within the walls of Capua, which was taken the next morning, and of undergoing the miseries they had at so dear a rate endeavoured to evade.[1] Taurea Jubellius, another citizen of the same country,[2] seeing the consul, Fulvius, returning from the shameful butchery he had made on this occasion of two hundred and twenty-five senators, called him back fiercely by his name, and having made him stop, "Give the word," said he, "that somebody may dispatch me after the massacre of so many others, that thou mayest boast to have killed a much more valiant man than thyself." Fulvius, disdaining him as a man out of his wits, and as also having received letters from Rome, contrary to the inhumanity of this execution, which tied his hands, Jubellius proceeded;—"Since my country being taken, my friends dead, and having with my own hands slain my wife and children to rescue them from desolation and ruin, I am denied to die the death of my fellow citizens, let us borrow from virtue vengeance on this hated life!" and drawing a sword he carried concealed about him, he ran it through his own bosom, falling down backward, and expiring at the consul's feet.

Alexander, laying siege to a city of the Indies, those within, finding themselves very hardly pressed, put on a vigorous resolution to deprive him of the pleasure of his victory, and accordingly burned themselves in general, together with their city, in spite of all his efforts to save them: a new kind of war, where the enemies sought to rescue them, and they to kill themselves, doing, to make themselves sure of death, all that men do to secure their lives.[3]

Astapa, a city of Spain, finding itself too weak in walls and defence to withstand the Romans, the inhabitants made a heap of all their riches and furniture in the public place, and, having ranged upon this heap all the women and children, and piled them round with wood and other combustible matter to take sudden fire, and left fifty of their young men for the execution of that whereon they had resolved; they made a desperate sally, where, for want of power to overcome, they caused themselves to be every man slain. The fifty, after having massacred every living soul throughout the whole city, and put fire to this pile, threw themselves lastly into it, finishing their generous liberty rather in an insensible, than after a sorrowful and disgraceful, manner, and showing the enemy that, if fortune had been so pleased, they had the courage as well to take the victory out of their hands as to frustrate and render it dreadful, and even mortal, to those who, allured by the glitter of the gold melting in this flame, having approached it, were in great numbers there suffocated and burned, being kept from retiring by the crowd that followed them.[4]

The Abydeans, being pressed by King Philip, put on the same resolution, but, being come upon too suddenly, they could not put it in effect; the king, however, who abhorred to see the precipitate rashness of this execution, (the treasure and moveables which they had condemned to fire and water being first seized,) drawing off his soldiers, granted them three days' time to kill themselves in, that they might do it with more order and at greater ease; which space they filled with blood and slaughter, beyond the utmost excess of all hostile cruelty, so that not so much as any one soul was left alive that had the power to destroy itself.[5] There are infinite examples of like popular conclusions, which seem the more tremendous by how much the effect is more universal, and yet are really less than when singly executed. What arguments and persuasions cannot make upon individuals, they can do upon all, the ardour of society imposing upon particular judgments.

The condemned who waited to be executed, in the reign of Tiberius, forfeited their goods, and were denied the rites of sepulture; but those who, by killing themselves, did anticipate it, were interred, and had liberty to dispose of their estates by will.[6]

But men sometimes covet death out of hope of a greater good. "I desire," says St. Paul,[7] "to be dead, that I may be with Christ;" and "who shall rid me of these bonds?" Cleombrotus Ambraciota,[8] having read Plato's Phædo, entered into so great a desire of the life to come that without any other occasion he threw himself into the sea. By which it appears how improperly we call this voluntary dissolution despair, to which the eagerness of hope does often incline us, and often a calm and temperate desire, proceeding from a mature and considerate judgment. Jaques du Chastel, Bishop of Soissons, in St. Louis's foreign expedition, seeing the king and the whole army upon the point of returning into France, leaving the affairs of religion imperfect, took a resolution rather to go into Paradise; wherefore, having taken solemn leave of his friends, he charged alone, in the sight of every one, into the enemy's army, where he was presently cut to pieces. In a certain kingdom of the New World, upon a day of solemn procession, when the Idol they adore is drawn about in public upon a car of wonderful size; besides that several are then seen cutting off pieces of their flesh to offer to him, there are a number of others who prostrate themselves to be crushed and broken to pieces with the weighty wheels, to obtain the veneration of sanctity after their death, which is accordingly paid them. The

Death desired for the hopes of a greater good.

1 Livy, xxvi. 13.
2 *Campania.* Livy, *ut supra.*
3 Diod. Sic. xvii. 18.
4 Livy, xxviii. 22.
5 Livy, xxxi. 17.
6 Tacitus, *Annals*, vi. 29.
7 *Epist. to the Philipp.* c. 1.
8 Or of *Ambracia*, Cicero, *Tusc. Quæs*, i. 34.

death of the fore-named bishop, with his sword in his hand, has more of gallantry in it, and less of feeling, the ardour of combat taking away part of the latter.

There are some governments who have taken upon them to regulate the justice and opportunity of voluntary deaths. In former times there was kept, in our city of Marseilles, a poison prepared out of hemlock at the public charge, for those who had a mind to hasten their end, having first before the Six Hundred, which were their senate, given an account of the reasons and motives of their design, and it was not otherwise lawful than by leave from the magistrate, and upon just occasion, to do violence to themselves. The same law was also in use in other places.

Poison kept and prepared at the public expense for such as were inclined to make use of it.

Sextus Pompeius, in his expedition into Asia, touching at the Isle of Cea, in Negropont, it accidentally happened whilst he was there, as we have it from one that was with him,[1] that a woman of great quality having given an account to her citizens why she was resolved to put an end to her life, invited Pompeius to her death, to render it the more honourable; an invitation that he accepted, and having long tried in vain, by the power of his eloquence, which was very great, to divert her from that design, he acquiesced at last to grant her request. She had passed four-score and ten years in a very happy state both of body and mind; but being then laid on her bed, better drest than ordinary, and leaning upon her elbow: "The Gods," said she, "O, Sextus Pompeius, and rather those I leave than those I go to seek, reward thee, for that thou hast not disdained to be both the counsellor of my life, and the witness of my death. For my part, having always experienced the smiles of fortune, for fear lest the desire of living too long may make me see a contrary fate, I am going by a happy end to dismiss the remains of my soul, leaving behind two daughters and a legion of nephews." Which having said, and having exhorted her family to live in union and peace, she divided amongst them her goods, and recommending her domestic gods to her eldest daughter, she took with a firm hand the bowl that contained the poison, and, having made her vows and prayers to Mercury to conduct her to some happy abode in the other world, drank off the mortal potion, which having done, she entertained the company with the progress of its operation, and how the cold by degrees seized the several parts of her body, one after another, till, having in the end told them it began to seize upon her heart and bowels, she called her daughters to do their last office and close her eyes.

Pliny[2] tells us of a certain hyperborean nation, where, by reason of the sweet temperature of the air, lives did rarely end but by the voluntary surrender of the inhabitants; but that, being weary of and satiated with life, they had a custom, at a very old age, after having made good cheer, to precipitate themselves into the sea from the top of a certain rock, destined for that service. Pain, and the fear of a worse death, seem to me the most excusable incitements.

The voluntary death of the Hyperboreans.

CHAPTER IV.

BUSINESS TO-MORROW.

Of all our French writers, I give, with justice, I think, the palm to Jaques Amiot, as well for the propriety and purity of his language, in which he excels all others, as his application and patience in going through so long a work, and the depth of his learning and judgment in having been able to unravel and explain so difficult an author; (for let people say what they please, I understand nothing of Greek, but I meet with sense so well connected and maintained throughout his whole translation that certainly he either knew the true imagination of the author, or having, by long conversation with him, planted in his soul a thorough and lively idea of that of Plutarch, at least he has lent him nothing that either contradicts or dishonours him;) but what I am most pleased with him for is the discreet choice he has made of so noble and useful a book to make a present of to his country. We ignorant people had been undone had not this book raised us out of the mire; by its favour we dare both speak and write; by it the ladies are able to school their schoolmasters: 'tis our breviary. If this good man lived I would desire him to do as much for Xenophon: 'tis a much easier task than the other, and consequently more proper for his age. And besides, I know not how, but methinks, though he briskly and clearly enough gets over steps another would have stumbled at, that nevertheless his style is more his own where he does not encounter those difficulties, and rolls on at its ease.

A eulogium on Amiot, the translator of Plutarch.

I was just now reading that passage where Plutarch says of himself, that Rusticus, being present at a declamation of his in Rome, he there received a packet from the emperor, and deferred to open it till all was over: for which, says he, all the company highly applauded the gravity of this person. 'Tis true, that his discourse being upon Curiosity, and that eager passion for news which makes us, with so much indiscretion and impatience, quit all things to entertain a new comer, and, without any manner of respect or civility, tear open on a sudden, in what company soever, the letters that are

[1] Val. Max. ii. 6. 8.

[2] *Nat. Hist.* iv. 12.

delivered to us, he had reason to applaud the gravity of Rusticus upon this occasion; and might moreover have added to it the commendation of his civility and courtesy, that would not interrupt the course of his declamation. But I doubt whether any one can commend his prudence; for, receiving unexpected letters, and especially from an emperor, it might well have fallen out that the deferring to read them might have been of great prejudice. The vice opposite to curiosity is negligence, to which I naturally incline, and which I have seen some men so extremely guilty of that one might have found the letters that had been sent to them three or four days before, still sealed up in their pockets.

Negligence the opposite vice to curiosity.

I never opened any letters directed to another, not merely those entrusted with me, but even such as chance has placed in my hand; and am annoyed if my eyes unawares steal any contents of letters of importance which a great man is reading when I stand near him. Never was man less inquisitive, or less prying into other men's affairs than I am.

In our fathers' days Monsieur de Boutieres had like to have lost Turin from neglecting, he having company at that time with him at supper, to read an information that was sent him of a conspiracy against the city where he commanded. And this very Plutarch tells me that Julius Cæsar had preserved himself, if, in going to the Senate the day he was assassinated by the conspirators, he had read a paper that was presented to him by the way; and he tells also the story of Archias, tyrant of Thebes, that the night before the execution of the design Pelopidas had laid to kill him, to restore his country to liberty, he had an account sent him in writing by another Archias, an Athenian, of the whole conspiracy, and that this packet having been delivered to him while he sat at supper, he deferred the opening of it, saying, which afterwards became a proverb in Greece, "Business to-morrow."[1]

A wise man may, I confess, out of respect to another, as not indecorously to disturb the company, as Rusticus did, or not to break off another affair of importance in hand, defer to read or hear any new thing that is brought him; but if for his own interest or particular pleasure, especially if he be a public minister, he will not interrupt his dinner, or break his sleep, he is inexcusable. And there was anciently at Rome the Consular Place, as they called it, which was the most honourable at the table, for being a place of most liberty, and of more convenient access to those who came in to talk with the person seated there.[2] By which it appears that, though at meals, they did not totally abandon the concern of other affairs. But, when all is said, it is very hard in human actions to give so exact a rule, upon the best grounds of reason, that Fortune will not have a hand in them, and maintain her own right.

The consular place at table the most accessible.

CHAPTER V.

OF CONSCIENCE.

The Sieur de la Brousse my brother, and I, travelling one day together during the time of our civil wars, met a gentleman of good mien. He was of the contrary party to ours, though I did not know so much, for he pretended otherwise; and the mischief is that, in this sort of war, the cards are so shuffled, an enemy not being distinguishable from a friend by any apparent mark, either of language or habit, nourished under the same laws, air, and manners, that it is very hard to avoid disorder and confusion. This made me afraid myself of meeting any of our troops in a place where I was not known, that I might not be in fear to tell my name, and peradventure of something worse; as it has befallen me before, where, by one of these mistakes, I lost both men and horses; and, amongst others, an Italian gentleman, my page, whom I had bred with the greatest care and affection, was miserably killed —in whom a promising youth of great expectation was blasted. But the gentleman that my brother and I met had so strange a fear upon him at the meeting of any horse, or passing by any of the towns belonging to the king, that I at last discovered them to be alarms of conscience, and the poor man seemed to be in such a condition as if through his vizard, and the crosses upon his cassock, one might have penetrated into his bosom, and read the most secret intentions of his heart. So wonderful is the power of conscience, that it makes us betray, accuse, and fight against ourselves; and, for want of other witnesses, to give evidence against ourselves,

> Occultum quatiens animo tortore flagellum.[3]
>
> "Whom conscience, ne'er asleep,
> "Wounds with incessant strokes, not loud, but deep."

This story is in every child's mouth: Bessus the Pæonian, being reproached with wantonness, for pulling down a nest of young sparrows and killing them, replied he had reason so to do, seeing that those little birds never ceased falsely to accuse him of the murder of his father. This parricide had till then been concealed and unknown, but the revenging fury of conscience caused it to be discovered by himself, who was justly to suffer for it.[4] Hesiod corrects the say-

[1] Plutarch, *On the Dæmon of Socrates.*
[2] Plutarch, *Table-Talk.*
[3] Juvenal, xiii. 195.
[4] Plutarch, *On Divine Justice.*

Punishment connate with sin.

ing of Plato, "That punishment closely follows sin;" it being, as he says, born at the same time with it.[1] Whoever expects punishment, already suffers it; whoever has deserved it, expects it.[2] Wickedness contrives torments against itself: *Malum consilium, consultori pessimum*:[3] "Ill designs fall out worse to the contriver:" as the wasp stings and offends another, but most of all itself; for it there loses its sting and its power for ever,

Vitasque in vulnere ponunt.[4]

"And in the wound which they inflict expire."

Cantharides have somewhere about them, by a contrariety of nature, a counterpoison against their poison.[5] In like manner, at the same time that we take delight in vice, there springs in the conscience a displeasure that afflicts us sleeping and waking with many tormenting imaginations:

Quippe ubi se multi, per somnia sæpe loquentes,
Aut morbo delirantes, protraxe ferantur,
Et celata diu in medium peccata dedisse.[6]

"The guilty seldom their own counsel keep,
But oft will blab it ev'n in their sleep;
Or, in a fever raging, will reveal
Crimes which they long had labour'd to conceal."

Apollodorus dreamed that he saw himself flayed by the Scythians, and after boiled in a cauldron, and that his heart muttered these words: "I am the cause of all these mischiefs that have befallen thee."[7] Epicurus said that no hiding hole can conceal the wicked, since they can never assure themselves of being hid, for their consciences discover them to themselves.[8]

Prima est hæc ultio, quod se
Judice nemo nocens absolvitur.[9]

"'Tis the first constant punishment of sin,
That no bad man absolves himself within."

As an ill conscience fills us with fear, so a good one gives us greater confidence and assurance; and I can truly say that I have gone through several hazards with a more steady pace, in consideration of the secret knowledge I had of my own will, and the innocence of my intentions:

Conscia mens ut cuique sua est, ita concipit intra
Pectora pro facto spemque, metumque suo.[10]

"Despotic conscience rules our hopes and fears."

Of this there are a thousand examples; but it will be enough to instance three of one and the same person. Scipio being one day accused before the people of Rome of a heavy crime, instead of excusing himself, or flattering the judges: "It will become you well," said he, "to sit in judgment upon him by whom you have the power to judge all the world."[11] And another time all the answer he gave to several impeachments brought against him by a tribune of the people, instead of making his defence: "Come, citizens,"[12] said he, "let us go render thanks to the gods for the victory they gave me over the Carthaginians on such a day;" and marching himself before them towards the temple, he had presently all the assembly, and his very accuser himself, following at his heels.[12] And Petilius having been set on by Cato to demand of him an account of the money that had passed through his hands in the province of Antioch, Scipio, being come into the senate for that purpose, produced a book from under his robe, in which, he told them, was an exact account of his receipts and disbursements; but being required to deliver it to the secretary to be examined and enrolled, he refused, saying, "He would not do himself so great a disgrace;" and in the presence of the whole senate tore the book with his own hands to pieces.[13] I do not believe that a seared conscience could have counterfeited so great an assurance. "He had naturally too high a spirit, and was accustomed to too high a fortune," says Titus Livius, "to know how to be criminal, and to dispose himself to the meanness of defending his innocency."

The confident innocency of Scipio.

The putting men to the rack is a dangerous invention, and seems to be rather a trial of patience than of truth. Both he who has the fortitude to endure it conceals the truth, and he who has not. For why should pain sooner make me confess what really is, than force me to say what is not? And, on the contrary, if he who is not guilty of what he is accused of has the courage to undergo those torments, why should not he who is guilty have the same, so fair a reward as life being in his prospect? I think the ground of this invention proceeds from the consideration of the force of conscience: for to the guilty it seems to assist the rack to make him confess his fault and to shake his resolution; and on the other side, that it fortifies the innocent against the torture. But when all is done, 'tis in plain truth a trial full of uncertainty and danger. What would not a man say, what would not a man do, to avoid such intolerable torments?

The inconveniences of the rack.

"Etiam innocentes cogit mentiri dolor.[14]

"Pain the most innocent will make to lie."

[1] Plutarch, *On Divine Justice.*
[2] Seneca, *Epist.* 105.
[3] *Apud Aul. Gell.* iv. 5.
[4] Virg. *Georg.* iv. 238.
[5] Plutarch, *on Divine Justice.*
[6] Lucret. v. 1157.
[7] Plutarch, *of the Delay of the Divine Justice*, c. 9. This Apollodorus, who reigned like a true tyrant, was King of Cassandria, in Macedonia.
[8] Seneca, *Epist.* 97.
[9] Juvenal, xiii. 2.
[10] Ovid, *Fast.* i. 485.
[11] Plutarch, *How far a Man may praise Himself.*
[12] Val. Max. iii. 7. 1.
[13] Livy, xxxviii. 54.
[14] Publius Syrus, *Maxime.*

whence it comes to pass that he whom the judge has racked that he may not die innocent is made to die both innocent and racked. A thousand and a thousand have charged their own heads by false confessions, amongst whom I place Philotas, considering the circumstances of the trial Alexander put him upon, and the progress of his torture.[1] "But so it is," say they, "that it is the least evil human weakness could invent:" very inhuman notwithstanding, and to very little purpose, in my opinion."

The use of the rack condemned by several nations, and why.

Many nations, less barbarous in this than the Greeks and Romans who call them so, repute it horrible and cruel to torment and pull a man to pieces for a fault of which they are yet in doubt. How can it help your ignorance? Are not you unjust, that, not to kill him without cause, do worse than kill him? And that this is so, do but observe by how many times he had rather die without reason than undergo this examination, more painful than execution itself; and which often, by its extremity, anticipates execution and dispatches him. I know not where I had this story,[2] but it exactly matches the conscience of our justice in this particular. A country-woman came to a general[3] of very severe discipline, and accused one of his soldiers that he had taken from her children the little food she had left to nourish them withal, the army having consumed all the rest; but of this, proof there was none. The general cautioned the woman to take good heed to what she said, for that she would make herself guilty of a false accusation, and should suffer the punishment due to it if she told a lie; but she persisting, he presently caused the soldier's belly to be ripped up, to clear the truth of the fact, and the woman was found to be in the right. An instructive sentence.

CHAPTER VI.

USE MAKES PERFECT.

Reason and instruction, without practice, cannot make us virtuous.

'Tis not to be expected that reasoning and instruction, though we never so voluntarily surrender our belief to them, should be powerful enough to lead us on so far as to action, if we do not over and above exercise and form the soul by experience to the course for which we design it: it will otherwise doubtless find itself at a loss when it comes to the pinch of the business. This is the reason why those amongst the philosophers who were ambitious to attain to a greater excellence were not contented to await the severities of fortune in their retirement and repose, lest she should surprise them raw and unexpert in the combat; but sallied out to meet her, and purposely threw themselves into the proof of difficulties. Some of whom abandoned riches to exercise themselves in a voluntary poverty; others have sought out labour, and an austerity of life, to inure themselves to hardships and inconveniences; others have deprived themselves of their dearest members, as of their eyes and instruments of generation, lest their too delightful and effeminate service should soften and relax the stability of their souls.

But in dying, which is the greatest work we have to do, practice can give us no assistance. A man may by habit fortify himself against pain, shame, poverty, and such like misfortunes; but as to death, we can experience it but once, and are all apprentices when we come to it.

There have anciently been men such excellent managers of their time that they have tried even in death itself to relish and taste it, and who have bent their utmost faculties of mind to discover what this passage is. But they are none of them come back to give an account of it:

Nemo expergitus extat,
Frigida quem semel est vitai pausa sequuta,[4]

"No person e'er again awak'd to breath
Who once was clasp'd in the cold arms of death."

A memorable instance of a Roman, who, when dying, observed the effect of death.

Canius Julius, a noble Roman, of singular firmness and virtue, having been condemned to die by that rascal Caligula, besides many admirable testimonies that he gave of his resolution, as he was just going to receive the stroke of the executioner was asked by a philosopher, a friend of his,—"Well, Canius, whereabout is your soul now? What is she doing?—what are you thinking of?" "I was thinking," replied he, "to keep myself ready, and the faculties of my mind concentrated and fixed, to try if in this short and quick instant of death I could perceive the motion of the soul when she parts from the body, and whether she has any sense of the separation, that I may hereafter come again, if I can, to acquaint my friends with it."[5] This man philosophizes not unto death only, but in death itself. What a strange assurance was this, what loftiness of courage, to desire his death should be a lesson to him, and to have leisure to think of other things in so great an affair.

Jus hoc animi morientis habebat.[6]

"This mast'ry of his mind he, dying, had."

[1] Quint. Curtius, vi. 7.
[2] It is in Froissart.
[3] Bajazet the First, whom Froissart calls Amorabaquin,—a name given to this prince because he was the son of Amorath.

[4] Lucret. iii. 942.
[5] Seneca, *de Tranquillitate*.
[6] Luc. viii 636.

How a man may, in some measure, make death familiar to him.

And yet I fancy there is some way of making it familiar to us, and in some sort of making trial what it is. We may gain experience of it, if not entire and perfect, yet such, at least, as shall not be totally useless to us; and that may render us more assured. If we cannot undertake it, we may approach it and view it; and if we do not advance so far as to the fort, we may at least discover and make ourselves perfect in the avenues.

Sleep the image of death.

It is not without reason that we are taught to consider sleep as a resemblance of death: with how great facility do we pass from waking to sleeping, and with how little concern do we lose the knowledge of light and of ourselves! Perhaps the faculty of sleeping would seem useless and contrary to nature, since it deprives us of all action and sense, were it not that by it nature instructs us that she has equally made us to die as to live, and from life presents us the eternal estate she reserves for us after it, to accustom us to it and to take from us the fear of it. But such as have by some violent accident fallen into a swoon, and in it have lost all sense, these, methinks, have been very near seeing the true and natural face of death; for as to the moment of the passage, it is not to be feared that it brings with it any pain or displeasure, forasmuch as we can have no feeling without leisure: our sufferings require time, which in death is so short and precipitous that it must necessarily be insensible. The approaches are what we have to fear, and these may fall within the limits of experience.

Many things seem greater by imagination than they are in effect. I have passed a good part of my age in a perfect and entire health; I say not only entire, but moreover sprightly and wanton. This state, so full of verdure, jollity, and vigour, made the consideration of sickness so horrible to me that, when I came to experience it, I found the attacks faint and easy, in comparison of what I had feared. Of this I have daily experience: if I am under the shelter of a warm room, in a stormy and tempestuous night, I wonder how people can live abroad, and am afflicted for those who are out in the field: if I am there myself, I do not wish to be anywhere else. This one thing of being always shut up in a chamber I fancied insupportable: but I was presently inured to be so imprisoned a week, nay, a month together, weak and ill; and have found that in the time of my health I did much more pity the sick than I think myself to be pitied when I am so, and that the force of my imagination enhances near one half of the essence and reality of the thing. I hope that when I come to die I shall find the same, and that I shall not find it worth the pains I take, so much preparation and so much assistance as I call in to undergo the stroke. But, at all events, we cannot give ourselves too much advantage.

The story of an accident that happened to Montaigne, which cast him into a long swoon.

In the time of our third or second troubles (I do not well remember which), going one day abroad to take the air, about a league from my own house, which is seated in the very centre of the scene of all the bustle and mischief of the civil wars of France, thinking myself in all security and so near to my retreat that I stood in need of no better equipage, I had taken a horse that went very easy in his pace, but was not very strong. Being upon my return home, a sudden occasion falling out to make use of this horse in a kind of service that he was not very well used to, one of my people, a lusty, proper fellow, mounted upon a strong German horse, that had a very ill mouth, but was otherwise vigorous and unfoiled, to play a bravado and get a-head of his fellows, comes thundering full speed in the very track where I was, rushing like a Colossus upon the little man and the little horse, with such a career of strength and weight that he turned us both over and over, topsy turvy, with our heels in the air: so that there lay the horse, overthrown and stunned by the fall, and I ten or twelve paces from him, stretched out at length, with my face all battered and bruised, my sword, which I had in my hand, above ten paces beyond me, and my belt broken all to pieces, without any more motion or sense than a stock. 'Twas the only swoon I was ever in till that hour in my life. Those who were with me, after having used all the means they could to bring me to myself, concluding me dead, took me up in their arms and carried me with very much difficulty home to my house, which was about half a French league thence. On the way, and after having for more than two long hours been given over for a dead man, I began to move and fetch my breath, for so great abundance of blood was fallen into my stomach that nature had need to rouse her forces to discharge it. They then raised me upon my feet, where I threw off a great quantity of pure blood, which I did also several other times on the way. This gave me so much ease that I began to recover a little life, but slowly, and by so small advances that my first sensations were much more like the approaches of death than life:

> Perchè, dubbiosa ancor del suo ritorno,
> Non s'assicura attonita la mente.[1]
>
> "Because the soul her mansion half had quit,
> And was not sure of her return to it."

The remembrance of this accident, which is very well imprinted in my memory, so naturally representing to me the image and idea of death, has in some sort reconciled me to it. When I first began to open my eyes after my trance, it was with so perplexed, so weak and dead a sight, that I could yet distinguish nothing, and could only discern the light:

[1] Tasso, *La Gerusalemme*, xii. 74.

Come quel ch'or apre, or chiude
Gli occhi, mezzo tra'l sonno è l' esser desto.[1]

"As people in the morning when they rise,
'Twixt sleep and wake, open and shut their eyes."

As to the functions of the soul, they advanced with the same pace and measure with those of the body. I saw myself all bloody, for my doublet was stained all over with the blood I had vomited. The first thought that came into my mind was that I had a cross-bow shot in my head; indeed at the same time there were several of these discharged round about us. Methought my life but just hung upon my lips, and I shut my eyes to help, methought, to thrust it out, and took a pleasure in languishing and letting myself go. It was an imagination that only superficially floated upon my soul, as tender and weak as all the rest; but really not only exempt from pain, but mixed with that sweetness and pleasure that people are sensible of when they are falling into a slumber.

Whether swoonings in the agonies of death are very painful.

I believe it is the very same condition those people are in whom we see swoon with weakness, in the agony of death, and I am of opinion that we pity them without cause, supposing them agitated with grievous dolours, or that their souls suffer under painful thoughts. It has ever been my belief, contrary to the opinion of many, and even of Stephen Boëtius, that those whom we see so subdued and stupified at the approach of their end, or depressed with the length of the disease, or by accident of an apoplexy or falling sickness,—

Vi morbi sæpe coactus
Ante oculos aliquis nostros, ut fulminis ictu,
Concidit, et spumas agit; ingemit, et remit artus;
Desipit, extentat nervos, torquetur, anhelat,
Inconstanter et in jactando membra fatigat;[2]

"As if by thunder struck, oft have we known
The dire disease's victims fall and groan,
Foam, tremble, writhe, breathe short, until at length
In various strugglings they exhaust their strength;"

or hurt in the head, whom we hear to mutter, and by fits to give grievous groans; though we gather thence some signs by which it seems as if they had some remains of sense and knowledge, I have always believed, I say, both the body and the soul benumbed and asleep;

Vivit, et est vitæ nescius ipse suæ;[3]

"He lives, but knows it not;"

and I cannot believe that in so great a stupefaction of the members, and so great a defection of the senses, the soul can maintain any force within to take cognisance of herself, or look into her own condition, and that therefore they had no reason or reflections to torment them, or make them consider and be sensible of the misery of their condition, and that consequently were not much to be pitied.

I can, for my part, think of no state so insupportable and dreadful as to have the soul vividly alive and afflicted, without means to declare itself; as I should say of such who are sent to execution, with their tongues first cut out (were it not that, in this kind of dying, the most silent seems to me the most graceful, if accompanied with a grave and firm countenance), or of those miserable prisoners who fall into the hands of the base, bloody soldiers of this age, by whom they are tormented with all sorts of inhuman usage to compel them to some excessive and impossible ransom, kept in the mean time in such condition and place, where they have no means of expressing or signifying their mind and misery to such as they may expect should relieve them. The poets have feigned some gods who favour the deliverance of such as suffer under a languishing death:

Hunc ego Diti
Sacrum jussa fero, teque isto corpore solvo.[4]

"I, by command, offer to Pluto this,
And from that body do thy soul dismiss."

And the unconnected words, and the short and irregular answers one gets from them sometimes, by bawling and keeping a clutter about them; or the motions which seem to yield some consent to what we would have them do, are no testimony nevertheless that they live an entire life at least. It is thus that in the yawning of sleep, before it has fully possessed us, we perceive, as in a dream, what is done about us, and follow the last things that are said, with a perplexed and uncertain hearing, which seems but to touch upon the borders of the soul, and make answers to the last words that were spoken to us, which have more in them of chance than sense.

Now, seeing I have, in effect, tried it, I make no doubt but I have hitherto made a right judgment of it. For first, being quite in a swoon, I laboured to tear open my doublet with my hands, for I was without a weapon, and yet I felt nothing in my imagination that hurt me; for we have many motions in us that do not proceed from our direction;

Semianimesque micant digiti, ferrumque retractant.[5]

"And half-dead fingers grope about and feel,
To grasp again the late abandoned steel."

So falling people extend their arms before them by a natural impulse which prompts them to offices and motions, without any commission from us.

Falciferos memorant currus abscindere membra . . .
Ut tremere in terra videatur ab artubus, id quod
Decidit abscisum; cum mens tamen atque hominis vis,
Mobilitate mali, non quit sentire dolorem.[6]

"So chariots armed with keen scythes around,
When fiercely driven, deal the desp'rate wound;
And yet the wounded man, so quick 's the blow,
Is scarce disturb'd, scarce seems to feel or know
His wound."

1 Tasso, *La Gerusalemme*, viii. 26.
2 Lucret. iii. 485.
3 *Ovid, Trist.* i. 3. 12.
4 *Æneid*, iv. 702.
5 *Id.* x. 396.
6 Lucret. iii. 642.

My stomach was oppressed with the coagulated blood, and my hands moved to that part by their own voluntary motion, as they frequently do to the part that itches, without being directed by our will. There are several animals, and even men, in whom one may perceive the muscles to stir and tremble after they are dead. Every one by experience knows that there are some members which grow stiff, and flag, often without his leave. Now these passions which only touch the outward bark of us, as a man may say, cannot be said to be ours; to make them so there must be a concurrence of the whole man; and the pains which are felt by the hand or the foot, while we are sleeping, are none of ours.

As I drew near my own house, where the alarm of my fall was already got before me, and my family ran to me with the clamour usual in such cases, I did not only make some little answer to the questions that were asked me, but they moreover tell me that I had so much sense about me as to order them to give a horse to my wife, who, I saw, was toiling and labouring along the road, which was a steep and uneasy one. This consideration should seem to proceed from a soul that retained its function, but it was not so with me. I knew not what I said or did; they were nothing but idle thoughts in the clouds that were stirred up by the senses of the eyes and ears, and proceeded not from me. I knew not any the more whence I came, or whither I was going, neither was I capable to weigh and consider what was said to me. These were light effects that the senses produced of themselves, as of custom; what the soul contributed was in a dream, and lightly touched, as it were, merely licked and bedewed by the soft impression of the senses. Meantime my condition was, in truth, very easy and quiet; I had no affliction upon me, either for others or myself. It was an extreme drooping and weakness, without any manner of pain. I saw my own house, but knew it not. When they had put me to bed, I found an inexpressible sweetness in that repose; for I had been wretchedly tugged and jolted about by those poor people who had taken the pains to carry me upon their arms a very great, and a very ill way, and had, in doing so, all quite tired out themselves twice or thrice, one after another. They offered me all sorts of remedies, but I would take none, certainly believing that I was mortally wounded in the head. And in earnest, it had been a very happy death; for the weakness of my understanding deprived me of the faculty of discerning, and that of my body from the sense of feeling. I was suffering myself to glide away so sweetly, and after so soft and easy a manner, that I scarce find any other action less troublesome than that was. When I came again to myself, and to re-assume my faculties,

Ut tandem sensus convaluere mei,[1]

"As my lost senses did again return,"

which was two or three hours after, I felt myself on a sudden involved in a terrible pain, having my limbs battered and knocked to pieces with my fall, and was so exceedingly ill for two or three nights after that, I thought once more I was dying, but a more painful death, and to this hour am sensible of the bruises of that shock. I will not here omit that the last thing I could make them beat into my head was the memory of the accident; and I made it be over and over again repeated to me whither I was going, whence I was coming, and at what time of the day this mischance befel me, before I could comprehend it. As to the manner of my fall, that was concealed from me in favour to him who had been the occasion, and some other account was invented. But a long time after, and the very next day, when my memory began to return and represent to me the state wherein I was at the instant that I perceived this horse coming full drive upon me (for I had seen him at my heels, and gave myself for gone; but this thought had been so sudden that fear had no leisure to introduce itself), it seemed to me like a flash of lightning that had pierced through my soul, and that was coming from the other world.

This long story of so light a matter would appear vain enough, were it not for the knowledge I have gained by it for my own use; for I really find that, to get acquainted with death, you have but nearly to approach it. "Every one," as Pliny says,[2] "is a good doctor to himself, provided he be capable of looking closely into himself." This is not my doctrine, 'tis my study; it is not the lesson of another, but my own, and yet, if I communicate it, it ought not to be ill taken. That which is of use to me may also, perhaps, be useful to another. As to the rest, I spoil nothing, I make use of nothing but my own; and, if I play the fool, 'tis at my own expense, and nobody else is concerned in it: for 'tis a folly that will die with me, and that no one is to inherit. We hear of but two or three of the ancients who have beaten this road, and yet we cannot say if it be after this manner, knowing no more of them but their names. No one since has followed the track: 'tis a ticklish subject, and more nice than it seems, to follow a pace so extravagant and uncertain as that of the soul: to penetrate the dark profundities of her intricate internal windings, to choose and lay hold of so many little *nimble motions*; it is a new and extraordinary undertaking, which withdraws us from the common and most recommended employments of the world. 'Tis now many years since that my thoughts have had

Man is a good lesson to himself.

[1] Ovid, *Trist.* i. 3. 14.

[2] *Nat. Hist.* xxii. 24.

no other aim and object than myself, that I have only pried into and studied myself: and if I do now and then study any other thing, 'tis all of a sudden, in order to apply it to myself, or rather, in myself. And I do not think it a fault if, as others do by much less profitable sciences, I communicate what I have learnt in this matter; though I am not very well pleased with what progress I have made in it. There is no description so difficult, nor doubtless of so great utility, as that of one's-self. And withal a man must curl his hair, order his apparel, and adjust himself, to appear in public. Now, I am perpetually setting off myself, for I am eternally upon my own description. Custom has made all speaking of a man's self vicious, and positively forbids it, in hatred to the vanity that seems inseparably joined with the testimony men give of themselves. Because the child wants to blow his nose, they cut it off:

Whether it is vanity for a man to speak sincerely of himself.

In vitium ducit culpæ fuga.[1]

"But oft our greatest errors take their rise
From our best views."

I find more evil than good in this remedy. But though it should be true that to entertain people with discourses of ourselves must of necessity be a piece of presumption, yet I ought not, according to my general plan, to forbear an action that publishes this infirmity, since it is in me; nor conceal a fault which I not only practise but profess. Nevertheless, to speak my mind freely of the matter, I think the custom of condemning wine, because some people will be drunk, is to be condemned. A man cannot abuse anything but what is good in itself; and I believe that this rule has only regard to the popular vice: it is a bridle for calves, by which neither saints, whom we hear speak so highly of themselves, nor the philosophers, nor the divines, will be curbed: neither will I, who am as little the one as the other. If these folks do not expressly name themselves, yet they take good care, whenever an occasion offers, to exhibit themselves so manifestly before you that there is no mistaking them. Of what does Socrates treat more largely than of himself? To what does he more direct and address the discourses of his disciples than to speak of themselves; not of the lesson in their book, but of the essence and motion of their souls? We confess ourselves religiously to God and our confessor, as our neighbours[2] do to all the people. But it may be said,—"there we speak *nothing* but accusation against ourselves." Why then we say all, for our very virtue itself is faulty and repentable. My trade and my art is to live. He that forbids me to speak according to my own sense, experience, and practice, may as well enjoin an architect not to speak of building according to his own knowledge, but according to that of his neighbour; according to the knowledge of another, and not according to his own. If it be vain-glory for a man to publish his own virtues, why does not Cicero prefer the eloquence of Hortensius, and Hortensius that of Cicero? Perhaps they mean that I should give testimony of myself by works and effects, not barely by words: I chiefly paint my thoughts, an inform subject, and incapable of operative production. 'Tis all that I can do to couch it in this airy body of the voice. The wisest and devoutest men have lived in the greatest care to avoid all discovery of works: effects would speak more of fortune than of me. They manifest their own office, and not mine; but uncertainly, and by conjecture. They are but patterns of some one particular virtue. I expose myself entire: 'tis an anatomy where, at one view, the veins, muscles, and tendons are apparent, each of them in its proper place. The effect of coughing produced one part, the effect of paleness or heart-beating another, but this doubtfully. I do not write my acts, but myself and my essence.

I am of opinion that a man must be very prudent in valuing himself, and equally conscientious to give a true report, be it better or worse, indifferently. If I thought myself perfectly good and wise, I would sound it forth to good purpose. To speak less of a man's-self than what one really is, is folly, not modesty; and to take that for current pay which is under a man's value is pusillanimity and cowardice, according to Aristotle:[3] no virtue assists itself with falsehood: truth is never the matter for error: to speak more of one's-self than is really true is not always presumption, 'tis moreover very often folly: to be immeasurably pleased with what one is, and to fall into an indiscreet self-love, is the substance of this vice. The best remedy for it is to do quite contrary to what these people direct, who, in forbidding us to speak of ourselves, do consequently at the same time interdict thinking of ourselves. Pride dwells in the thought; the tongue can have but very little share in it.

It is a commendable thing for a man to set a just value upon himself.

They fancy that to think of one's-self is to be delighted with one's-self; that to frequent and to converse with one's-self is to be over-indulgent. But this excess arises only in those who take but a superficial view of themselves, and dedicate their main inspection to their affairs; that call meditation raving and idleness, and furnishing and fitting ourselves up building castles in the air; looking upon themselves as a third person only, and a stranger. If any one is charmed with his own knowledge, whilst he looks only on those below him, let him but turn his eye upward toward past ages and his pride will be abated, when he shall there find so many thousand wits that trample him under foot. If he enter into a flattering vanity of his

[1] Horace, *Art. Poet.* 31. [2] The Protestants. [3] *Ethics*, iv. 7.

personal valour, let him but recollect the lives of Scipio, Epaminondas, so many armies and nations that leave him so far behind, and he will be cured of his self-opinion. No particular quality can make any man proud, that will at the same time put the so many weak and imperfect ones he has in him in the other scale, and the nothingness of human condition to balance the weight. Because Socrates had alone digested to purpose the precept of his God, "To know himself;" and by that study was arrived to the perfection of setting himself at nought, he only was reputed worthy the title of a sage. Whoever shall so know himself, let him boldly speak out and make himself known.

Why Socrates was reckoned the only wise man.

CHAPTER VII.

OF RECOMPENSES OF HONOUR.

THOSE who wrote the life of Augustus Cæsar[1] observe this in his military discipline—that he was wonderfully liberal of gifts to men of merit; but that as to the pure recompenses of honour he was altogether as sparing: he himself had been gratified by his uncle with all the military recompenses before he had ever been in the field. It was a pretty invention, and received into most governments of the world, to institute certain vain and in themselves valueless distinctions, to honour and recompense valour or virtue: such as crowns of laurel, oak, and myrtle; the particular fashion of some garment; the privilege to ride in a coach in the city, or to have a torch by night; some peculiar place assigned in public assemblies; the prerogative of certain additional names and titles; certain distinctions in their bearing of coats of arms, and the like: the use of which, according to the several humours of nations, has been variously received, and does yet continue.

Honorary rewards ought to be dispensed with very great discretion.

We in France, as also several of our neighbours, have the orders of knighthood, that were instituted only for this end. And it is, indeed, a very good and profitable custom to find out an acknowledgment for the worth of excellent and extraordinary men; and to satisfy their ambition with rewards that are not at all costly either to prince or people. And what has been always found both by ancient experience, and which we ourselves may also have observed in our own times, that men of quality have ever been more jealous of such recompenses than of those wherein there was gain and profit, is not without very good ground and reason. If with reward, which ought to be simply a recompense of honour, they should mix other emoluments, and add riches, this mixture, instead of procuring an increase of esteem, would vilify and debase it. The order of St. Michael,[2] which has been so long in repute amongst us, had no greater commodity than that it had no communication with any other; which produced this effect, that formerly there was no office or title whatever to which the gentry pretended with so great a desire and affection as they did to this order; nor quality that carried with it more respect and grandeur: virtue more willingly embracing, and with greater ambition aspiring to a recompense truly her own, and rather honourable than beneficial. For, in truth, the other rewards have not so great a dignity in them, by reason they are laid out upon all sorts of occasions. With money a man pays the wages of a servant, the diligence of a courier, dancing, vaulting, speaking, and the vilest offices we receive; nay, we reward vice with it, too, as flattery, treachery, and pimping: and therefore 'tis no wonder if virtue less desires, and less willingly receives, this common sort of payment, than that which is proper and peculiar to her, as being truly generous and noble. Augustus was right in being a better husband and more sparing of this than the other, by how much honour is a privilege that extracts its principal essence from its rarity, and virtue the same.

Orders of knighthood instituted to reward military virtue.

The Order of St. Michael.

Cui malus est nemo, quis bonus esse potest?[3]

"To whom none seemeth bad, who good can seem?"

We do not intend it for a commendation when we say that such a one is careful in the bringing up of his children, by reason it is a common act, how just and well done soever, no more than we commend a great tree where the whole forest is the same. I do not think that any citizen of Sparta valued himself upon his valour, it being the universal virtue of the whole nation, and as little prided himself upon his fidelity and contempt of riches. There is no recompense to virtue, how great soever, that is once become a general custom; and I know not withal whether we can ever call it great, being common.

Valour of the citizens of Sparta.

Seeing then that these rewards of honour have no other value and estimation but only this, that few people enjoy them, 'tis but to be liberal of them to bring them down to nothing. And though there should be more men found than in former times worthy of our order,[4] the value of it, nevertheless, ought not to be abated, nor the honour made cheap: and it may easily happen that more may merit it now than formerly; for there is no virtue that so easily diffuses itself as that of military valour. There is another true, perfect, and philosophical, of

[1] Suetonius, *in vitâ*.

[2] Instituted by an ordonnance of Louis XI. at Amboise, 1st August, 1469.

[3] Martial, xii. 82.

[4] That of St. Michael.

which I do not speak (and only make use of the word in the common acceptation), much greater than this, and more full, which is a strength and assurance of soul, despising equally all sorts of adverse accidents, equable, uniform, and constant, of which ours is but a little ray. Use, bringing up, example and custom, can do all in all in the establishment of that which I am speaking of, and with great facility render it common, as by the experience of our civil war is manifest enough; and whoever could at this instant unite us all, Catholics and Hugonots, into one body, and set us upon some common enterprise, we should make our ancient military reputation flourish again. It is most certain that in times past the recompense of this order had not only a regard to valour, but had a farther prospect. It never was the reward of a valiant soldier, but of a great captain: the science of obeying was not reputed worthy of so honourable a guerdon. There was therein a more universal military expertness required, which comprehended the most and the greatest qualities of a military man: *Neque enim eædem militares et imperatoriæ artes sunt* "For the qualities of a soldier and of a general are not the same;" and, besides, a man was to be of a birth and rank suitable to such a dignity. But I say, though more men should be worthy now than formerly, yet ought it not to be more liberally distributed; and it were better to fall short and not give it to all to whom it may be due, than for ever to lose, as we have lately done, the fruit of so useful an invention. No man of spirit will vouchsafe to advantage himself with what is in common with many; and such of the present time as have least merited this recompense make the greater show of disclaiming it, intending thereby to be ranked with those to whom so much wrong has been done, by the unworthy conferring and debasing the distinction which was their particular right.

It is difficult to bring a new order of knighthood into credit.

Now to expect, in obliterating and abolishing this, suddenly to create and bring into credit a like institution, is not a proper attempt for so licentious and sick a time as this in which we now are; and it will fall out that the last[1] will, from its birth, incur the same inconveniences that have ruined the other. The rules for the dispensing of this new order had need to be extremely clipped, and bound under great restrictions, to give it authority; and this tumultuous season is incapable of such a curb. Besides that before this can be brought into reputation 'tis necessary that the memory of the first, and the contempt into which it is fallen, should be totally buried in oblivion.

This place might naturally enough admit of some discourse upon the consideration of valour, and the difference of this virtue from others: but Plutarch having so often handled this subject, I should give myself an unnecessary trouble to repeat what he has said. But this, nevertheless, is worth considering, that our nation places valour (*vaillance*) in the highest degree of virtue, as the very word itself shows, being derived from value (*valeur*); and that, according to our custom, when we mean a worthy man, or a man of value (*homme vaillant*), it is only in our court style to say a valiant man, after the Roman way; for the general appellation of virtue with them takes etymology from force.[2] The proper, sole, and essential occupation of the French nobility and gentry is the practice of arms. It is likely that the first virtue which discovered itself amongst men, and that has given some advantage over others, was this, by which the strongest and most valiant have mastered the weaker, and acbuired a particular rank and reputation, whence this honour and name remained to them. Or else that these nations, being very warlike, have given the pre-eminence to that of the virtues which was most familiar to them, and which they thought of the most worthy character. Just as our passion, and the feverish solicitude we have of the chastity of women makes the saying a good woman, a woman of worth, a woman of honour and virtue, to signify no more than a chaste woman; as if to oblige her to that one duty, we were indifferent to all the rest; and gave them the reins to all other faults whatever, to compound for that one of incontinence.

Valour the chief virtue among the French.

CHAPTER VIII.

OF THE AFFECTION OF FATHERS TO THEIR CHILDREN.

TO MADAME D'ESTISSAC.[3]

MADAM, if the strangeness and novelty of my subject, which generally give value to things, do not save me, I shall never come off with honour from this foolish attempt: but 'tis so fantastic, and carries a face so unlike the common custom, that the oddness of it may perhaps make it pass. 'Tis a melancholic humour, and consequently a humour very much opposed to my natural complexion, engendered by the pensiveness of the solitude into which for some years past I have retired myself, that first put into my head this idle fancy of writing: wherein, finding myself totally unprovided and empty of other matters, I presented myself to myself for argument and subject. 'Tis the

[1] The order of *Saint Esprit* (the Holy Ghost), instituted by Henry III., in 1578.

[2] *Virtus, vis.* "Le mot de *vertu* vient de force; la force est la base de toute vertu; la vertu n'appartient qu'à un être foible par sa nature, et fort par sa volonte."—Rousseau, *Emile*, v.

[3] The son of this lady accompanied Montaigne in his journey to Rome.

only book in the world of its kind, and of a wild and extravagant design. Indeed, there is nothing worth remark but the extravagancy in this affair: for in a subject so vain and frivolous the best workman in the world could not have given it a form fit to recommend it to any manner of esteem. Now, madam, being to draw my own picture to the life, I should have omitted an important feature, had I not represented in it the honour I have ever paid to your merits; and I have chosen to say this expressly at the head of this chapter, by reason that, among your other excellent qualities, the love you have shown to your children holds one of the chief places. Whoever shall know at what age Monsieur d' Estissac, your husband, left you a widow, the great and honourable matches have since been offered to you, as many and as great as to any lady of your condition in France; the firmness and steadiness wherewith you have sustained for so many years, through so many sharp difficulties, the charge and conduct of their affairs, which have kept you in agitation in every corner of the kingdom, and which yet hold you, as it were, besieged, and the happy direction you have given all these, either by your prudence or good fortune, will easily conclude with me that we have not a more striking example than yours of maternal affection in our times.

I praise God, madam, that it has been so well employed; for the great hopes that Monsieur d' Estissac, your son, gives of himself, are sufficient assurances that, when he comes to age, you will reap from him all the obedience and gratitude of a very good man. But forasmuch as by reason of his tender years he has not been capable of taking notice of those numberless offices of kindness which he has received from you, I will take care, if these papers ever fall into his hands, when I shall neither have mouth nor speech left to deliver it to him, that he shall receive from me this testimony, in all truth, which shall be more effectually manifested to him by their own effects, and by which he will see and feel that there is not a gentleman in France who stands more indebted to a mother's care than he does; and that he cannot for the future give a better nor more certain proof of his own worth and virtue, than by acknowledging you for that excellent mother you are.

The affection of parents toward their children greater than that of children towards them, and why.

If there be any law truly natural, that is to say, any instinct that is seen universally, and perpetually imprinted in both beasts and men (which is not without controversy), I can say that, in my opinion, next to the care every animal has of his own preservation, and to avoid that which may hurt him, the affection that the begetter bears to his offspring holds the second place in rank. And seeing that nature seems to have recommended it to us, having regard to the extension and progression of the successive pieces of this machine of hers; 'tis no wonder that, on the contrary, that of children towards their parents is not so great. To which we may add this other Aristotelian consideration, that he who confers a benefit on any one loves him better than he is beloved by him again; and that he to whom it is due loves better than him from whom it is due:[1] and that every artificer is fonder of his work than, if that work had sense, it would be of the artificer; by reason that it is dear to us to be, and to be consists in moving and action; whereby every one has, in some sort, a being in his work. Whoever confers a benefit, exercises a fine and honest action; he who receives it, exercises the *utile* only. Now the *utile* is much less amiable than the *honestum*: the *honestum* is stable and permanent, supplying him who has done it with a continual gratification. The *utile* loses itself, easily slides away, and the memory of it is neither so fresh nor so pleasing. Those things are dearest to us that have cost us most; and giving is more chargeable than receiving.

To what end men are created capable of reasoning.

Since it has pleased God to endue us with some capacity of weighing and considering things, to the end we may not, like brutes, be servilely subjected and enslaved by the laws common to both, but that we should by judgment, and a voluntary liberty, apply ourselves to them; we ought, indeed, sometimes to yield to the simple authority of nature, but not suffer ourselves to be tyrannically hurried away, and transported by her; reason alone should have the conduct of our inclinations. I, for my part, have a strange distaste to those inclinations that are started in us, without the mediation and direction of the judgment; as, upon the subject I am speaking of, I cannot entertain that passion of dandling and caressing an infant scarcely born, having, as yet, neither motion of soul, nor shape of body distinguishable, by which they can render themselves loveable; and have not willingly suffered them to be nursed near me. A true and well-regulated affection ought to spring up, and increase with the knowledge they give us of themselves, and then, if they are worthy of it, natural propension going hand-in-hand with reason, to cherish them with a truly paternal love; and to judge and discern also if they be otherwise, still submitting ourselves to reason, notwithstanding the force of nature. It is often quite the reverse; and most commonly we find ourselves more taken with the first trotting about, and little ways and plays of our children, than we are afterwards with their formed actions; as if we had loved them for our sport, like monkeys, and not as men. And some there are who are very liberal in buying them playthings when they are children, who are very close-handed for the least necessary expense when they grow up. Nay, to such

What ought to be the love of parents to their children.

[1] Aristotle, *Ethics*, ix. 7.

degree that it looks as if the jealousy of seeing them appear in, and enjoy the world, when we are about to leave it, renders us more niggardly and stingy towards them: it vexes us that they tread upon our heels, as if to solicit us to go out; but if this be to be feared, since the order of things will have it so, that they cannot, to speak the truth, be or live but at the expense of our being and life, we should never meddle with getting children.

For my part, I think it cruelty and injustice not to receive them into the share and society of our goods, and not to make them partakers in the intelligence of our domestic affairs when they are capable, and not to lessen and contract our own expenses, to make the more room for theirs, seeing we begat them to that effect. 'Tis unjust that an old fellow, deaf, lame, and half-dead, should alone, in a corner of the chimney, enjoy the goods that were sufficient for the maintenance and advancement of many children, and suffer them in the mean time to lose their best years for want of means to put themselves forward in the public service, and the knowledge of men. A man by this means drives them to desperate courses, and to seek out by any means, how unjust or dishonourable soever, to provide for their own support: as I have, in my time, seen several young men of good birth so addicted to stealing that no correction could cure them of it. I know one of a very good family, to whom, at the request of a brother of his, a very honest and brave gentleman, I once spoke on this account; who made answer, and confessed to me roundly that he had been put upon this dirty practice by the severity and avarice of his father; but that he was now so accustomed to it he could not leave it off. At this very time he had been entrapped stealing a lady's rings, being come into her chamber as she was dressing, with several others. He put me in mind of a story I had heard of another gentleman so perfect and accomplished in this genteel trade in his youth that, after he came to his estate, and resolved to give it over, could not hold his hands, nevertheless, if he passed by a shop where he saw anything he liked, from catching it up, though it put him to the shame of sending afterwards to pay for it. And I have myself seen several so habituated to this laudable quality that even amongst their comrades they could not forbear filching, though with intent to restore what they had taken. I am a Gascon, and yet there is no vice I so little understand as that; I hate it even something more by disposition than I condemn it by my reason: I do not so much as desire any thing of another man's. This province of *ours* is, in truth, a little more suspected than the other parts of the kingdom; and yet we have often seen, in our times, men of good families of other provinces, in the hands of justice, convicted of several abominable thefts. I fear this offence is, in some sort, to be attributed to the forementioned vice of the fathers.

Young men given to filching.

Gascons generally addicted to stealing.

And if a man should tell me, as a lord of very good understanding once did, "That he hoarded up wealth, not to extract any other fruit and use from his parsimony, but to make himself honoured and sought after by his own relations; and that, age having deprived him of all other powers, it was the only remaining remedy to maintain his authority in his family, and to keep *him from being neglected* and despised by all the world," (and, in truth, not only old age, but all other imbecility, according to *Aristotle*,[1] is the promoter of avarice) this is something, but it is physic for a disease that a man should prevent altogether. A father is very miserable that has no other hold of his children's affections than the need they have of his assistance, if that can be called affection; he must render himself worthy to be respected by his virtue and wisdom, and beloved by his bounty and the sweetness of his manners. Even the very ashes of a rich matter have their value, and we generally, by custom, have the bones and relics of worthy men in regard and reverence. No old age can be so ruinous and offensive in a man who has passed his life in honour, but it must be very valuable, especially to his children; the soul of which must have trained up to their duty by reason, not by necessity and the need they have of him, nor by roughness and force:

The means by which a father should procure the respect of his children.

> Et errat longe mea quidem sententia,
> Qui imperium credat esse gravius, aut stabilius,
> Vi quod fit, quam illud, quod amicitia adjungitur.[2]
>
> "And he extremely differs from my sense,
> Who thinks the pow'r obtain'd by violence
> Can ever prove more solid and secure
> Than that which friendship's softer means procure."

I condemn all violence in the education of a gentle soul that is designed for honour and liberty. There is, I know not what of servile in rigour and restraint; and I am of opinion that what is not to be done by reason, prudence and address, is never to be effected by force. I myself was brought up after that manner, and they tell me that in all my first age, I never felt the rod but twice, and then very slightly. I have practised the same method with my children, who all of them died at nurse, except Leonora,[3] my only daughter, who escaped that misfortune, and has arrived to the age of six years and upward, without other correction for her childish faults (her mother's indulgence easily concurring) than words only,

Violence in the education of children condemned.

[1] *Ethics*, iv. 3.
[2] Terence, *Adelph.* i. 1. 40.

[3] Montaigne speaks again of his daughter in *Book* iii. c. 5. She was afterwards married to the Viscount de Gamaches.

and those very gentle; and, though my expectation should be frustrated, there are other causes enough to lay the fault on, without blaming my discipline, which I know to be natural and just. I should in this have been even more scrupulous towards males, as born to less subjection, and more free; I should have loved to swell their hearts with ingenuousness and freedom. I have never observed other effects of whipping unless to render children more cowardly or more wilful and obstinate.

The true way for parents to gain the love of their children.

Do we desire to be beloved of our children? would we remove from them all occasion of wishing our death (though no occasion of so horrid a wish can either be just or excusable, *Nullum scelus rationem habet:* "No crime can have a reason")? Let us reasonably accommodate their lives with what is in our power. In order to this, we should not marry so young that our age shall in a manner be confounded with theirs; for this inconvenience plunges us into many very great difficulties; I speak more especially of the gentry who are of a condition wherein they have little to do, and live, as the phrase is, upon their income; for in other conditions, where life is dedicated to making money, the plurality and numbers of children is an increase to good husbandry, and they are so many new tools and instruments wherewith to grow rich.

The most proper age for marriage.

I married at three and thirty years of age, and [illegible] in the opinion for [illegible]ive, which is said to be [illegible] of Aristotle.[1] Plato will have nobody marry before thirty, but he has reason to laugh at those who undertake the work of marriage after five and fifty, and to condemn their offspring as unworthy of aliment and life. Thales gave it the truest limits, who when young, and being importuned by his mother to marry, answered, "That it was too soon;" and being grown in years, and urged again, "That it was too late."[2] A man must deny opportunity to every importunate action. The ancient Gauls[3] looked upon it as a very great reproach for a man to have to do with a woman before he was twenty years of age; and strictly recommended to the men who designed themselves for war the keeping their virginity till well grown in years, forasmuch as courage is abated and diverted by the use of women:

The use of women enervates young men.

Ma hor congiunto à giovinetta sposa,
E lieto homai, de' figli, era invilito
Negli affetti di padre et di marito.[4]

"But now being married to a fair young wife,
Hels quite fall'n off from his old course of life:
His mettle is grown rusty, and his care
His wife and children do betwixt them share."

Muleasses,[5] King of Tunis, he whom the Emperor Charles the Fifth restored to the kingdom, reproached the memory of his father, Mahomet, with the frequentation of women, styling him loose, effeminate, and a getter of children. The Greek History observes of Iccus, the Tarentine, of Crisso, Astyllus, Diopompus, and others, that, to keep their bodies in order for the Olympic games, and such like exercises, they denied themselves during that preparation all commerce with Venus. In a certain country of the Spanish Indies, men were not permitted to marry till after they were forty years of age, and yet the girls were allowed to do so at ten. 'Tis not time for a gentleman of five-and-thirty years old to give place to his son who is twenty; he being himself in a condition to serve both in the camp and court of his prince, he has himself need of all his money; and yet, doubtless ought to allow his son a share, but not so great a one as wholly to disfurnish himself; and for such a one, the saying that fathers have ordinarily in their mouths, "I will not put off my clothes till I go to bed," is proper enough.

A father that is superannuated ought to give up his estate to his child.

But a father, worn out with age and infirmities, and deprived, by his weakness and want of health, of the common society of men, wrongs himself and his, to rake together a great mass of useless treasure. He has lived long enough, if he be wise, to have a mind to strip himself to go to bed; not to his very shirt, I confess, but to that and a good warm night-gown. The remaining pomps, of which he has no further use, he ought voluntarily to surrender to those to whom by the order of nature they belong. 'Tis reason he should transfer the use of those things to them, seeing that nature has reduced him to such a state that he cannot enjoy them himself; otherwise there is, doubtless, ill-nature and envy in the case. The greatest act of the Emperor Charles the Fifth was that, in imitation of some of the ancients of his own quality, confessing it but reason to strip ourselves when our clothes encumber and grow too heavy for us, and to lie down when our legs begin to fail us, he resigned his possessions, grandeur, and power to his son, when he found himself beginning to lose the vigour and steadiness necessary to conduct his affairs, with the glory he had therein acquired.

Solve senescentem mature sanus equum, ne
Peccet ad extremum ridendus, et ilia ducat.[6]

"Loose from the rapid car your aged horse,
Lest in the race, derided, left behind,
Jaded he drag his limbs and burst his wind."

This fault of not perceiving betimes, and not being sensible of the feebleness and extreme alteration that age naturally brings, both upon

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[1] At the end of the *Sixth Book of the Republic;* but Aristotle says, from thirty to thirty-five.
[2] Diogenes Laert. *in vitâ.*
[3] What Montaigne ascribes here to the Gauls, Cæsar says expressly of the Germans, *De Bello Gallico*, vi. 21. "Qui diutissimè impuberes permanserunt, maximam inter suos ferunt laudem," &c.
[4] Tasso, *Jerusalem, lib.* x. stanza 39.
[5] Muley Hassan.
[6] Horace, *Epist*, i. 1. 8.

the body and the mind (which in my opinion is equal, if the soul, indeed, is not more than the half), has lost the reputation of most of the great men of the world. I have known in my time, and have been intimately acquainted with some persons of very great quality whom a man might easily discern so manifestly fallen from that former sufficiency I was sure they were once endued with, by the reputation they had acquired in their former years, that I could heartily, for their own sakes, have wished them at home at their ease, discharged from those public and military employments which were now grown too heavy for their shoulders. I was formerly very familiar in a gentleman's house, a widower, and very old, though healthy and cheerful enough. This gentleman had several daughters to marry, and a son, already of a ripe age, which brought upon him many visits, and a great expense, neither of which did very well please him, not only out of consideration of frugality, but yet more for having, by reason of his age, entered into a course of life far differing from ours. I told him, one day, a little boldly, as I have been used to do, that he would do better to give us room, and to leave his principal house (for he had but that well situated and furnished), to his son, and retire himself to an estate he had hard by, where nobody would trouble his repose, seeing he could not otherwise avoid being importuned by us, the condition of his children considered. He took my advice afterwards, and found an advantage by so doing.

I do not mean that a man should so instate them as not to reserve to himself a liberty to recant: I, who am now arrived to the age wherein such things are nigh fit to be done, would resign to them the enjoyment of my house and goods, but with a power of revocation, if they should give me cause to alter my mind. I would leave to them the use, that being no longer proper for me; but of the general authority and power over all, I would reserve as much as I thought good to myself; having always thought that it must needs be a great satisfaction to an aged father, to put his children himself in the way of governing his affairs, and to have power, during his life, to superintend their behaviour, supplying them with instruction and advice from his own experience, and himself to transfer the ancient honour and order of his house into the hands of those who are to succeed him, and by that means to be responsible to himself (by the hopes he may conceive) for their future conduct. And in order to this, I would not avoid their company; I would observe them near at hand, and partake, according to the condition of my age, of their feasts and amusements. If I did not live amongst them (which I could not do without being a disturbance to them, by reason of the touchiness of my age, and the restlessness of my infirmities, and without violating also the rules and order of living I should then have set down to myself), I would at least live near them in some part of my house, not the best in show, but the most commodious. Not as I saw, some years ago, a Dean of St. Hilaire, of Poictiers, by his melancholy given up to such a solitude that, at the time I came into his chamber, it had been two-and-twenty years that he had not stepped one foot out of it, and yet had all his motions free, and ate, and was in perfect health, saving a little rheum that fell upon his lungs. He would hardly once in a week suffer any one to come to see him; he always kept himself shut up in his chamber, alone, except a servant that brought him something to eat, and did then but just come in and go out again. His employment was to walk up and down, and read some book; for he was a bit of a scholar: but as to the rest, obstinately bent to die in his retirement, as he soon after did. I would endeavour, by a sweet and obliging conversation, to create in my children a lively and unfeigned friendship and good will, which, in well-descended natures, is not hard to do; for if they be brutes, of which this age of ours produces thousands, we must hate and avoid them as such.

I am angry at the custom of forbidding children to call their father by the name of father, and to enjoin them another, as more full of respect and reverence, as if nature had not sufficiently provided for our authority. We call God father, and disdain to have our children call us so. I have reformed this error in my family.[1] It is also folly and injustice to deprive children, when grown up, of a familiarity with their father, and to carry an austere countenance toward them, thinking by that to keep them in awe and obedience; for it is but a very idle farce that, instead of producing the effect designed, renders fathers distasteful and, which is worse, ridiculous, to their own children. They have youth and vigour in possession, and consequently the breath and favour of the world, and therefore receive these fierce and tyrannical looks (mere scare-crows) of a man without blood, either in his heart or veins, with mockery and contempt. Though I could make myself feared, I had yet much rather make myself beloved. There are so many sorts of defects in old age, so much impotency, and it is so liable to contempt, that the best purchase a man can make is the kindness and affection of his own family: command and fear are no longer his weapons. Such a one I have known, who, having been very imperious in his youth, when he came to be old, though he might have

Children ought not to be forbid to call their father by the name of father.

Children that are grown up ought to be admitted to a familiarity with their fathers.

[1] The good King Henry IV. reformed it also in his family; for Perefixe says he would not have his children call him monsieur, an appellation which seems to make the father and the children strangers, and which is a mark of subjection and slavery; but that they should call him papa, or father, an appellation of love and tenderness.

lived at his full ease and had his judgment as entire as ever, would yet torment himself and others; strike, rant, swear, and curse; the most tempestuous master in France; fretting himself with unnecessary suspicion and vigilance. And all this rumble and clutter but makes his family cheat him the sooner and the more; of his barn, his kitchen, cellar, nay, and his very purse too, others have the greatest use and share, whilst he keeps his keys in his bosom much more carefully than his eyes. Whilst he hugs himself with the frugality of the pitiful pittance of a wretched niggardly table, everything goes to wrack and ruin in every corner of his house, in play, drink, all sorts of profusion, making sports in their junkettings with his vain anger and fruitless parsimony. Every one is a centinel against him; and if by accident any wretched fellow that serves him is of another humour, and will not join with the rest, he is presently rendered suspected to him, a bait which old age very easily bites at of itself. How often has this gentleman boasted to me in how great awe he kept his family, and how exact an obedience and reverence they paid him! How clearly he saw into his own affairs!

Ille solus nescit omnia.[1]

"He alone knows nothing of the matter."

I do not know any one that can muster more parts, both natural and acquired, proper to maintain such a dominion, than he; yet he is fallen from it like a child. For this reason it is that I have picked him out amongst several others that I know of the same humour, for the greatest example. It were matter for a question in the schools, "Whether he is better thus or otherwise?" In his presence all submit to and bow before him, and give so much way to his vanity that nobody ever resists him; he has his belly-full of cringe, and all postures of fear, submission, and respect. Does he turn away a servant? he packs up his bundle, and is gone,—but 'tis no further than just out of his sight: the pace of old age is so slow, and the senses so weak and troubled, that he will live and do his old office in the same house a year together without being perceived. And after a fit interval of time, letters are pretended to come from a great way off, very pitiful, suppliant, and full of promises of amendment, by virtue of which he is again received into favour. Does monsieur make any bargain, or send away any dispatch that does not please? 'Tis suppressed, and causes afterwards forged to excuse the want of execution in the one or answer in the other. No strange letters are first brought to him; he never sees any but those that seem fit for his knowledge. If by accident they fall first into his own hand, being used to trust somebody to read them to him, he reads extempore what he thinks fit, and very often makes such a one ask him pardon, who abuses and rails at him in his letter. In short, he sees nothing but by an image prepared and designed before-hand, and the most satisfactory they can invent not to rouse and awake his ill-humour and choler. I have, under different forms, seen enough of long and enduring management to just the same effect.

Women have a sort of natural tendency to cross their husbands:[2] they lay hold with both hands on all occasions to contradict and oppose them, and the first excuse serves for a plenary justification. I have seen a wife who grossly purloined from her husband, that, as she told her confessor, she might distribute more liberal alms. As if anybody would believe a word of this religious dispensation. No authority seems to them of sufficient dignity, if proceeding from the husband's assent; they must usurp it either by insolence or cunning, and always injuriously, or else it has not the grace of that authority they desire. When, as in the case I am speaking of, 'tis against a poor old man, and for the children, they make use of this title to serve their passion with glory; and, as in a common servitude, easily monopolise against his government and dominion. If they be men, strong, and flourishing in health and manhood, they presently corrupt, either by force or favour, both steward, receivers, and all the rest. Such as have neither wife nor son do not so easily fall into this misfortune; when they do, it is more cruelly and undeservedly. Cato the Elder, in his time, said, "So many servants so many enemies."[3] Consider, then, whether, according to the vast difference betwixt the purity of the age he lived in and the corruption of this of ours, he does not seem to advertise us that wife, son, and servant, are so many enemies to us? 'Tis well for old age that it is always accompanied with stupidity, ignorance, and a facility of being deceived; for, should we see how we are used, and would not acquiesce, what would become of us?—especially in such an age as this, where the very judges who are to determine are usually partial to the young in any cause that comes before them.[4] In case that the discovery of this cheat escape me, I cannot at least fail to discern that I am very fit to be cheated; and can a man ever enough speak the value of a friend, in comparison with these civil ties? The very image of it which I see so pure and uncorrupted in beasts, how religiously do I respect it! If others deceive me, yet I do not at least deceive myself in thinking I am able to defend myself from them, or in

[1] Terence, *Adelp.* iv. 2. 9.

[2] Mr. Cotton's gallantry, or his desire to save the credit of Montaigne with the ladies, induced him to diminish the effect of this shameful calumny upon our better halves, by this addition—"Women, *especially the perverse and elder sort*,"—a modification which I cannot refrain from preserving in the form of a note, though Montaigne himself, by an oversight, doubtless, neglected to make it.

[3] Seneca, *Epist.* 47. Macrobius, *Saturnal.* i. 11.

[4] The author seems to hint that the judges were young men themselves.

wearing out my brains to make myself so? I protect myself from such treasons in my own bosom, not by an unquiet and tumultuary curiosity, but rather by diversion and resolution. When I hear talk of any one's condition I never trouble me to think of him, I presently turn my eyes upon myself, to see in what condition I am. Whatever concerns another relates to me; the accident that has befallen him gives me caution and rouses me to turn my defence that way. We every day and every hour say things of another that we might more properly say of ourselves, could we but revert our observation to our own concerns as well as extend it to others. And several authors have in this manner prejudiced their own cause by running headlong upon those they attack, and darting those shafts against their enemies that are more properly, and with greater advantage, to be returned upon them.

The late Marshal de Montluc, having lost his son, who died in the Island of Madeira, in truth a very brave gentleman, and of great expectation, did to me, amongst his other regrets, very much insist upon what a sorrow and heart-breaking it was to him that he had never made himself familiarly acquainted with him; and, by that humour of fatherly gravity and grimace, had lost the opportunity of having an insight into, and of well knowing, his son; as also of letting him know the extreme affection he had for him, and the worthy opinion he had of his virtue. "The poor boy," said he, "never saw in me other than a stern and disdainful countenance; and is gone in a belief that I neither knew how to love or esteem him according to his desert. For whom did I reserve the discovery of that singular affection I had for him in my soul? Was it not he himself who ought to have had all the pleasure of it, and all the obligation? I forced and wracked myself to put on and maintain this vain disguise, and have by that means deprived myself of the pleasure of his conversation, and, I doubt, in some measure of his affection; which could not but be very cold towards me, having never other from me than austerity; nor felt other than a tyrannical manner of proceeding."[1] I find this complaint to be rational and rightly apprehended; for as I myself know, by too certain experience, there is not so sweet a consolation in the loss of friends as the consciousness of having had no reserve with them, to have had with them a perfect and entire communication. Oh, my friend![2] am I the better for being sensible of this; or am I the worse? I am doubtless much the better. I am comforted and honoured in the sorrow for his death. Is it not a pious, a pleasing office of my life to be always upon my friend's obsequies? Can there be any joy equal to this privation?

I open myself to my family as much as I can, and very willingly let them know in what state they are in my opinion and good will, as I do to every body else. I make haste to bring out and produce myself to them; for I will not have them mistaken in me in any thing. Amongst other particular customs of our ancient Gauls, this, as Cæsar reports, was one,—that the sons never presented themselves before their fathers, nor durst ever appear in their company in public, till they began to bear arms;[3] as if they would intimate, by that, that then was also time for the fathers to receive them into their familiarity and acquaintance.

I have observed yet another sort of indiscretion in fathers of my time, that, not contented with having deprived their children, during their own long lives, of the share they naturally ought to have had in their fortunes, they after leave to their wives the same authority over their estates, and liberty to dispose of them according to their own fancy: and I have known a certain lord, one of the principal officers of the crown, who having in his prospect, by right of succession, above fifty thousand crowns yearly revenue, died necessitous and overwhelmed with debt, at above fifty years of age; his mother, in an extreme decrepitude, being yet in possession of all his estates by the will of his father, who had, for his part, lived till near eighty years old. This appears by no means reasonable to me. And therefore I think it of very little advantage to a man, whose affairs are well enough, to seek a wife that will charge his estate with too great a jointure: there being no sort of foreign debt or incumbrance that brings greater and more frequent ruin to estates and families than that. My predecessors have ever been aware of that danger, and provided against it, and so have I. But those who dissuade us from rich wives, for fear they should be less tractable and kind, are out in their advice to make a man lose a real convenience for so frivolous a conjecture. It costs an unreasonable woman no more to pass over one reason than another. The more she is in the wrong the better. Injustice allures such, as the honour of their virtuous actions does the good; the more riches women bring with them, the more likely they are to be so much the more gentle and sweet-natured; as women, the fairer they are, are the more inclined to be proudly chaste.

'Tis reasonable to leave the administration of affairs to the mothers during the minority of the children; but the father has brought them up very ill if he cannot hope that, when they come to maturity, they will have more wisdom and dexterity in the management of their affairs than his wife, considering the ordinary weakness of the sex. It were, notwithstanding, to say the truth, more against nature to make the

[1] "Je ne puis lire qu'avec les larmes aux yeux, dans les Essais de Montaigne, ce que fit le Mareschal de Montluc du regrèt qu'il a de ne s'être pas communiqué à son fils, et de lui avoir laissé ignorer de la tendresse qu'il avoit pour lui. C'est à Madame d'Estissac, *De l'amour des pères envers leurs enfants*. Mon Dieu, que ce livre est plein de bon sens."—*Mad. de Sevigné, lettre à sa fille.*

[2] This apostrophe is addressed to La Boëtie.

[3] *De Bello Gall.* vi. 18.

mothers depend upon the discretion of their children. They ought to be plentifully provided for, to maintain themselves according to their quality and age, by reason that necessity is much more unbecoming and insupportable to them than to men; and therefore the son is rather to be cut short than the mother.

The most prudent distribution of estates.

In general, the most judicious distribution of our goods, when we come to die, is, in my opinion, to let them be distributed according to the custom of the country. The laws have considered it better than we, and 'tis better to let them fail in their election than rashly to run the hazard of miscarrying in ours. Neither are they properly ours, since, by a civil prescription, and without us, they are all judged to certain successors. And although we have some liberty beyond that, yet I think that we ought not, without great and manifest cause, to take away that from one which his fortune has allotted him, and to which the public equity gives him title; and that it is against reason to abuse this liberty, in making it serve our own frivolous and private fancies. My destiny has been kind to me, in not furnishing me with occasions to tempt and divert my affection from the common and legitimate institution. I see some with whom 'tis time lost to employ a long diligence of good offices: a word ill taken obliterates ten years' merit; he is the happy man who is in a condition to oil their good will at the last passage. The last action carries it: not the best and most frequent offices, but the most recent and present, do the work. These are people that play with their wills, as with apples and rods, to gratify or chastise every action of those that pretend to an interest in them. 'Tis a thing of too great weight and consequence to be so tumbled and tossed and altered every moment: and wherein wise men determine once for all, having therein, above all things, a regard to reason, and to what is publicly observed. We lay male inheritance too much to heart, proposing a ridiculous eternity to our names. We are, moreover, too superstitious in the vain conjectures of futurity, which we derive from those little observations we make of the words and actions of children. Perhaps they might have done me an injustice in dispossessing me of my rank, for having been the most dull and heavy, the most slow and unwilling at my book, not of all my brothers only, but of all the boys in the whole province; whether at my lesson or at any bodily exercise. 'Tis a folly to make an extraordinary election upon the credit of these divinations, wherein we are so often deceived. If the rule of primogeniture were to be violated, and the destinies corrected in the choice they have made of our heirs, one might more plausibly do it upon the account of some enormous personal deformity; a constant and incorrigible vice, and, in the opinion of us French, who are great admirers of beauty, of important prejudice.

Plato's opinion that the disposition of estates should be regulated by the laws.

The pleasant dialogue betwixt legislator and his citizens will be an ornament to this place. "What," said they, feeling themselves about to die, "may we not dispose of our own to whom we please? Gods, what cruelty, that it shall not be lawful for us, according as we have been served and attended in our sickness, in old age, and other affairs, to give more or less to those whom we have found most diligent about us, at our own fancy and discretion!" To which the legislator answers thus: "My friends, who are now, without question, very soon to die, it is hard for you either to know yourselves, or what is yours, according to the Delphic inscription. I, who make the laws, am of opinion that you neither are yourselves your own, neither is that yours of which you are possessed. Both your goods and you belong to your families, as well those past as those to come; but yet, both your family and goods do much more appertain to the public. Wherefore, lest any flatterers in your age, or in your sickness, or any passion of your own, should unseasonably prevail with you to make an unjust will, I shall take care to prevent that impropriety. But, having respect both to the universal interest of the city, and that of your particular family, I shall establish laws, and make it appear that a particular convenience ought to give place to the common benefit. Go then cheerfully where human necessity calls you. It belongs to me, who have no more respect to one thing than another, and who, as much as in me lies, am careful of the public concern, to take care of what you leave behind you."[1]

'Tis dangerous to leave it in the power of the widows to share the succession of the fathers among their children.

To return to my subject: it appears to me that such women are very rarely born to whom the prerogative over men, the maternal and natural excepted, is in any sort due, unless it be for the punishment of such as in some lustful humour have voluntarily submitted themselves to them: but that does nothing concern the old ones, of whom we are now speaking. This consideration it is which has made us so willing to forge and give force to that law, which was never yet seen by any one, by which women are excluded the succession to this crown; and there is hardly a government in the world where it is not pleaded as 'tis here, by mere reason of the thing that gives it authority, though fortune has given it more credit in some places than in others. 'Tis dangerous to leave the disposal of our succession to their judgment, according to the choice they shall make of children, which is often fantastic and unjust; for the irregular appetite and depraved taste they have during the time of their being with child, they have at all other times in the mind.

[1] Plato, *Laws*, xi.

We commonly see them fond of the most weak, ricketty, and deformed children, or of those, if they have such, as are at the breast. For, not having sufficient force of reason to choose and embrace that which is most worthy, they the more willingly suffer themselves to be carried away, where the impressions of nature are most alone; like animals that know their young no longer than they give them suck. As to the rest, it is easy by experience to be discerned that this natural affection, to which we give so great authority, has but a very weak and shallow root. For a very little profit we every day ravish their own children out of their mothers' arms, and make them take ours in their room. We make them abandon their own to some pitiful nurse, to which we disdain to commit ours, or to some she-goat: forbidding them not only to give them suck, what danger soever they run thereby, but moreover to take any manner of care of them, that they may wholly be taken up with the care of, and attendance upon, ours. And we see in most of them an adulterate affection, begot by custom toward the foster-children, more vehement than the natural, and greater solicitude for the preservation of those they have taken charge of than their own. And that which I was saying of goats was upon this account; that it is ordinary, all about where I live, to see the country-women, when they want suck of their own, to call goats to their assistance. And I have at this hour two footmen that never sucked women's milk more than eight days after they were born. These goats are immediately taught to come to suckle the little children, well knowing their voices when they cry, and come running to them; when, if any other than that they are acquainted with be presented to them, they refuse to let it suck; and the child will do the same to any other goat. I saw one the other day from whom they had taken away the goat that used to nourish it, by reason the father had only borrowed it of a neighbour, that would not touch any other they could bring, and died doubtless of hunger. Beasts do as easily alter and corrupt their natural affections, as we. I believe that in what Herodotus[1] relates of a certain district of Lybia there are many mistakes. He says,—"That the women are there in common; but that the child, so soon as it can go, finds him out in the crowd for his father, to whom he is first led by his natural inclination."

What stress may be laid on the natural affection of mothers to their children.

Goats trained to give suck to children.

Now, in considering this simple reason for loving our children and calling them our second-selves, only because we beget them, it appears, methinks, that there is another kind of production proceeding from us that should no less recommend itself to our love: for that which we engender by the soul, the issue of our understanding, courage, and abilities, springs from nobler parts than those of the body, and that are much more our own; we are both father and mother together in this generation. These cost us a great deal more, and bring us more honour, if they have any thing of good in them. For the value of other children is much more theirs than ours; the share we have in them is very little; but of these, all the beauty, all the grace and value, is ours. Thus 'tis that they more livelily represent and resemble us than the rest. Plato[2] adds that those are immortal children that immortalise their fathers, as Lycurgus, Solon, Minos. Now, histories being full of examples of the common affection of fathers to their children, it seems not altogether improper to introduce some few also of this other kind. Heliodorus, that good Bishop of Tricca, rather chose to lose the dignity, profit, and devotion, of so venerable a prelacy, than to lose his daughter;[3] a daughter that continues to this day very graceful and comely, though, peradventure, a little too curiously and wantonly set off, and too amorous, for an ecclesiastic and sacerdotal daughter. There was one Labienus at Rome, a man of great worth and authority, and, amongst other good qualities, excellent in all sorts of literature, who was, as I take it, the son of that great Labienus, the chief of Cæsar's captains in the wars of Gaul, and who, afterwards siding with Pompey the Great, so valiantly maintained his cause, till he was by Cæsar defeated in Spain. This Labienus of whom I am now speaking had several enemies, jealous of his virtue, and, 'tis likely, courtiers and minions of the emperor of his time, who were very angry at, and displeased with, his freedom and the paternal humour which he yet retained against tyranny, with which, it is to be supposed, he had tinctured his books and writings. His adversaries, before the magistracy of Rome, prosecuted several pieces he had published, and prevailed so far against him as to have them condemned to the flames.[4] It was in him that this new example of punishment was begun, which was afterwards continued against several others at Rome, to punish even writing and studies with death. There would not be means and matter enough of cruelty did we not mix with them things that nature has exempted from all sense and suffering, as reputation and the products of mind, and if we did not communicate corporeal punishments to the learning and monuments of the muses. Now Labienus could not

Books, immortal children.

[1] What Herodotus says, however, is that each child is regarded as belonging to the man whom he most resembles: τῳ̃ ἂν οἴχη τῳ̃ ἀνδρῶν. The other reading, ἵκηται, is not received.

[2] In the *Phædo*.

[3] Viz., his *Amorous History of Theagines and Charicles, or Ethiopian History*. See Nicephorus, xii. 34. Bayle, *in verbo*, disputes the tradition.

[4] Seneca, *Rhetor. Controv.* v. It is doubtful whether this Labienus was the son of Cæsar's lieutenant. See Vossius, *de Hist. Lat.* i. 25.

suffer this loss, nor survive these his so dear issue, and therefore caused himself to be conveyed and shut up alive in the monument of his ancestors, where he made shift to kill and bury himself at once. 'Tis hard to show a more violent paternal affection than this. Cassius Severus, a man of great eloquence, and his very intimate friend, seeing his books burn, cried out, "That by the same sentence they should also condemn him to the fire too, seeing that he carried in his memory all that they contained." The like misfortune befel Cremutius Cordus, who being accused for having in his books commended Brutus and Cassius, the dirty, servile, and degenerate senate, worthy a worse master than Tiberius, condemned his writings to the flames. He was willing to bear them company, and killed himself with fasting.[1] The good Lucan, being condemned by that rascal Nero, at the last gasp of his life, when the greater part of his blood was already gone by the veins of his arms, which he had caused his physician to open to make him die, and that the cold had seized on all his extremities, and began to approach his vital parts; the last thing he had in his memory was some of the verses of his battle of Pharsalia, which he repeated, and died with them in his mouth.[2] What was this but taking a tender and paternal leave of his children, in imitation of the farewell blessings and embraces wherewith we part with ours when we come to die; and an effect of that natural inclination that suggests to our remembrance, in this extremity, those things which were dearest to us during life?

Cordus's writings condemned to the fire.

Can we believe that Epicurus,[3] who, as he says himself, dying of intolerable pains of the cholic, had all his consolation in the beauty of the doctrine he left behind him, could have received the same satisfaction from many children, though never so well brought up, had he had them, as he did from the issue of so many rich and admirable writings? Or that, had it been in his choice to have left behind him a deformed and untoward child, or a foolish and ridiculous book, he, or any other man of his understanding, would not rather have chosen to have run the first misfortune than the other? It had been, perhaps, an impiety in St. Austin, for example, if, on the one hand, it had been proposed to him to bury his writings, from which our religion has received so great advantage; or, on the other, to bury his children, had he had any, had he not rather chosen to bury his children? And I know not whether I had not much rather have begot a very beautiful one, through my society with the muses, than by lying with my wife. To this, such as it is, what I give it I give it absolutely and irrevocably, as men do to their bodily children. That little I have done for it is no more at my own disposal. It may know many things that I have forgotten, and retain from me that which I have not retained myself; and that, as a stranger, I must borrow thence, should I stand in need. If I am wiser than my book, it is richer than I.

Of the affection which Montaigne had for his book.

There are few men addicted to poetry who would not be much prouder to be father to the Æneid than to the handsomest and best made youth of Rome, and that would not much better bear the loss of the one than the other. For, according to Aristotle,[4] the poet, of all sorts of artificers, is fondest of his work. 'Tis hard to believe that Epaminondas, who boasted that for all his posterity, he left two daughters behind him which would one day do their father honour, (meaning the two noble victories he obtained over the Lacedæmonians)[5] would willingly have consented to exchange these for the most beautiful creatures of all Greece: or that Alexander, or Cæsar, ever wished to be deprived of the grandeur of their glorious exploits in war, for the conveniency of having children and heirs, how perfect and accomplished soever. Nay, I make great question whether Phidias, or any other excellent statuary, would be so solicitous of the preservation and continuance of his natural children as he would be of a rare statue, which with long labour and study he had perfected according to art. And to those furious and irregular passions that have sometimes flamed in fathers towards their own daughters, and in mothers towards their own sons; the like is also found in this other sort of parentage. Witness what is related of Pygmalion, who, having made the statue of a woman of singular beauty, fell so passionately in love with this work of his that the Gods, in pity of his passion, were fain to inspire it with life:

> Tentatum mollescit ebur, positoque rigore
> Subsidit digitis.[6]
>
> "Hard though it was, beginning to relent,
> The iv'ry breast beneath his fingers bent."

CHAPTER IX.

OF THE ARMS OF THE PARTHIANS.

'Tis an ill custom, and a little unmanly, which the gentlemen of our time have got, not to put on their armour, but just upon the point of the most extreme necessity; and to lay it by again as soon as ever there is any show of the danger being a little over; whence many disorders arise; for every one bustling and running to his arms, just when he should go to

The ill custom of not being armed till the enemy is at the gates.

[1] Tacitus, *Annal.* iv. 34.
[2] Id. *ib.* xv. 70.
[3] Laertius, *in vitâ*, ix. 22. Cicero, *de Finib.* ii. 30.
[4] *Ethics*, ix. 7.
[5] Diod. Sic. xv. 87. Nepos, in his life of this great captain, makes him speak but of one daughter, the Battle of Leuctra.
[6] Ovid, *Met.* x. 283

charge, has his cuirass to buckle on when his companions are already put to the rout. Our ancestors were wont to give their head-piece, lance, and gauntlets to carry, but never put off their other pieces so long as there was any work to be done. Our troops are now cumbered and rendered unsightly with the clutter of baggage and servants, that cannot be from their masters, by reason they carry their arms. Livy, speaking of our nation, *Intolerantissima laboris corpora vix arma humeris gerebant.*[1] "Their bodies were so impatient of labour that they could scarcely endure to wear their armour." Many nations do yet, as anciently, go to war without defensive arms; or such, at least, as were of very little proof.

Tegmina queis capitum, raptus de subere cortex.[2]

"Who their temples only bind
With a light helm, made of the cork-tree rind."

Alexander, the most adventurous captain that ever was, very seldom wore armour; and such amongst us as slight it do not by that much harm the main concern; for if we see some killed for want of it, there are few less whom the lumber of armour helps to destroy, either by being over-burdened, crushed, and cramped with its weight, by a rude shock, or otherwise. For, in plain truth, to observe the weight and thickness of that which we have now in use, it seems as if we only sought to defend ourselves; we are rather loaded, than secured, by it. We have enough to do to support its weight, manacled and immured, as if we were only to contend with the shock of our armour; and as if we had not the same obligation to defend it as it has to defend us. Tacitus[3] gives a pleasant description of the men-at-arms of our ancient Gauls, so armed as to be only able to move, without power to offend, or possibility to be offended, or to rise again when once beaten down. Lucullus, seeing certain soldiers of the Medes that made the front of Tigranes's army, heavily armed, and very uneasy, as if in prisons of iron, thence conceived hopes with great ease to defeat them; and by them began his charge and victory.[4] And now that our musqueteers are come into credit, I believe some invention will be found out to immure us for our safety, and draw us to the war in castles, such as those the ancients loaded their elephants withal.

The armour of the French too cumbersome, by its weight, to be proper for use.

This humour is far differing from that of the younger Scipio, who sharply reprehended his soldiers for having planted caltraps[5] under water, in a part of the fosse by which those of the town he held besieged might sally out upon him; saying that those who assaulted should think of attacking, and not of fearing;[6] suspecting, with good reason, that this stop they had put to the enemy would make them less vigilant upon their duty. He said, also, to a young man showing him a fine buckler he had that he was very proud of; "It is a very fine buckler, indeed; but a Roman soldier ought to repose greater confidence in his right hand than in his left."

Now 'tis nothing but the not being used to wear them that makes the weight of our arms so intolerable:

L'usbergo in dosso haveano, et l'elmo *in testa*,
Duo di questi guerrier, dei quali io canto;
Ne notte o dì, dopo ch' entraro in questa
Stanza, gl' haveano mai messi da canto;
Che facile a portar come la vesta
Era lor, perche in uso l'avean tanto.[7]

"Two of these heroes whom I sing, had on
Each his bright helm, and strong habergeon;
And night nor day, nor one poor minute's space,
Once laid them by whilst they were in this place;
So long accustomed this weight to bear,
Their clothes to them not lighter did appear."

The Emperor Caracalla was wont continually to march on foot, completely armed, at the head of his army.[8] The Roman infantry always carried not only their helmet, sword and shield (for as to arms, says Cicero, they were so accustomed to have them always on that they were no more trouble to them than their own limbs; *Arma enim membra militis esse dicunt*;[9]) but moreover, fifteen days' provision, together with a certain number of piles, or stakes, wherewith to fortify their camp, to sixty pounds' weight. And Marius's soldiers,[10] laden at the same rate, were inured to march in battalia five leagues in five hours; and sometimes, upon an urgent occasion, six. Their military discipline was much ruder than ours, and accordingly produced much greater effects. The younger Scipio, reforming his army in Spain, ordered his soldiers to eat standing, and nothing that was dressed.[11] The jeer that was given a Lacedæmonian soldier is marvellously pat to the matter, who, in an expedition of war, was reproached to have been seen under the roof of a house. They were so inured to hardship that, let the weather be what it would, it was a shame to be seen under any other cover than the roof of Heaven. We should not march our people very far at that rate.

Arms of Roman infantry, and their military discipline.

As to what remains, Marcellinus, a man bred up in the Roman wars, curiously observes the manner of the Parthians arming themselves; and the rather for its being so different from

[1] *Book* x. 28.
[2] *Æneid*, vii. 742.
[3] *Annal.* iii. 43.
[4] Plutarch, *in vitâ*.
[5] A sort of *chevaux de frise*.
[6] Val. Max. iii. 7. 2. The Latin text merely says that this stratagem was proposed to Scipio, who refused to adopt it.
[7] Ariosto, xii. 30.
[8] Xiphilin, *in vitâ*.
[9] *Tuscul. Quæs.* ii. 16. Hence, in Latin, the analogy between *arma*, arms, with *armus*, the shoulder, and *armilla*, bracelets.
[10] Plutarch, *in vitâ*.
[11] Plutarch, *Apothegms*.

that of the Romans. "They had," says he, "armour artificially woven, like so many little feathers, which did nothing hinder the motion of the body, and yet so hard that our darts hitting upon it would rebound."[1] (These were the coats of mail our forefathers were so constantly wont to use.) And in another place: "They had," says he, "strong and able horses, covered with thick tanned hides of leather, and were themselves armed cap-a-pie, with great plates of iron so artificially ordered that, in all parts of the limbs which required bending, they assisted motion. One would have said that they were men of iron; having armour for the head so neatly fitted, and so naturally representing the form of a face, that they were no where vulnerable, save at two little round holes that gave them a little light; and certain small chinks about their mouth and nostrils, through which they did, with great difficulty, breathe."

Arms of the Parthians.

> Flexilis inductis animatur lamina membris,
> Horribilis visu; credas simulacra moveri
> Ferrea, cognatoque viros spirare metallo.
> Par vestitus equis: ferrata fronte minantur,
> Ferratosque movent, securi vulneris, armos.[2]

> "Stiff plates of steel o'er the body laid,
> By armorers' skill so flexible were made
> That, dreadful to be seen, *you* would them guess
> Not to be men, but moving images:
> The horse, like arm'd, spikes bore in fronts above,
> And fearless they their iron shoulders move."

A description very near resembling the equipage of the men-at-arms in France, with their barbed horses. Plutarch says that Demetrius caused two complete suits of armour to be made for himself and for Alcimus, the first warrior about him, of six-score pounds weight each; whereas the ordinary suits weighed but half so much.[3]

CHAPTER X.

OF BOOKS.

I MAKE no doubt but that I often happen to speak of things that are much better, and more truly, handled by those who are masters of the trade. You have here purely an essay of my natural, and not acquired, parts; and whoever shall take me tripping in my ignorance, will not in any sort displease me; for I should be very unwilling to become responsible to another for my writings, who am not so to myself, nor satisfied with them. Whoever goes in quest of knowledge, let him fish for it where it is to be found; there is nothing I so little profess. These are fancies of my own, by which I do not pretend to discover things, but to lay open myself. They may, perhaps, one day be known to me, or have formerly been, according as fortune has put me upon a place where they have been explained; but I have forgotten them; and if I am a man of some reading, I am a man of no retention; so that I can promise no certainty, if not to make known to what point the knowledge I now have rises. Therefore let nobody insist upon the matter I write, but my method in writing it: let them observe in what I borrow, if I have known how to choose what is proper to raise or help the invention, which is always my own; for I make others say for me what, either for want of language, or want of sense, I cannot so well myself express. I do not number my borrowings, I weigh them. And had I designed to raise their value by their number, I had made them twice as many. They are all, or within a very few, so famed and ancient authors that they seem, methinks, themselves sufficiently to tell who they are, without giving me the trouble.[4] In reasons, comparisons, and arguments, if I transplant any into my own soil, and confound them amongst my own, I purposely conceal the author to awe the temerity of those forward censurers that fall upon all sorts of writings, particularly the late ones, of men yet living, and in the vulgar tongue, forsooth, which puts, it would seem, every one into a capacity of judging, and which seems to convict the authors themselves of vulgar conception and design. I would have them give Plutarch a fillip on my nose, and put themselves in a heat with railing against Seneca, when they think they rail at me. I must shelter my own weakness under these great reputations. I shall love any one that can unplume me, that is, by clearness of understanding and judgment, and by the sole distinction of the force and beauty of reason: for I, who, for want of memory, am at every turn at a loss to pick them out by their national livery, am yet wise enough to know, by the measure of my own abilities, that my soil is incapable of producing any of those rich flowers that I there find set and growing; and that all the fruits of my own growth are not worth any one of them. For this, indeed, I hold myself responsible, though the confession make against me; if there be any vanity and vice in my writings, which I do not of myself perceive, nor can discern, when pointed out to me by another; for many faults escape the eye, but the infirmity of judgment consists in not being able to discern them, when, by another,

Why Montaigne did not choose to name the authors from whom he quoted.

[1] Ammianus Marcellinus, a Latin historian, though, by birth, a Greek, who bore arms under the emperors Constantius, Julian, &c. lib. xxiv. cap. 7.

[2] Claudian in *Ruf.* ii. 356.

[3] Plutarch, *in vitâ*, who tells the story somewhat differently.

[4] It was not till after Montaigne's death that his editor undertook to name the authors whom he had quoted. And this was rather attempted than executed up to the edition of M. Buchon (whence the present translation is corrected and enlarged), which not only shews the places whence Montaigne quoted those passages, but also many others, which he had only referred to in a very loose manner, though he had inserted the sense of them in his work.

laid open to us. Knowledge and truth may be in us without judgment, and judgment also without them; but the confession of ignorance is one of the fairest and surest testimonies of judgment that I know. I have no other officer to put my writings in rank and file, but fortune. As things come into my head I heap them in; sometimes they advance in whole bodies, sometimes in single files. I am content that every one should see my natural and ordinary pace, ill as it is. I let myself jog on at my own rate and ease. Neither are these subjects which a man is not permitted to be ignorant in, or casually, and at a venture, to discourse of. I could wish to have a more perfect knowledge of things, but I will not buy it so dear as it will cost. My design is to pass over easily, and not laboriously, the remainder of my life. There is nothing that I will break my brain about; no, not knowledge, of what price soever.

What he aimed to find in books.

I seek, in the reading of books, only to please myself by an irreproachable diversion; or, if I study, it is for no other science than what treats of the knowledge of myself, and instructs me how to live and die well:

Has meus ad metas sudet oportet equus.[1]

"I to this only course
Train up, and in it only breathe my horse."

I do not bite my nails about the difficulties I meet with in my reading; after a charge or two I give them over. Should I insist upon them, I should both lose myself and time; for I have an impatient understanding that must be satisfied at once; what I do not discern at first, by persisting becomes still more obscure. I do nothing without gaiety; continuation, and a too obstinate endeavour, darkens, stupifies and tires my judgment. My sight is confounded and dissipated with poring; I must withdraw it, and refer the discovery to new attempts; just as, to judge rightly of the lustre of scarlet, we are taught to pass it lightly over with the eye, in running it over at several sudden and reiterated views and glances. If one book does not please me, I take another, and never meddle with any but at such times as I am weary of doing nothing. I care not much for new ones, because the old seem fuller, and of stronger reason; neither do I much tamper with Greek authors, for my judgment loves not to occupy itself on matters which I know but superficially.[2] Amongst those that are simply pleasant of the moderns, Boccaccio's Decameron, Rabelais, and the Basia of Johannes Secundus, if those may be ranged under that title, are worth reading. As to the Amadises, and such kind of stuff, they had not the credit to take me, so much as in my childhood. And I will moreover say (whether boldly or rashly), that this old, heavy soul of mine is now no longer delighted with Ariosto; no, nor with the good fellow Ovid; his facility and invention, with which I was formerly so ravished, are now of no relish, and I can hardly have the patience to read him. I speak my opinion freely of all things, even of those that, perhaps, exceed my capacity, and that I do not conceive to be in anywise under my jurisdiction. The judgment I deliver is to show the measure of my own sight, and not that of the things. When I find myself disgusted with Plato's Axiochus, as with a work, considering who the author was, without force, my judgment does not believe itself:[3] it is not so arrogant as to oppose the authority of so many other famous judgments of antiquity, which it considers as its directors and masters, and with whom it is rather content to err; in such a case it condemns itself, either for stopping at the outer bark, not being able to penetrate to the heart, or for considering it by some false light, and is content with securing itself from trouble and error only; and, as to its own weakness, does frankly acknowledge and confess it. It thinks it gives a just interpretation, according to the appearance that its conceptions present to it; but they are weak and imperfect. Most of the Fables of Æsop have several meanings; those who mythologised them chose some aspect that quadrates well to the Fable; but, for the most part, 'tis but the first face that presents itself, and but superficial; there yet remain others more lively, essential, and profound, into which they have not been able to penetrate; and just so do I.

What he thought of Ovid in the decline of his life.

Montaigne preferred the writings of the ancients to the moderns.

But to proceed. I have always thought that, in poetry, Virgil, Lucretius, Catullus, and Horace, do many degrees excel the rest, and signally, Virgil in his *Georgics*, which I look upon as the most finished work in poetry; in comparison of which a man may easily discern that there are some places in his *Æneids* to which the author would have given a little more of the file, had he had leisure: the fifth book of his *Æneids* seems to me the most perfect. I also love Lucan, and willingly read him; not so much for his style as for his own worth, and the truth and solidity of his opinions and judgments. As for my good Terence, the standard of all that is charming and eloquent in the Latin tongue, I find in him so admirable and lively a representation of our manners and the

His opinion of Virgil;

Of Lucan;

Of Terence;

[1] Propertius, iv. 9, 70.

[2] Montaigne takes other occasions to declare, more distinctly, his ignorance of Greek; yet we find him often quoting passages from that language.

[3] The *Axiochus* is not by Plato, and Laertius had already admitted this. It was for a long time attributed to Æschines, the Socratician (see the edition by Jean Le Clerc, Amsterdam, 1711); others have given it to Xenocrates, the Chalcedonian. Be this as it may, the dialogue is one of very great antiquity.

movements of the soul, that our actions throw me at every turn upon him; and I cannot read him so oft that I do not still discover some new grace and beauty. Such as lived near Virgil's time were scandalized that some should compare him with Lucretius. I am of opinion that the comparison is, in truth, very unequal; a belief that, nevertheless, I have much ado to assure myself in, when I meet with some excellent passages in Lucretius. But, if they were so angry at this comparison, what would they have said of the brutish and barbarous stupidity of those who, at this hour, compare Ariosto with him? and what would Ariosto himself say?

Of Lucretius.

O sæculum insipiens, et infacetum![1]

"O foolish, tasteless age!"

I think the ancients had more reason to be angry with those who compared Plautus to Terence (though he smacks more of his man), than Lucretius to Virgil. It makes much for the honour and preference of Terence that the father of Roman eloquence had him alone so often in his mouth, and the sentence that the best judge of Roman poets has passed upon the other.[2] I have often observed that those of our times who take upon them to write comedies (as well as the Italians, who are happy enough in that way of writing), take in three or four arguments of those of Plautus or Terence to make one of theirs, and crowd five or six of Boccaccio's novels into one single comedy. That which makes them so load themselves with matter is the diffidence they have of being able to support themselves with their own strength. They must find out something to lean on; and, having not of their own wherewith to entertain the audience, bring in the story to supply the defect of language. It is quite otherwise with my author;[3] the beauty, the perfection of his way of speaking, makes us lose the appetite for his plot. His fine expression, elegance, and quaintness, is every where taking: he is so pleasant throughout,

Of Plautus, as compared with Terence.

Liquidus, puroque simillimus amni;[4]

"Liquid, and like a crystal running stream;"

and does so possess the soul with his graces that we forget those of his fable. This very consideration carries me further: I observe that the best and most ancient poets have avoided the affectation and hunting after, not only of fantastic Spanish and Petrarchic elevations, but even the softest and most gentle touches, which are the ornaments of the poetry of succeeding times. And yet there is no good judgment that will condemn this in the ancients, and that does not incomparably more admire the equal polish and the perpetual sweetness and flourishing beauty of Catullus's Epigrams than all the stings with which Martial arms the tails of his. This is by the same reason that I gave before, as Martial says of himself: *Minus illi ingenio laborandum fuit, in cujus locum materia successerat.*[5] "His subject was so fruitful that he had the less need for the exercise of his wit." The first, without being moved or putting themselves out at all, make themselves sufficiently felt; they have matter enough of laughter throughout, they need not tickle themselves. The others have need of foreign assistance; as they have the less wit, they must have the more body; they mount on horseback, because they are not able to stand on their own legs. As in our balls, those mean fellows that teach to dance not being able to represent the port and dignity of our gentry, are fain to supply it with dangerous jumpings, and other strange motions and fantastic tricks. And the ladies are less put to it in dances where there are several *coupées*, changes, and quick motions of body, than in some others of a more quiet kind, where they are only to move a natural pace, and to represent their ordinary grace and port: and as I have often seen good merry-andrews, who, in their own every-day clothes, and with their ordinary face, give us all the pleasure of their art, when their apprentices, not yet arrived to such perfection, are fain to meal their faces, put themselves into a ridiculous disguise, and make a hundred faces, to get us to laugh. This conception of mine is no where more demonstrable than in comparing the *Æneid* with *Orlando Furioso;* we see the first on outspread wing, with lofty and sustained flight, always following his point; the latter, fluttering and hopping from tale to tale, as from branch to branch, not daring to trust his wings but in very short flights, and perching at every turn, lest his breath and force should fail.

Comparison betwixt Catullus and Martial.

Comparison between the Æneid and the Orlando Furioso of Ariosto.

Excursusque breves tentat.[6]

"He tries short flights."

These, then, as to this sort of subjects, are the authors that best please me.

As to what concerns my other reading, that mixes a little more profit with the pleasure, and whence I learn how to marshal my opinions and qualities; the books that serve me to this purpose are Plutarch (since he has been translated into French) and Seneca. Both of them have this great convenience

The characters of Plutarch and Seneca.

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1 Catullus, xlii. 8.

2 Horace, who says in his *Arte Poeticâ*, ver. 270, &c.:

At nostri proavi Plautinos et numeros, et
Laudavere sales, nimium patienter, utrosque,
Non dicam stultè, mirati.

"And yet our sires with joy could Plautus hear;
Gay were his jests, his numbers charm'd their ear;
Let me not say too lavishly they prais'd,
But sure their judgment was full cheaply pleas'd."

3 Terence.

4 Horace, *Epist.* ii. 2, 129.

5 Martial, *Præf. lib.* viii.

6 Virg. *Georg.* iv. 194.

suited to my humour, that the knowledge I there seek is discoursed in some pieces that do not require any great trouble of reading long, of which I am incapable. Such are the minor works of the first, and the *Epistles* of the latter, which are the best and most profitable of all their writings. 'Tis no great undertaking to take one of them in hand, and I give over at pleasure; for they have no chain or dependence upon one another. These authors, for the most part, concur in all useful and true opinions: and there is this further parallel betwixt them, that fortune brought them into the world about the same age: they were both tutors to the Roman emperors: both sought out from foreign countries: both rich, and both powerful. Their instructions are the cream of philosophy, and delivered after a plain and pertinent manner. Plutarch is more uniform and constant; Seneca more various and undulating. The last toiled, set himself, and bent his whole force to fortify virtue against frailty, fear, and vicious appetites. The other seems more to slight their power; he disdains to alter his pace, or stand upon his guard. Plutarch's opinions are Platonic, gentle, and accommodated to civil society: those of the other are Stoical and Epicurean, more remote from common use, but, in my opinion, more proper for private sanction and more firm. Seneca would seem to lean a little to the tyranny of the emperors of his time, but only seems; for I hold it for certain that he spake against his judgment when he condemns the generous action of those who assassinated Cæsar. Plutarch is frank throughout; Seneca abounds with brisk touches and sallies: Plutarch with things that heat and move you more; this contents and pays you better; he guides us, the other pushes us on.

Opinion of Cicero;

As to Cicero, those of his works that are most useful to my design are they that treat of philosophy, especially moral. But, boldly to confess the truth (for since one has stepped over the barriers of impudence there is no checking one's-self,) his way of writing, and that of all other long-winded authors, appears to me very tedious: for his prefaces, definitions, divisions, and etymologies, take up the greatest part of his work: whatever there is of life and marrow is smothered and lost in the preparation. When I have spent an hour in reading him (which is a great deal for me), and try to recollect what I have thence extracted of juice and substance, for the most part I find nothing but wind; for he is not yet come to the arguments that serve to his purpose, and the reasons that should properly help to loose the knot I would untie. For me, who only desire to become more wise, not more learned or eloquent, these logical or Aristotelian dispositions of parts are of no use. I would have a man begin with the main proposition, and that wherein the force of the argument lies; I know well enough what death and pleasure are; let no man give himself the trouble to anatomize them to me; I look for good and solid reasons at the first dash to instruct me how to stand the shock, and resist them; to which purpose neither grammatical subtleties, nor the ingenious contexture of words and arguments, are of any use at all. I am for discourses that give the first charge into the heart of the doubt; his languish about his subjects, and delay our expectation. They are proper for the schools, for the bar, and for the pulpit, where we have leisure to nod, and may awake a quarter of an hour after, time enough to find again the thread of the discourse. It is necessary to speak after this manner to judges, whom a man has a design, right or wrong, to incline to favour his cause; to children and common-people, to whom a man must say all he can, and try what effects his eloquence can produce. I would not have an author make it his business to render me attentive; or that he should cry out fifty times *O yes*, as the clerks and heralds do. The Romans, in their religious exercises, began with *Hoc age;* as we in ours do with *Sursum corda*, which are so many words lost to me; I come thither already fully prepared from my chamber. I need no allurement, no invitation, no sauce; I eat the meat raw, and, instead of whetting my appetite by these preparatives, they tire and pall it. Will the license of the time excuse the sacrilegious boldness of my holding the dialoguisms of Plato himself to be also heavy, and too much stifling his matter; and my lamenting so much time lost by a man who had so many better things to say, in so many long and needless preliminary interlocutions. My ignorance will better excuse me in this, that I see nothing in the beauty of his language. I would generally choose books that use sciences, not such as only lead to them. The two first,[1] and Pliny, and their like, have nothing of this *Hoc age;* they will have to do with men already instructed; or if they have, 'tis a substantial *Hoc age*, and that has a body by itself. I also delight in reading the Epistles to Atticus; not only because they contain a great deal of history and the affairs of his time; but much more because I therein discover much of his own private humour: for I have a singular curiosity (as I have said elsewhere) to pry into the souls, and the natural and true judgments, of the authors with whom I converse. A man may indeed judge of their parts, but not of their manners nor of themselves, by the writings they expose upon the theatre of the world. I have a thousand times lamented the loss of the treatise that Brutus writ upon virtue; for it is best learning the theory of those who best know the practice. But seeing the thing preached, and the preacher, are different things, I would as willingly see Brutus in Plutarch as in a book of his own. I would rather choose to be certainly informed of the conference he had in h

and of Plato's dialogues.

[1] Plutarch and Seneca.

tent, with some particular friends of his, the night before a battle, than of the harangue he made the next day to his army; and of what he did in his closet and his chamber, than what he did in the public place and in the Senate. As to Cicero, I am of the common opinion that (learning excepted), he had no great natural parts. He was a good citizen, of an affable nature, as all fat, heavy men, such as he was, usually are: but given to ease, and had a mighty share of vanity and ambition. Neither do I know how to excuse him for thinking his poetry fit to be published. 'Tis no great imperfection to make ill verses; but it is an imperfection not to be able to judge how unworthy his verses were of the glory of his name. For what concerns his eloquence, that is totally out of comparison: I believe it will never be equalled. The younger Cicero, who resembled his father in nothing but in name, whilst commanding in Asia had several strangers one day at his table, and among the rest Cestius, seated at the lower end, as men often intrude to the open tables of the great. Cicero asked one of his people who that man was? who presently told him his name. But he, as one who had his thoughts taken up with something else, and had forgot the answer made him, asking three or four times over and over again the same question, the fellow, to deliver himself from so many questions, and to make him know him by some particular circumstance: "'Tis that Cestius," said he, "of whom it was told you that he makes no great account of your father's eloquence in comparison of his own." At which Cicero, being suddenly nettled, commanded poor Cestius presently to be seized, and caused him to be very well whipped in his own presence:[1]—a very discourteous entertainer! Yet, even amongst those who, all things considered, have reputed his eloquence incomparable, there have been some, however, who have not stuck to observe some faults: as that great Brutus, his friend, for example, who said 'twas a broken and feeble eloquence: *fractam et elumbem*.[2] The orators, also, nearest to the age wherein he lived, reprehended in him the care he had of a certain long cadence in his periods, and particularly took notice of these words, *esse videatur*, which he there so oft makes use of.[3] For my part I better approve of a shorter cadence, that comes more roundly off; yet he sometimes shuffles his parts more briskly together, but 'tis very seldom. I have myself taken notice of this one passage, *Ego verò me minus diu senem mallem, quam esse senem antequam essem*.[4] "For my own part, I had rather be old only a short time, than be old before I really am so."

Character of Cicero.

The historians, however, are my true men; for they are pleasant and easy; where immediately man in general, the knowledge of whom I hunt after, appears more lively and entire than any where besides: the variety and truth of his internal qualities, in gross and piece-meal, the diversity of means by which he is united and knit, and the accidents that threaten him. Now those that write lives, by reason they insist more upon counsels than events, more upon what sallies from within than upon that which happens without, are the most proper for my reading; and, therefore, above all others, Plutarch is the man for me. I am very sorry we have not a dozen Laertiuses, or that he was not further extended, or better understood. For I am equally curious to know the lives and fortunes of the great instructors of the world, as to know the diversities of their doctrines and opinions. In this class of study, the reading of histories, a man must tumble over, without distinction, all sorts of authors, ancient and modern, vulgar and classical, there to know the things of which they variously treat. But Cæsar, in my opinion, particularly deserves to be studied, not for the knowledge of the history only, but for himself, so great an excellence and perfection he has above all the rest, though Sallust be one of the number. In truth, I read this author with somewhat more reverence and respect than is usually allowed to human writings; one while considering him in his person, by his actions and miraculous greatness, and another in the purity and inimitable polish of his language and style, wherein he not only excels all other historians, as Cicero confesses,[5] but peradventure even Cicero himself: speaking of his enemies with so much sincerity in his judgment that, the false colours with which he strives to palliate his ill cause, and the pollution of his pestilent ambition, excepted, I think there is no fault to be objected against him, saving this, that he speaks too sparingly of himself, seeing so many great things could not have been performed under his conduct, but that he himself must necessarily have had a greater share in the execution than he makes mention of.

Why Montaigne was best pleased with history.

Cæsar's commentaries commended.

I love historians who are either very unsophisticated or very excellent. The former, who have nothing of their own to mix with it, and who only make it their business to make a faithful collection of all that comes to their knowledge, and faithfully to record all things without choice or prejudice, leave to us the entire judgment of discerning the truth of things. Such, for example, amongst others, is honest Froissart, who has proceeded in his undertaking with so frank

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[1] Seneca, *Suasor.* viii.

[2] See the Dialogue *de Oratoribus*, c. 18.

[3] *Ib.* c. 23.

[4] Cicero, *De Senectute*, c. 10. See some observations on this criticism in the *Œuvres complètes de Cicéron*, vol. xxviii. p. 91.

[5] *Brutus*, c. 75.

Froissart.

a plainness that, having committed an error, he is not ashamed to confess and correct it in the place where the finger has been laid, and who represents to us even the variety of rumours that were then spread abroad, and the different reports that were made to him; which is the naked and unformed matter of history, and of which every one may make his profit according to his proportion of understanding. The more excellent sort of historians have judgment to pick out what is most worthy to be known; and, of two reports, to examine which is the most likely to be true. From the condition of princes and their humours they conclude the counsels, and attribute to them words proper for the occasion; and such have title to assume the authority of regulating our belief to what they themselves believe; but certainly this privilege belongs to very few. The middle sort of historians (of which the most part are) spoil all: they will chew our meat for us; they take upon themselves to judge of, and consequently to bias history to their own fancy: for, if the judgment partially lean to one side, a man cannot avoid wresting and writhing his narrative to that bias.[1] They undertake to choose things worthy to be known, and yet very often conceal from us such a word, such a private action, as would much better instruct us; omit, as incredible, such things as they do not understand; and others, perhaps, because they cannot express them in good French or Latin. Let them, in God's name, display their eloquence, and judge according to their own fancy; but let them, withal, leave us something to judge of after them, and neither alter nor disguise, by their abridgments and selections, any thing of the substance of the matter; but deliver it to us pure and entire in all its dimensions.

For the most part, and especially in these latter ages, persons are culled out for this work from amongst the common people, upon the sole consideration of well-speaking, as if we were to learn grammar thence; and the men so chosen are in the right, being hired for no other end, and pretending to nothing but babble, not to be very solicitous of any part but that, and so, with a fine jingle of words, prepare us a pretty contexture of reports they pick up in the corners of the streets. The only good histories are those that have been written by the persons themselves who commanded in the affairs whereof they write, or who have participated in the conduct of them, or, at least, who have had the conduct of others of the same nature. Such almost are all the Greek and Roman historians: for several eye-witnesses having writ of the same subject (as happened in those times, when grandeur and learning

What are the only good histories.

frequently met in the same person), if there was an error it must of necessity be a very slight one, and upon a very doubtful accident. What can a man expect from a physician who will undertake to write of war; or from a mere scholar treating upon the designs of princes? If we would take notice how religious the Romans were in this, there needs but this example: Asinius Pollio found in the History of Cæsar himself some mistake occasioned either by reason he could not have his eye in all parts of his army at once, and had given credit to some particular persons, who had not delivered him a very true account; or else for not having had too perfect notice given him by his lieutenants of what they had done in his absence.[2] By which we may see whether the inquisition after truth be not very delicate, when a man cannot believe the report of a battle from the knowledge of him who there commanded, nor from the soldiers who were engaged in it, unless, after the method of judicatory information, the witnesses be confronted, and the challenges received upon the proof of the least details of every point. The knowledge we have of our own private affairs is indeed still much weaker and more obscure: but that has been sufficiently handled by Bodin,[3] and according to my own sentiment.

The mistakes that have been discovered in Cæsar's Commentaries.

A little to guard against the treachery and defect of my memory (a defect so extreme that it has happened to me more than once to take books again into my hand for new and unseen, which I had carefully read over a few years before, and scribbled with my notes), I have taken a custom of late to fix at the end of every book (that is, of those I never intended to read again), the time when I made an end of it, and the judgment I had made of it on the whole, to the end that that might, at least, represent to me the air and general idea I had conceived of the author in reading it. And I will here transcribe some of these annotations.

I writ this some ten years ago in my Guicciardini (in what language soever my books speak, I always speak of them in my own):—"He is a diligent historiographer, and from whom, in my opinion, a man may learn the truth of the affairs of his time as exactly as from any other, or more; in the most of which he was himself also a personal actor, and in honourable command. There is no appearance that he disguised anything, either upon the account of hatred, favour, or vanity; of which the free opinion he passes upon great men, and particularly those by whom he was advanced and employed in commands of trust and honour, as Pope Clement the Seventh, give ample testimony. As to that

Opinion of Guicciardini;

[1] "Les faits changent de forme dans la tête de l'historien; ils se moulent sur ses interêts; ils prennent la teinte de ses prejugés."—ROUSSEAU, *Emile*, iv.

[2] In Suetonius's *Life of Julius Cæsar*, sect. 56, where the reader will find Pollio's criticism more severe than in Montaigne, who, however, must have taken it from Suetonius.

[3] A celebrated jurisconsult, in a work published by him in 1566, entitled *Methodus ad facilem historiarum cognitionem*.

part which he seems to think himself the best at, namely, his digressions and discourses, he has indeed very good ones, and enriched with fine expressions; but he is too fond of them: for to leave nothing unsaid, having a subject so full, ample, and almost infinite, he degenerates into pedantry, and relishes a little of the scholastic prattle. I have also observed this in him; that of so many persons, and so many effects, so many motives and so many counsels as he judges of, he never attributes any one of them to virtue, religion, or conscience; as if all those were utterly extinct in the world. And of all the actions, how brave and fair an outward show soever they make of themselves, he always throws the cause and motive upon some vicious occasion or some prospect of profit. It is impossible to imagine but that, amongst such an infinite number of actions as he makes mention of, there must be some one produced by the way of reason. No corruption could so universally have infected men that some of them would not have escaped the contagion: which makes me suspect that his own taste was vicious; whence it might happen that he judged other men by himself.

of Philip de Comines;

In my Philip de Comines there is this written:—"You will here find the language soft, delightful, and full of simplicity; the narration pure, in which the veracity of the author evidently shines; free from vanity when speaking of himself, and from affection or envy when speaking of others. His discourses and exhortations more accompanied with zeal and truth than with any exquisite self-sufficiency; and throughout authority and gravity, which speak him a man of extraction and bred up in great affairs."

of du Bellay.

Upon the Memoirs of Monsieur du Bellay[1] I find this:—"'Tis always pleasant to read things writ by those that have experienced how they ought to be carried on; but withal it cannot be denied but there is a manifest falling-off in these two lords from the freedom and liberty of writing that shines in the older historians of their class, such as the Sire de Jouinville, a domestic to St. Louis; Eginhard, chancellor to Charlemagne; and of later date in Philip de Comines. We have here rather an apology for King Francis against the Emperor Charles the Fifth than a history. I will not believe that they have falsified anything as to matter of fact; but they make a common practice of wresting the judgment of events (very often contrary to reason) to our advantage, and of omitting everything that is ticklish to be handled in the life of their master; witness the affairs of Messieurs de Montmorency and de Biron, which are here omitted: nay, so much as the very name of Madame d'Estampes is not here to be found. Secret actions an historian may conceal; but to pass over in silence what all the world knows, and things that have drawn after them important public consequences, is an inexcusable defect. In fine, whoever has a mind to have a perfect knowledge of King Francis, and what happened in his reign, let him seek it elsewhere, if my advice may prevail. The only profit a man can reap here is from the particular narrative of battles and other exploits of war wherein those gentlemen were personally engaged; some words and private actions of the princes of their time, and the practices and negociations carried on by the Seigneur de Langey; where, indeed, there are everywhere things worthy to be known, and discourses above the vulgar strain."

CHAPTER XI.

OF CRUELTY.

Virtue better than goodness.

I TAKE virtue to be distinct from, and something more noble than, those inclinations to generosity and good nature which we are born with. Well disposed and well descended souls pursue, indeed, the same methods, and represent the same face that virtue itself does; but the word virtue imports something, I know not what, more great and active than merely for a man to suffer himself, by a happy dispensation, to be gently and quietly drawn in the train of reason. He who, from a natural sweetness and facility of temper, should despise injuries received, would doubtless do a very great and a very laudable thing; but he who, provoked and nettled to the quick by an offence, should fortify himself with the arms of reason against the furious appetite of revenge, and, after a great conflict, master his own passion, would doubtless do a very great deal more. The first would do well; the latter virtuously. One action might be called goodness, and the other virtue; for methinks the very name of virtue pre-supposes difficulty and contention, and that it cannot be exercised without opposition. 'Tis for this reason, perhaps, that we call God good, mighty, liberal, and just; but we do not call him *virtuous*,[2] being that all his operations are natural and without endeavour. Many philosophers, not

Virtue cannot be exercised without some difficulty.

[1] These *Memoirs*, published by Martin du Bellay, consist of ten books, of which the four first and three last are Martin du Bellay's, and the others his brother William de Langey's, and were taken from his fifth *Ogdoade*, from the years 1536 to 1540. They are entitled *Memoirs of Martin du Bellay, containing Accounts of several things that happened in France, from* 1513 *to the death of Francis I., in* 1547. This *accounts for Montaigne's speaking of two lords du Bellay*, after he had mentioned only Monsieur du Bellay.

[2] "Quoique nous appellions Dieu *bon*, nous ne l'appellons pas *vertueux*, par ce qu'il n'a pas besoin d'effort pour bien faire."—Rousseau, *Emile*, v.

only Stoics, but Epicureans,[1] (and this distinction I borrow from the common opinion, which is a wrong one, notwithstanding that subtle quip of Arcesilaus to him who reproached him, "That many persons went from his school to the Epicurean, but never from the Epicurean to his;"—"It may well be so," said he; "cocks make many capons, but capons never make cocks." For, in truth, in firmness and austerity of opinions and precepts the Epicurean sect yields in no degree to the Stoic; and a Stoic, exhibiting better faith than those disputants who, to combat Epicurus and give themselves an advantage, make him say things he never thought of, twisting his words awry, and making use of the laws of grammar to deduce another sense from his way of speaking, and another doctrine than what, they well knew, he had in his heart and manifested in his manners, tells us that he declined to become an Epicurean for this consideration, among others, that he thought their ways too high and rugged: *Et ii qui φιληδονοι vocantur sunt φιλοκαλοι, omnes virtutes et colunt et retinent*):[2] of the philosophers, Stoic and Epicurean, I say, there are several who were of opinion that it is not enough to have the soul seated in a good place, of a good temper, and well disposed to virtue;—it is not enough to have our resolution and our reason fixed above all the power of fortune, but we are, moreover, to seek occasions wherein to put them to the proof. We are to covet pain, necessity, and contempt, to contend with them, and to keep the soul in breath: *Multum sibi adjicit virtus lacessita.*[3] "Virtue perfectionates herself by resisting assaults." 'Tis one of the reasons why Epaminondas, who was yet of a third sect,[4] refused the riches which fortune presented to him by very lawful means. "In order," said he, "to contend with poverty;" in the extreme of which he maintained himself to the last. Socrates, methinks, put himself upon a still harder trial, keeping for his exercise a termagant scolding wife, which was fighting at sharps. Metellus having, of all the Roman senators, alone attempted, by the power of virtue, to withstand the violence of Saturninus, tribune of the people at Rome, who sought forcibly to cause an unjust law to pass in favour of the commons, and by so doing having incurred the capital penalties that Saturninus had established against dissentients, entertained those who in this extremity led him to execution, with words to this effect: "That it was a thing too easy and too base to do ill; and that to do well where there was no danger was a common thing; but that to do well where there was danger was the proper office of a man of virtue."[5] These words of Metellus very clearly represent to us what I would make out, that virtue refuses facility for a companion; and that that easy, smooth, and descending way, by which the regular steps of a sweet disposition of nature are conducted, is not that of a true virtue. She requires a rough and stormy passage; she will have either outward difficulties to wrestle with, like that of Metellus, by means of which fortune delights to interrupt the speed of her career; or internal difficulties, which our inordinate appetites and imperfections introduce to disturb her.

I am come thus far at my ease; but here it comes into my head that the soul of Socrates, the most perfect that ever came to my knowledge, should, by this rule, be of very little account; for I cannot conceive in that person any the least motion of a vicious inclination: I cannot imagine there could be any difficulty or constraint in the course of his virtue: I know his reason to be so powerful and sovereign over him that she would never have suffered a vicious appetite so much as to spring in him. To a virtue so elevated as his I have nothing to oppose. Methinks I see him march, with a victorious and triumphant pace, in pomp, and at his ease, without opposition or disturbance. If virtue cannot shine bright but by the conflict of contrary appetites, shall we then say that she cannot subsist without the assistance of vice, and that it is from her that she derives her reputation and honour? What then also would become of that brave and generous Epicurean pleasure which assumes to nourish virtue tenderly in her lap, and there make it play and wanton, giving it for toys to play withal shame, fevers, poverty, death, and torments? If I presuppose that a perfect virtue manifests itself in contending, in patiently enduring pain, and undergoing the utmost extremity of the gout, without being moved in her seat; if I give her austerity and difficulty for her necessary objects, what will become of a virtue elevated to such a degree as not only to despise pain, but moreover to rejoice in it, and to be tickled with the stabs of a sharp colic, such a virtue as the Epicureans have established, and of which many of them, by their actions, have given most sufficient proofs?[6] As have likewise several others, who I take to have surpassed, in effect,

[1] Montaigne stops here to make his excuse for thus naming the Epicureans with the Stoics, in conformity to the general opinion that the Epicureans were not so rigid in their morals as the Stoics, which is not true in the main, as he demonstrates at one view. This involved Montaigne in a long parenthesis, during which it is proper that the reader be attentive, that he may not entirely lose the thread of the argument. In some latter editions of this author it has been attempted to remedy this inconvenience by some vain and unauthorised repetition; but, without observing that Montaigne's argument is rendered somewhat feeble and obscure by these, it is a license that ought not to be taken, because he who publishes the work of another ought to give it as the other composed it. Mr. Cotton was so puzzled with the enormous parenthesis that follows in the text that he quite left it out.

[2] Cicero, *Epist. Fam.* xv. 19.

[3] Seneca, *Epist.* 13.

[4] The Pythagorean. See Cicero, *de Offic.* i. 44.

[5] Plutarch, *Life of Marius.*

[6] Cicero, *de Finibus*, ii. 30.

even the rules of their own discipline; witness the younger Cato. When I see him die, and tear his own bowels, I am not satisfied simply to believe that he had then his soul totally exempt from all troubles and fear, I cannot think that he only maintained himself in the steadiness that the stoical rules prescribed him; temperate, without emotion, and undisturbed; there was, methinks, something in the virtue of this man too sprightly and active to stop there; I believe that, without doubt, he felt a pleasure and delight in so noble an action, and was more pleased in it than in any other of his life: *Sic abiit è vita ut causam moriendi nactum se esse gauderet.*[1] "He quitted life rejoicing that he had found occasion to seek death." I believe this so entirely that I question indeed whether he would have been content to have been deprived of the occasion of so brave an exploit. And if the goodness that made him embrace the public concern more than his own withheld me not, I should easily fall into an opinion that he thought himself obliged to fortune for having put his virtue upon so brave a trial, and for having favoured that thief[2] in treading under foot the ancient liberty of his country. Methinks I read in this action I know not what exultation in his soul, and an extraordinary and manly emotion of pleasure, when he looked upon the generosity and height of his enterprize:

The noble death of Cato accompanied with pleasure.

Deliberata morte ferocior:[3]

"Made more haughty by his resolution to die:"

not stimulated with any hope of glory, as the popular and effeminate judgments of some have concluded (for that consideration had been too mean and low to possess so generous, so haughty, and so unbending a heart as his), but for the very beauty of the thing in itself, which he, who had the handling of the springs discerned more clearly and in its perfection than we are able to do. Philosophy has obliged me in determining that so brave an action had been indecently placed in any other life than that of Cato, and that it only belonged to his to end so. Therefore it was that, according to reason, he commanded his son and the senators that accompanied him, to take another course in their affairs: *Catoni quum incredibilem natura tribuisset gravitatem, eamque ipse perpetua constantia roboravisset, semperque in proposito consilio permansisset, moriendum potius quam tyranni vultus aspiciendus erat.*[4] "Nature having endued Cato with a surprising inflexibility, which he himself had fortified with perpetual exercise, never having deviated from his resolutions, he chose rather to die than to see the face of the tyrant." Every death ought to hold proportion with the life before it. We do not become others for dying. I always interpret the death by the life preceding; and if any one tells me of a death strong and firm in appearance, annexed to a feeble life, I conclude it produced by some feeble cause, and suitable to the life before. The easiness then of this death, and the facility of dying he had acquired by the vigour of his soul, shall we say that it ought to abate anything of the lustre of his virtue? And who that has his brain never so little tinctured with the true philosophy, can be content to imagine Socrates merely free from fear and passion in the accident of his prison, fetters, and condemnation? and that will not discover in him not only stability and firmness (which was his ordinary composure), but moreover I know not what new satisfaction and frolic cheerfulness in his last words and actions? at the start he gave, with the pleasure of scratching his leg, when his irons were taken off, does he not discover an equal serenity and joy in his soul for being freed from past inconveniences, and at the same time to enter into the knowledge of things to come? Cato will pardon me if he please; his death, indeed, is more tragical and more taken notice of, but yet this, I know not how, finer. Aristippus said to those who were pitying him, "The gods grant me such a death." A man discerns in the souls of these two great men and their imitators (for I very much doubt whether there were ever their equals) so perfect a habit of virtue that it was turned to a complexion. It is no more a laborious virtue, nor the precepts of reason, to maintain which the soul is racked; but the very essence of their souls, its natural and ordinary condition. They have rendered it such by a long practice of philosophical precepts, having lit upon a rich and ingenuous nature. The vicious passions that spring in us can find no entrance into them. The force and vigour of their souls stifle and extinguish irregular desires so soon as they begin to move.

Virtue turned into habit in Cato and Socrates.

Now, that it is not more noble, by a high and divine resolution, to hinder the birth of temptations, and to be so formed to virtue that the very seeds of vice be rooted out, than to hinder, by main force, their progress; and having suffered one's-self to be surprised with the first motions of the passions, to arm one's-self, and to stand firm to oppose their progress and overcome them; and that this second effect, itself, is not also much more noble than to be simply endowed with a facile and affable nature, of itself disaffected to debauchery and vice, I do not think can be doubted; for this third and last sort seems to

Different degrees of virtue.

[1] Cicero, *Tusc. Quæst.* i. 30.

[2] *Cæsar*, who, notwithstanding his great qualities, which Montaigne set off with such lustre in the preceding chapter, is here treated as he deserves, for having committed the most heinous of all crimes. Cicero, too, calls him *perditus latro* (*Ad Attic.* vii. 18).

[3] Horace, *Od.* i. 37. 29.

[4] Cic. *de Offic.* i. 31.

render a man innocent, but not virtuous; free from doing ill, but not apt enough to do well: added, that this condition is so near neighbour to imperfection and weakness that I know not very well how to separate the confines and distinguish them: the very name of goodness, and good nature, and innocence are, for this reason, in some sort grown into contempt. I know that several virtues, as chastity, sobriety, and temperance, may come to a man through personal defects. Firmness in danger (if firmness it must be called), the contempt of death and patience in misfortunes, may oft-times be found in men for want of well judging of such matters, and not apprehending them for such as they are. Want of apprehension and sottishness do sometimes counterfeit virtuous effects: as I have often observed it happen that men have been commended for what really deserved blame. An Italian lord once said this in my presence, to the disadvantage of his own nation; that the subtilty of the Italians and the vivacity of their conceptions were so great that they foresaw the dangers and accidents that might befal them so far off that it must not be thought strange if they were often, in war, observed to provide for their safety, even before they had discovered the peril: that we French and Spaniards, who are not so cunning, went on further; and that we must be made to see and feel the danger before we could take the alarm; but the Germans and Swiss, more heavy and thick-skulled, had not the sense to look about them, even then, when the blows were falling about their ears. Perhaps, he only said so for mirth's sake. And yet it is most certain that, in war, raw soldiers rush into danger with more precipitation than after they have been well beaten.

Italians subtile and quick of apprehension.

Germans and Swiss loggerheads.

> Haud ignarus * * * quantum nova gloria in armis,
> Et prædulce decus, primo certamine, possit.[1]
>
> "Knowing how much the hope of glory warms
> The soldier in his first essay of arms."

For this reason it is that when we judge of a particular action, we are to consider the several circumstances and the whole of the man by whom it is performed, before we give it a name.

To instance in myself; I have sometimes known my friends call that prudence in me which was merely fortune, and repute that courage and patience which was judgment and opinion: and attribute to me one title for another, sometimes to my advantage, and sometimes otherwise. As to the rest, I am so far from being arrived at the first and most perfect degree of excellence, where virtue is turned into habit, that even of the second I have made no great trial. I have not been very solicitous to curb the desires by which I have been importuned. My virtue is a virtue, or rather an innocence, casual and accidental. If I had been born of a more irregular complexion, I am afraid I should have made scurvy work on't; for I never observed any great stability in my soul to resist passions, if they were never so little vehement. I have not the knack of nourishing quarrels and debates in my own bosom, and consequently owe myself no great thanks that I am free from several vices:

In what consisted Montaigne's virtue.

> Si vitiis mediocribus et mea paucis
> Mendosa est natura, alioqui recta; velut si
> Egregio inspersos reprehendas corpore nævos:[2]
>
> "If of small crimes, and few, my nature be
> To be accused, and from the great ones free,
> Those venial faults will no more spot my soul
> Than a fair body's blemished with a mole:

I owe it rather to my fortune than my reason. She has made me to be descended of a race famous for conduct, and of a very good father; I know not whether or no he has infused into me part of his humour; or whether domestic examples and the good education of my infancy have insensibly assisted in the work, or if I was otherwise born so:

> Seu Libra, seu me Scorpius aspicit
> Formidolosus, pars violentior
> Natalis horæ, seu tyrannus
> Hesperiæ Capricornus undæ.[3]
>
> "If Libra, or dread Scorpio's sign,
> Or Capricorn with stormy rays
> Prevailed, the tyrant of the Hesperian seas.

But so it is that I have naturally a horror for most vices. The answer of Antisthenes to him who asked him which was the best apprenticeship; "To unlearn evil,"[4] seems to point at this. I have them in horror, I say, with a detestation so natural and so much my own that the same instinct and impression I brought with me from my nurse I yet retain, no temptations whatever having had the power to make me alter it; not so much as my own discourses, which, in some things, dashing out of the common road, might easily license me to actions that my natural inclination makes me hate. I will say a prodigious thing, but I will say it however; I find myself, in many things, more curbed and retained by my manners than my opinion, and my concupiscence is less debauched than my reason. Aristippus instituted opinions so bold, in favour of pleasure and riches, as made all the philosophers set at him: but, as to his manners, Dionysius, the tyrant, having presented three beautiful women before him to take his choice, he made answer that he would choose them all, and that it had happened ill to Paris in having preferred one before the other two: but

Montaigne's opinions not so regular as his manners.

[1] *Æneid*, xi: 154.
[2] Horace, *Sat.* i. 6, 65.
[3] Horace, *Od.* ii. 17. 17.
[4] Laertius, *in vitâ.*

having taken them home to his house, he sent them back untouched.[1] His servant finding himself overloaded upon the way, with the money he carried after him, he ordered him to pour out and throw away that which troubled him.[2] And Epicurus, whose doctrines are so irreligious and effeminate, was, in his life, very laborious and devout: he wrote to a friend of his that he lived only upon biscuit and water, intreating him to send him a little cheese to lie by him against he had a mind to make a feast.[3] Can it be true, that to be a perfect good man we must be so by an occult, natural and universal propriety, without law, reason, or example? The debauchs wherein I have been engaged have *not* been, I thank God, of the worst sort; and I have thoroughly condemned them myself; for my judgment was never infected by them. On the contrary, I accuse them more severely in myself than in another. But that is all; for, as to the rest, I oppose too little resistance, and suffer myself to incline too much to the other side of the balance, excepting that I moderate them, and prevent them from mixing with other vices which, for the most part, will cling together if a man have not a care. I have contracted and curtailed mine to make them as single as I can:

Nec ultra
Errorem foveo.[4]

"Nor ever beyond this my faults indulge."

For, as to the opinion of the Stoics, who say that the wise man, when he works, works by all the virtues together, though one be most apparent, according to the nature of the action; (and of this the similitude of a human body might serve them to some instance; for the action of anger cannot work but that all the humours must assist, though choler predominate:) if thence they will draw a like consequence, that when the wicked man does wickedly, he does it by all the vices together, I do not believe it to be simply so, or else I understand them not; for I, by effect, find the contrary. These are witty, unsubstantial subtilties, which philosophy sometimes insists upon. I follow some vices, but I fly others as much as a saint would do. The Peripateticks also disown this indissoluble connection; and Aristotle is of opinion that a prudent and just man may be intemperate and lascivious. Socrates confessed to some who had discovered a certain inclination to vice in his physiognomy, that it was, in truth, his natural propensity, but that he had, by discipline, corrected it.[5] And such as were familiar with the philosopher Stilpo said that, being born subject to wine and women, he had, by study, rendered himself very abstinent both from the one and the other.[6]

What I have in me of good, I have, on the contrary, by the chance of my birth; and hold it not either by law, precept, or other apprenticeship. The innocence that is in me is quite simple; little vigour and no art. Amongst other vices I mortally hate cruelty, both by nature and judgment, as the extreme of all vices; and this to such a degree of tender-heartedness that I cannot see a chicken's neck pulled off without trouble, and cannot, without impatience, endure the cry of a hare in my dog's teeth, though the chase be an exciting pleasure. Such as are combatting sensuality willingly make use of this argument, to shew that it is altogether vicious and unreasonable that, when it is at the height, it masters us to that degree that a man's reason can have no access,[7] and they allege our own experience in the act of love

What Montaigne's goodness consisted in.

Quum jam præsagit corpus,
Atque in eo est Venus, ut muliebria conserat arva;[8]

wherein they conceive that the pleasure doth so transport us that our reason cannot perform its office whilst we are so benumbed and ravished with delight. I know very well it may be otherwise, and that a man may sometimes, if he will, gain this point over himself to sway his soul, even in the critical moment, to think of something else: but then he must firmly incline and ply it to that bent. I know that a man may triumph over the utmost effort of this pleasure: I have experienced it myself, and have not found Venus so imperious a goddess as many, and some more correct than I, declare. I do not consider it as a miracle, as the Queen of Navarre does, in one of the tales of her *Heptameron* (which is a pretty book of its kind), nor for a thing of extreme difficulty, to pass over whole nights, where a man has all the convenience and liberty he can desire, with a long-coveted mistress, and yet be just to his faith before given, to content himself with kisses and innocent embraces, without pressing any further. I conceive that the example of the pleasure of the chase would be more proper: wherein, though the pleasure be less, yet the ravishment and the surprise are more, by which the reason, being astonished, has not so much leisure to prepare itself for the encounter; when after a long quest the game starts up on a sudden in a place where, perhaps, we least expected: which sudden motion, with the ardour of the shouts and cries of the hunters, so strike us that it would be hard, for such as are lovers of the chase, to turn their thoughts another way: and the poets make

He could resist the strongest impressions of pleasure.

The pleasure of the Chase, what.

[1] Laertius, *in vitâ.*
[2] Id. *ib.*
[3] Id. *ib.*
[4] Juvenal, viii. 154.

[5] Cicero, *Tusc. Quæs.* iv. 37.
[6] —— *de fato*, c. 5.
[7] —— *de Senect.* c. 12.
[8] Lucretius, iv. 1099.

Diana triumph over the torch and shafts of Cupid:

> Quis non malarum, quas amor curas habet,
> Hæc inter obliviscitur?[1]
>
> "Who amongst such delights would not remove
> Out of his thoughts the anxious cares of love?"

To return to my subject. I am tenderly compassionate of other afflictions, and should readily cry for company if, upon any occasion whatever, I could cry at all. Nothing tempts my tears but tears, and not only those that are real and true, but whatever they are, feigned or real. I do not much pity the dead, and should envy them rather; but I very much pity the dying. The savages do not so much offend me in roasting and eating the bodies of the dead as they do who torment and persecute the living. Nay, I cannot so much as look upon the ordinary executions of justice, how reasonable soever, with a steady eye. Some one having to give testimony of Julius Cæsar's clemency: "He was," says he, "mild and moderate in his vengeance; for, having compelled the pirates to yield, by whom he had before been taken prisoner and put to ransom, forasmuch as they had threatened him with the cross, he indeed condemned them to it, but it was after they were first strangled. He punished his secretary, Philemon, who had attempted to poison him, with no greater severity than simple death." Without naming that Latin author[2] that dares allege for a testimony of clemency the only killing those by whom we have been offended; it is easy to guess that he was struck with the horrid and inhuman examples of cruelty practised by the Roman tyrants.

Julius Cæsar's clemency.

For my part, even in justice itself, all that exceeds mere death appears to me pure cruelty; especially in us, who ought to have that regard to souls to dismiss them in a good and calm condition: which cannot be when we have discomposed them by insufferable torments. Not long since a soldier, who was a prisoner, perceiving from a tower where he was shut up that the people began to assemble in the place of execution, and that the carpenters were busy erecting a scaffold, he presently concluded that the preparation was for him; and therefore entered into a resolution to kill himself, but could find no instrument to assist him in his design, except an old rusty cart-nail, that fortune presented to him: with this he first gave himself two great wounds about his throat; but finding these would not do, he presently after gave himself a third in the belly, where he left the nail sticking up to the head. The first of his keepers that came in found him in this condition, alive, but sunk down and exhausted by his wounds. Therefore, to make use of time before he should die and defeat the law, they made haste to read his sentence, which having done, and he hearing that he was only condemned to be beheaded, he seemed to take new courage, accepted of wine, which he had before refused, and thanked his judges for the unhoped-for mildness of their sentence; saying, "That indeed he had taken a resolution to dispatch himself, for fear of a more severe and insupportable death; having entertained an opinion, by the preparations he had seen in the place, that they were resolved to torment him with some horrible execution:" and seemed to be delivered from death by having it changed from what he apprehended.

The executions of justice ought to be simple, and to carry no marks of severity.

I should advise that these examples of severity, by which 'tis designed to retain the people in their duty, might be exercised upon the dead bodies of criminals; for to see them deprived of sepulture, to see them boiled and divided into quarters, would almost work as much upon the vulgar as the pain they make the living endure: though that, in effect, be little or nothing, as God himself says, "Who kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do."[3] And the poets represent the horror of such a sight as far above that of death itself:

> Heu! reliquias semiassi regis, denudatis ossibus,
> Per terram sanie delibutas fœde divexarier.[4]

I happened to come by one day accidentally, at Rome, just as they were upon executing Catena, a notorious robber. He was strangled, without any emotion on the part of the spectators; but when they came to cut him in quarters, the hangman gave not a blow that was not followed by a doleful cry from the people, and an exclamation as if every one had lent his feeling to the miserable carcase. Those inhuman excesses ought to be exercised upon the bark, and not upon the quick. 'Twas thus that Artaxerxes moderated the severity of the ancient laws of Persia, ordering "That the nobility who had failed in their charge, instead of being whipped, as they used to be, should be stripped only, and their clothes whipped for them; and that, whereas they had formerly their hair torn off, they should only take off their high-crowned tiara."[5] The so devout Egyptians thought they sufficiently satisfied the divine justice in sacrificing hogs in effigy and representation:[6] a bold invention to pay God, so essential a substance, in picture only, and in show.

The severe laws of Persia moderated by Artaxerxes.

Hogs sacrificed in effigy to the divine justice by the Egyptians.

I live in a time wherein we abound in inces-

[1] Horace, *Epod.* ii. 37. In the first editions of the Essays, Montaigne added, after this quotation, "What a set of odds and ends have we here; I went clear out of my way to jog in this bit of prattle about the chase."

[2] *Suetonius*, in the Life of Cæsar.

[3] St. Luke, xii. 40.

[4] "Let not the blood-stained relics of the half-burnt king be dragged over the plains."—Cicero, *Tuscul.* i. 44.

[5] Plutarch, in his *Apothegms of the ancient Kings.*

[6] Herodotus, ii. 47, says this was only done by the poorer sort, who made swine in dough, which they baked, and then offered the sacrifice.

dible examples of this vice, through the license of our civil wars; and we see nothing in ancient histories more extreme than what we have proof of every day. I could hardly persuade myself, before I saw it with my eyes, that there could be found out men so cruel and fell who, for the sole pleasure of murder, would hack and lop off the limbs of others; sharpen their wits to invent unusual torments and new kinds of deaths, without hatred, without profit, and for no other end but only to enjoy the pleasant spectacle of the gestures and motions, the lamentable groans and cries of a man dying in anguish. For this is the utmost point to which cruelty can arrive, *Ut homò hominem, non iratus, non timens, tantum spectaturus, occidat.*[1] "That a man should kill a man without being angry, or without fear, only for the pleasure of the spectacle." For my own part I cannot, without pain, see so much as an innocent beast pursued and killed that has no defence, and from whom we have received no offence at all. And that which frequently happens, that the stag we hunt, finding himself weak and out of breath, seeing no other remedy, surrenders himself to us who pursue him, imploring mercy by his tears,

The cruelties exercised in civil wars.

Montaigne's humanity with regard to beasts.

Questuque, cruentus,
Atque imploranti similis,[2]

"With bleeding tears doth mercy seem to crave,"

has ever been to me a very melancholy sight. I hardly ever take any beast or bird alive that I do not presently turn loose. Pythagoras bought them of huntsmen and fowlers, and fishes of fishermen, to do the same:

Primoque a cæde ferarum
Incaluisse puto maculatum sanguine ferrum.[3]

"I think 'twas slaughter of wild beasts that made
Too docile man first learn the killing trade."

Those natures that are sanguinary towards beasts discover a natural propensity to cruelty. After they had accustomed themselves, at Rome, to the spectacle of the slaughter of animals, they proceeded to those of the slaughter of men, of the gladiators. Nature has herself, I fear, imprinted in man a kind of instinct to inhumanity; no body takes pleasure in seeing beasts play and caress one another, but every one is delighted with seeing them dismember and tear one another to pieces. And that I may not be laughed at for the sympathy I have with them, theology itself enjoins us some favour in their behalf: and, considering that one and the same Master has lodged us together in this palace for his service, and that they, as well as we, are of his family, it has reason to enjoin us some affection and regard to them. Pythagoras borrowed the Metempsycosis from the Egyptians, but it has since been received by several nations, and, particularly, by our druids:

Pythagoras's doctrine of the transmutation of souls.

Morte carent animæ; semperque, priore relicta
Sede, novis domibus vivunt, habitantque receptæ.[4]

"Souls never die, but, having left one seat,
Into new mansions they admittance get."

The religion of our ancient Gauls maintained that souls, being eternal, never ceased to remove and shift their places from one body to another; mixing, moreover, with this fancy some consideration of divine justice. For, according to the behaviour of the soul, whilst it had been in Alexander, they said that God ordered it another body to inhabit, more or less painful, and proper for its condition:

Muta ferarum
Cogit vincla pati: truculentos ingerit ursis,
Prædonesque lupis; fallaces vulpibus addit.
* * * * * *
Atque ubi per varios annos, per mille figuras
Egit, Lætheo purgatos flumine, tandem
Rursus ad humanæ revocat primordia formæ:[5]

"The yoke of speechless brutes he made them wear,
Blood-thirsty souls he did inclose in bears;
Those that rapacious were in wolves he shut;
The sly and cunning he in foxes put;
Where after having, in a course of years,
In num'rous forms, quite finish'd their careers,
In Lethe's flood he purged them, and at last
In human bodies he the souls replac'd:"

if it had been valiant, he lodged it in the body of a lion; if voluptuous, in that of a hog; if timorous, in that of a hart or hare; if subtle, in that of a fox; and so of the rest, till, having purified it by this chastisement, it again entered into the body of some other man;

Ipse ego, nam memini, Trojani tempore belli,
Panthoides Euphorbus eram.[6]

"For I, myself, remember, in the days
O' th' Trojan war, that I Euphorbus was."[7]

As to the relation betwixt us and beasts, I do not much admit of it, nor allow what several nations, and those some of the most ancient and most noble, have practised, who have not only received brutes into their society, but have given them a rank infinitely above them; esteeming them one while familiars and favourites of the gods, and having them in more than human reverence and respect; others knowing no other God or Divinity but they. *Belluæ à Barbaris propter beneficium consecratæ.*[7] "The Barbarians consecrated beasts out of opinion of some benefit received by them:"

Beasts revered as gods by some of the ancients.

[1] Seneca, *Epist.* 90.
[2] *Æneid*, vii. 501.
[3] Ovid. *Met.* xv. 106.
[4] Ovid, *Met.* xv. 166.
[5] Claudian, *in Rufin.* ii. 482.

[6] It is Pythagoras who speaks thus of himself, in Ovid, *Metam.* xv. 3, 8. Would you know by what means Pythagoras could remember what he had been in the time of the Trojan war? See Diogenes Laert. *in vitâ.*
[7] Cicero, *De Nat. Deor.* i. 36.

Crocodilon adorat
Pars hæc; illa pavet saturam serpentibus Ibin:
Effigies sacri hic nitet aurea Cercopitheci,
* * * * hic piscem fluminis, illic
Oppida tota canem venerantur.[1]

"The serpent-eating ibis these inshrine,
Those think the crocodile alone divine;
There, in another place, you may behold
The statue of a monkey shine with gold;
Here men some monstrous fish's aid implore,
And there whole towns a grinning dog adore."

And the very interpretation that Plutarch gives to this error,[2] which is very well put, is advantageous to them: for, he says, that it was not the cat, or the ox, for example, that the Egyptians adored: but that they, in those beasts, adored some image of the divine faculties; in this patience and utility, in that vivacity, or, like our neighbours, the Burgundians, with the whole of Germany, impatience to see itself shut up; by which they represented the liberty they loved and adored above all other divine faculties, and so of the rest. But when, amongst the more moderate opinions, I meet with arguments that endeavour to demonstrate the near resemblance betwixt us and animals, how much they share in our greatest privileges, and with how great probability they compare us together, in faith, I abate a great deal of our presumption, and willingly resign the title of that imaginary sovereignty that some attribute to us over other creatures.

But supposing all this were not so, there is, nevertheless, a certain respect, and a general duty of humanity, that ties us, not only to beasts that have life and sense, but even to trees and plants. We owe justice to men, and graciousness and benignity to other creatures that are capable of it. There is a certain natural commerce and mutual obligation betwixt them and us; neither shall I be afraid to discover the tenderness of my nature so childish that I cannot well refuse to play with my dog when he, the most unseasonably, importunes me so to do. The Turks have alms and hospitals for beasts. The Romans had public care to the nourishment of geese,[3] by whose vigilancy their Capitol had been preserved. The Athenians made a decree that the mules, which served at the building of the temple, called Hecatompedon, should be free, and suffered to pasture where they would without hindrance.[4] The Agrigentines had a common custom solemnly to inter the beasts they had a kindness for; as horses of some extraordinary qualities, dogs and birds of whom they had had profit, and even those that had only been kept to divert their children: and the magnificency that was common with them in all other things did also particularly appear in the sumptuousness and number of monuments erected to this end, that remained a show for several ages after.[5] The Egyptians buried wolves, bears, crocodiles, dogs, and cats, in sacred places, embalmed their bodies, and put on mourning at their death.[6] Cimon gave an honourable sepulture to the mares with which he had three times gained the prize of the course at the Olympic games.[7] The ancient Xantippus caused his dog to be interred on an eminence near the sea, which has ever since retained the name.[8] And Plutarch says[9] that he made conscience of selling to the slaughter, for a paltry profit, an ox that had been long in his service.

We ought to have some regard for the brute beasts.

CHAPTER XII.

APOLOGY FOR RAIMOND SEBOND.[10]

LEARNING is, indeed, a very great and a very material accomplishment; and those who despise it sufficiently discover their own want of understanding; but yet I do not prize it at the excessive rate that some others do, as Herillus, the philosopher, for one, who therein places the sovereign good, and maintained "That it was only in her to render us wise and contented,"[11] which I do not believe; no more than I do what others have said, that learning is the mother of all virtue, and that all vice proceeds from ignorance, which, if it be true, requires a very long interpretation. My house has long been open to men of knowledge, and is very well known to them; for my father, who governed it fifty years and upwards, inflamed with the new ardour with which Francis the First embraced letters, and brought them into esteem, with great diligence and expense hunted after the acquaintance of learned men, receiving them into his house as persons sacred, and that had some particular inspiration of divine wisdom; collecting their sayings and sentences as so many oracles, and with so much the greater reverence and religion as he was the less able to judge of them; for he had no knowledge of letters any more than his predecessors. For my part I love them well, but I do not adore them. Amongst others, Peter Bunel,[12] a man of great reputation for knowledge in his time, having, with some others of his sort, staid some days at Montaigne in my father's company, he pre-

The utility of learning.

1 Juv. xv. 2.
2 In his Treatise on *Isis* and *Osiris*.
3 Cicero, *pro Rosc. Am.* c. 20. Livy, v. 47. Pliny, x. 22.
4 Plutarch, *Life of Cato the Censor*.
5 Diod. Sic. xiii. 17.
6 Herod. ii. 65.
7 Id. vi. 103. Ælian, *H of Animals*, xii. 40.
8 *Cynossema*. Plutarch's *Life of Cato the Censor*.
9 Id. *ib.*
10 Called also Sebon, Sebeyde, Sabonde, de Sebonde; born at Barcelona in the fourteenth century; died in 1433, at Toulouse, where he had lived as professor of medicine and theology. Joseph Scaliger said of this apology for Sebond: "Eo omnia faciunt, ut *magnificat à matines*."—Scalig. ii.
11 Laertius, *in vitâ*.
12 A native of Toulouse, one of the most able Ciceronians of the sixteenth century, in the opinion of Henry Stephen; born 1499, died at Turin 1546. He was preceptor of Pibrac. See Baile, *in verbo*.

sented him at his departure with a book, entitled *Theologia naturalis; sive Liber Creaturarum, magistri Raimondi de Sebonde.*[1]

Sebond's work translated by Montaigne.

And as the Italian and Spanish tongues were familiar to my father, and as this book was written in a sort of jargon of Spanish with Latin terminations, he hoped that, with a little help, he might be able to understand it, and therefore recommended it to him for a very useful book, and proper for the time wherein he gave it to him; which was when the novel doctrines of Luther began to be in vogue, and in many places to stagger our ancient belief: wherein he was very well advised, wisely, in his own reason, foreseeing that the beginning of this distemper would easily run into an execrable atheism, for the vulgar, not having the faculty of judging of things, suffering themselves to be carried away by chance and appearance, after having once been inspired with the boldness to despise and controul those opinions which they had before had in extreme reverence, such as those wherein their salvation is concerned, and that some of the articles of their religion are brought into doubt and dispute, they afterwards throw all other parts of their belief into the same uncertainty, they having with them no other authority or foundation than the others they had already discomposed; and shake off all the impressions they had received from the authority of the laws, or the reverence of the ancient customs, as a tyrannical yoke:

> Nam cupide conculcatur nimis ante metutum;[2]
>
> "For with most eagerness they spurn the law,
> By which they were before most kept in awe;"

resolving to admit nothing for the future to which they had not first interposed their own decrees, and given their particular consent.

It happened that my father, a little before his death, having accidentally found this book under a heap of other neglected papers, commanded me to translate it for him into French. It is good to translate such authors as this, where there is little but the matter itself to express; but such wherein grace of language and elegance of style are aimed at, are dangerous to attempt, especially when a man is to turn them into a weaker idiom. It was a strange and a new undertaking for me; but having by chance at that time nothing else to do, and not being able to resist the command of the best father that ever was, I did it as well as I could; and he was so well pleased with it as to order it to be printed, which after his death was done.[3]

What books are proper to translate.

I found the ideas of this author exceeding fine, the contexture of his work well followed, and his design full of piety; and because many people take a delight to read it, and particularly the ladies, to whom we owe the most service, I have often thought to assist them to clear the book of two principal objections made to it. His design is bold and daring, for he undertakes, by human and natural reasons, to establish and make good, against the atheists, all the articles of the Christian religion: wherein, to speak the truth, he is so firm and so successful that I do not think it possible to do better upon that subject; nay, I believe he has been equalled by none. This work seeming to me to be too beautiful and too rich for an author whose name is so little known, and of whom all that we know is that he was a Spaniard, practising physic at Toulouse about two hundred years ago; I enquired of Adrian Turnebus, who knew all things, what he thought of that book; who made answer, "That he thought it was some abstract drawn from St. Thomas d'Aquin; for that, in truth, his mind, so full of infinite erudition and admirable subtlety, was alone capable of such thoughts." Be this as it may, whoever was the author and inventor (and 'tis not reasonable, without greater certainty, to deprive Sebond of that title), he was a man of great judgment and most admirable parts.

The first thing they reprehend in his work is "That Christians are to blame to repose their belief upon human reason, which is only conceived by faith and the particular inspiration of divine grace." In which objection there appears to be something of zeal to piety, and therefore we are to endeavour to satisfy those who put it forth with the greater mildness and respect. This were a task more proper for a man well read in divinity than for me, who know nothing of it; nevertheless, I conceive that in a thing so divine, so high, and so far transcending all human intelligence, as is that truth, with which it has pleased the bounty of God to enlighten us, it is very necessary that he should moreover lend us his assistance, as a very extraordinary favour and privilege, to conceive and imprint it in our understanding. And I do not believe that means purely human are in any sort capable of doing it: for, if they were, so many rare and excellent souls, and so abundantly furnished with natural force, in former ages, could not have failed, by their reason, to arrive at this knowledge. 'Tis faith alone that livelily and certainly comprehends the deep mysteries of

The objection made to the book; and Montaigne's answer.

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[1] In the first edition of the Essays, and in that of 1588, it is simply called *La Théologie Naturelle de Raimond Sebond.* The original Latin work was first printed at Deventer, in 1487, and was often reprinted in France during the 16th and 17th centuries.

[2] Lucret. v. 1139.

[3] "A Paris, chez Gabriel Buon," in 1569. Montaigne, in his first edition of the Essays, also states that the first edition of his translation was full of errors of the press, owing to the carelessness of the printer, who had the sole care of it. This translation was reprinted, in 1588, more correctly, Montaigne himself having purged it of the printer's errors. The best edition is that printed at Paris in 1611. There is such a perspicuity, spirit, and natural vivacity in this translation, that it has all the air of an original. Montaigne has added nothing of his own to it but a short dedication of it to his father, which the reader will find at the end of the present volume.

our religion; but, withal, I do not say that it is not a worthy and very laudable attempt to accommodate those natural and human utensils with which God has endowed us to the service of our faith: it is not to be doubted but that it is the most noble use we can put them to; and that there is not a design in a Christian man more noble than to make it the aim and end of all his studies to extend and amplify the truth of his belief. We do not satisfy ourselves with serving God with our souls and understandings only, we moreover owe and render him a corporal reverence, and apply our limbs and motions, and external things to do him honour; we must here do the same, and accompany our faith with all the reason we have, but always with this reservation, not to fancy that it is upon us that it depends, nor that our arguments and endeavours can arrive at so supernatural and divine a knowledge. If it enters not into us by an extraordinary infusion; if it enters not only by reason, but, moreover, by human ways, it is not in us in its true dignity and splendour: and yet, I am afraid, we only have it by this way. If we hold upon God by the mediation of a lively faith; if we hold upon God by him, and not by us; if we had a divine basis and foundation, human occasions would not have the power to shake us as they do; our fortress would not surrender to so weak a battery; the love of novelty, the constraint of princes, the success of one party, and the rash and fortuitous change of our opinions, would not have the power to stagger and alter our belief: we should not then leave it to the mercy of every new argument, nor abandon it to all the rhetoric in the world; we should withstand the fury of these waves with an immovable and unyielding constancy:

The marvellous effects of lively faith.

> Hlisos fluctus rupes ut vasta refundit,
> Et varias circum latrantes dissipat undas
> Mole sua.[1]
>
> "As a great rock repels the rolling tides,
> That foam and bark about her marble sides,
> From its strong bulk."

If we were but touched with this ray of divinity, it would appear throughout; not only our words, but our works also, would carry its brightness and lustre; whatever proceeded from us would be seen illuminated with this noble light. We ought to be ashamed that, in all the human sects, there never was any of the faction, what difficulty and strange novelty soever his doctrine imposed upon him, that did not, in some measure, conform his life and behaviour to it, whereas so divine and heavenly an institution does only distinguish Christians by the name! Will you see the proof of this? Compare our manners to those of a Mahometan or Pagan, you will still find that we fall very short; there where, out of regard to the reputation and advantage of our religion, we ought to shine in excellency at a vast distance beyond all others: and that it should be said of us, "Are they so just, so charitable, so good? Then they are Christians." All other signs are common to all religions; hope, trust, events, ceremonies, penance, martyrs. The peculiar mark of our truth ought to be our virtue, as it is also the most heavenly and difficult, and the most worthy product of truth. For this our good St. Louis was in the right, who, when the Tartar king, who was become Christian, designed to come to Lyons to kiss the Pope's feet, and there to be an eye-witness of the sanctity he hoped to find in our manners, immediately diverted him from his purpose; for fear lest our disorderly way of living should, on the contrary, put him out of conceit with so holy a belief.[2] And yet it happened quite otherwise since to that other, who, going to Rome, to the same end, and there seeing the dissoluteness of the prelates and people of that time, settled himself so much the more firmly in our religion, considering how great the force and divinity of it must necessarily be that could maintain its dignity and splendour among so much corruption, and in so vicious hands. If we had but one single grain of faith, we should remove mountains from their places,[3] saith the sacred Word; our actions, that would then be directed and accompanied by the divinity, would not be merely human, they would have in them something of miraculous, as well as our belief: *Brevis est institutio vitæ honestæ beataque, si credas.*[4] "Believe, and the way to happiness and virtue is a short one." Some impose upon the world that they believe that which they do not; others, more in number, make themselves believe that they believe, not being able to penetrate into what it is to believe. We think it strange if, in the civil war which, at this time, disorders our state, we see events float and vary after a common and ordinary manner; which is because we bring nothing to it but our own. Justice, which is in one party, is only there for ornament and palliation; it is, indeed, pretended, but 'tis not there received, settled and espoused: it is there, as in the mouth of an advocate, not as in the heart and affection of the party. God owes his extraordinary assistance to faith and religion; not to our passions. Men there are the conductors, and therein serve themselves with religion, whereas it ought to be quite contrary. Observe, if it be not by our own hands that we guide and train it, and draw it like wax into so many con-

Virtue the particular mark of the Christian religion.

God assists our faith and religion, not our passions.

[1] These Latin verses were written in praise of Ronsard by an anonymous modern poet, who borrowed the sentiment, and most of the words, from those lines of Virgil's,—

> Ille velut pelagi rupes immota resistit:
> Ut pelagi rupes magno veniente fragore,
> Quæ sese, multis circumlatrantibus undis,
> Mole tenet——. *Æneid.* vii. 587.

[2] *Mem. de Joinville*, c. 19.

[3] *St. Matthew*, xvii. 19.

[4] Quintilian, xii. 11. It is hardly necessary to remark that Montaigne uses this quotation in a different sense from its author.

trary figures, from a rule in itself so direct and firm. When and where was this more manifest than in France in our days? They who have taken it on the left hand, they who have taken it on the right; they who call it black, they who call it white, alike employ it to their violent and ambitious designs, conduct it with a progress so conform in riot and injustice that they render the diversity they pretended in their opinions, in a thing whereon the conduct and rule of our life depends, doubtful and hard to believe. Did one ever see, come from the same school and discipline, manners more united, and more the same? Do but observe with what horrid impudence we toss divine arguments to and fro, and how irreligiously we have both rejected and retaken them, according as fortune has shifted our places in these intestine storms. This so solemn proposition, "Whether it be lawful for a subject to rebel and take up arms against his prince for the defence of his religion," do you remember in whose mouths, the last year, the affirmative of it was the prop of one party, and the negative the pillar of another? And hearken now from what quarter comes the voice and instruction of the one and the other, and if arms make less noise and rattle for this cause than for that. We condemn those to the fire who say that truth must be made to bear the yoke of our necessity; and how much worse does France than say it?[1] Let us confess the truth; whoever should draw out from the army, even that raised by the king, those who take up arms out of pure zeal to religion, and also those who only do it to protect the laws of their country, or for the service of their prince, could hardly, out of both these put together, make one complete company of gens-d'armes. Whence does this proceed, that there are so few to be found who have maintained the same will and the same progress in our civil commotions, and that we see them one while move but a foot-pace, and another run full speed? and the same men one while damage our affairs by their violent heat and fierceness, and another by their coldness, gentleness, and slowness; but that they are pushed on by particular and casual considerations, according to the variety wherein they move?

Whether it be lawful to take arms against the king in defence of religion?

I evidently perceive that we do not willingly afford devotion any other offices but those that best suit with our own passions. There is no hostility so admirable as the Christian. Our zeal performs wonders, when it seconds our inclinations to hatred, cruelty, ambition, avarice, detraction, and rebellion: but when it moves, against the hair, towards bounty, benignity, and temperance, unless, by miracle, some rare and virtuous disposition prompts us to it, we stir neither hand nor foot. Our religion is intended to extirpate vices, whereas it screens, nourishes, and incites them. We must not mock God. If we believed in him, I do not say by faith, but with a simple belief, that is to say (and I speak it to our great shame) if we believed in him and recognised him as we do any other history, or as we would do one of our companions, we should love him above all other things for the infinite bounty and beauty that shines in him;—at least, he would go equal in our affection with riches, pleasure, glory, and our friends. The best of us is not so much afraid to outrage him as he is afraid to injure his neighbour, his kinsman, or his master. Is there any understanding so weak that, having on one side the object of one of our vicious pleasures, and on the other (in equal knowledge and persuasion) the state of an immortal glory, would change the first for the other? and yet we often renounce this out of mere contempt: for what lust tempts us to blaspheme, if not, perhaps, the very desire to offend. The philosopher Antisthenes, as he was being initiated in the mysteries of Orpheus, the priest telling him, "That those who professed themselves of that religion were certain to receive perfect and eternal felicity after death,"—"If thou believest that," answered he, "why dost thou not die thyself?"[2] Diogenes, more rudely, according to his manner, and more remote from our purpose, to the priest that in like manner preached to him, "To become of his religion, that he might obtain the happiness of the other world;"—"What!" said he, "thou wouldest have me to believe that Agesilaus and Epaminondas, who were so great men, shall be miserable, and that thou, who art but a calf, and canst do nothing to purpose, shalt be happy, because thou art a priest?"[3] Did we receive these great promises of eternal beatitude with the same reverence and respect that we do a philosophical discourse, we should not have death in so great horror:

The zeal of the Christians full of injustice and fury.

Non jam se moriens dissolvi conquereretur;
Sed magis ire foras, vestemque relinquere, ut anguis,
Gauderet, prælonga senex aut cornua cervus.[4]

"We should not on a death-bed grieve to be
Dissolved, but rather launch out cheerfully
From our old hut, and, with the snake, be glad
To cast off the corrupted slough we had;
Or with th' old stag rejoice to be now clear
From the large horns, too ponderous grown to bear."

"I desire to be dissolved," we should say, "and to be with Jesus Christ."[5] The force of Plato's arguments concerning the immortality of the soul set some of his disciples to seek a premature grave, that they might the sooner enjoy the things he had made them hope for.[6]

[1] Bayle quotes and comments on this passage in the article *Hotman*.
[2] Laertius, *in vitâ*.
[3] Id. *ib.*
[4] Lucret. iii. 612.
[5] St. Paul, *Epist. to Philipp.* i. 23.
[6] Cicero, *Tusc. Quæs.* i. 34. Callimachus, *Epig.* 24, &c.

All this is a most evident sign that we only receive our religion after our own fashion, by our own hands, and no otherwise than as other religions are received. Either we are happened in the country where it is in practice, or we reverence the antiquity of it, or the authority of the men who have maintained it, or fear the menaces it fulminates against misbelievers, or are allured by its promises. These considerations ought, 'tis true, to be applied to our belief but as subsidiaries only, for they are human obligations. Another religion, other witnesses, the like promises and threats, might, by the same way, imprint a quite contrary belief. We are Christians by the same title that we are Perigordians or Germans. And what Plato says,[1] "That there are few men so obstinate in their atheism whom a pressing danger will not reduce to an acknowledgment of the divine power," does not concern a true Christian: 'tis for mortal and human religions to be received by human recommendation. What kind of faith can that be that cowardice and want of courage establish in us? A pleasant faith, that does not believe what it believes but for want of courage to disbelieve it! Can a vicious passion, such as inconstancy and astonishment, cause any regular product in our souls? "They are confident in their judgment," says he,[2] "that what is said of hell and future torments is all feigned: but an occasion of making the experiment presenting itself, when old age or diseases bring them to the brink of the grave, the terror of death, by the horror of that future condition, inspires them with a new belief." And by reason that such impressions render them timorous, he forbids in his *Laws*[3] all such threatening doctrines, and all persuasion that anything of ill can befall a man from the gods, excepting for his great good when they happen to him, and for a medicinal effect. They say of Bion that, infected with the atheism of Theodorus, he had long had religious men in great scorn and contempt, but that death surprising him, he gave himself up to the most extreme superstition; as if the gods withdrew and returned according to the necessities of Bion.[4] Plato and these examples would conclude that we are brought to a belief of God either by reason or by force. Atheism being a proposition as unnatural as monstrous, difficult also and hard to establish in the human understanding, how arrogant soever, there are men enough seen, out of vanity and pride, to be the authors of extraordinary and reforming opinions, and outwardly to affect the profession of them; who, if they are such fools, have, nevertheless, not the power to plant them in their own conscience. Yet will they not fail to lift up their hands towards heaven if you give them a good thrust with a sword in the breast; and when fear or sickness has abated and dulled the licentious fury of this giddy humour, they will easily re-unite, and very discreetly suffer themselves to be reconciled to the public faith and examples. A doctrine seriously digested is one thing, and those superficial impressions another; which springing from the disorder of an unhinged understanding, float at random and great uncertainty in the fancy. Miserable and senseless men, who strive to be worse than they can!

The foundation of the profession of the Christian religion.

What atheism is.

The error of paganism and the ignorance of our sacred truth, let this great soul of Plato, but great only in human greatness, fall also into this other mistake, "That children and old men were most susceptible of religion," as if it sprung and derived its credit from our weakness. The knot that ought to bind the judgment and the will, that ought to restrain the soul and join it to our creator, should be a knot that derives its foldings and strength not from our considerations, from our reasons and passions, but from a divine and supernatural constraint, having but one form, one face, and one lustre, which is the authority of God and his divine grace. Now the heart and soul being governed and commanded by faith, 'tis but reason that they should muster all our other faculties, according as they are able to perform to the service and assistance of their design. Neither is it to be imagined that all this machine has not some marks imprinted upon it by the hand of the mighty architect, and that there is not in the things of this world some image that in some measure resembles the workman who has built and formed them. He has, in his stupendous works, left the character of his divinity, and 'tis our own weakness only that hinders us from discerning it. 'Tis what he himself is pleased to tell us, "That he manifests his invisible operations to us by those that are visible." Sebond applied himself to this laudable and noble study, and demonstrates to us that there is not any part or member of the world that disclaims or derogates from its maker. It were to do wrong to the divine goodness, did not the universe consent to our belief. The heavens, the earth, the elements, our bodies and our souls,—all things concur to this; we have but to find out the way to use them: they instruct us, if we are capable of instruction. For this world is a sacred temple, into which man is introduced, there to contemplate statues, not the works of a mortal hand, but such as the divine purpose has made the objects of sense; the sun, the stars, the water, and the earth, to represent those that are intelligible to us. "The

Divinity imprinted in the outward fabric of the world.

The world a sacred temple.

[1] *Laws*, book x.
[2] *Republic*, i.
[3] Book ii., and in the *Republic*, book iii.
[4] Laertius, *in vitâ*.

invisible things of God," says St. Paul,[1] "appear by the creation of the world, his eternal wisdom and divinity being considered by his works."

> Atque adeo faciem cœli non invidet orbi
> Ipse Deus, vultusque suos, corpusque recludit
> Semper volvendo; seque ipsum inculcat, et offert:
> Ut bene cognosci possit, doceatque videndo
> Qualis erat, doceatque suas attendere legis.[2]
>
> "And God himself envies not men the grace
> Of seeing and admiring heaven's face;
> But, rolling it about, he still anew
> Presents its varied splendour to our view,
> And on our minds himself inculcates, so
> That we th' Almighty mover well may know:
> Instructing us, by seeing him the cause
> Of all, to reverence and obey his laws."

Now our prayers and human discourses are but as sterile and undigested matter. The grace of God is the form; 'tis that which gives fashion and value to it. As the virtuous actions of Socrates and Cato remain vain and fruitless, for not having had the love and obedience of the true creator of all things for their end and object, and for not having known God, so is it with our imaginations and discourses; they have a kind of body, but it is an inform mass, without fashion and without light, if faith and grace be not added thereto. Faith coming to tinct and illustrate Sebond's arguments renders them firm and solid; and to that degree that they are capable of serving for directions, and of being the first guides to an elementary Christian to put him into the way of this knowledge. They in some measure form him to, and render him capable of, the grace of God, by which means he afterwards completes and perfects himself in the true belief. I know a man of authority, bred up to letters, who has confessed to me to have been brought back from the errors of unbelief by Sebond's arguments. And should they be stripped of this ornament, and of the assistance and approbation of the faith, and be looked upon as mere fancies only, to contend with those who are precipitated into the dreadful and horrible darkness of irreligion, they will even there find them as solid and firm as any others of the same quality that can be opposed against them; so that we shall be ready to say to our opponents:

> Si melius quid habes, arcesse; vel imperium fer:[3]
>
> "If you have arguments more fit,
> Produce them, or to these submit."

let them admit the force of our reasons, or let them show us others, and upon some other subject, better woven and of finer thread. I am, unawares, half engaged in the second objection, to which I proposed to make answer in the behalf of Sebond. Some say that his arguments are weak, and unable to make good what he intends, and undertake with great ease to confute them. These are to be a little more roughly handled, for they are more dangerous and malicious than the first. Men willingly wrest the sayings of others to favour their own prejudicate opinions. To an atheist all writings tend to atheism: he corrupts the most innocent matter with his own venom. These have their judgments so prepossessed that they cannot relish Sebond's reasons. As to the rest, they think we give them very fair play in putting them into the liberty of combatting our religion with weapons merely human, whom, in her majesty, full of authority and command, they durst not attack. The means that I shall use, and that I think most proper to subdue this frenzy, is to crush and spurn under foot pride and human arrogance; to make them sensible of the inanity, vanity, and vileness of man; to wrest the wretched arms of their reason out of their hands; to make them bow down and bite the ground under the authority and reverence of the Divine Majesty. 'Tis to that alone that knowledge and wisdom appertain; that alone that can make a true estimate of itself, and from which we purloin whatever we value ourselves upon: Οὐ γὰρ ἐᾷ φρονεῖν ὁ Θεὸς μέγα ἄλλον, ἢ ἑαυτόν.[4] "God permits not any being but himself to be truly wise." Let us subdue this presumption, the first foundation of the tyranny of the evil spirit. *Deus superbis resistit, humilibus autem dat gratiam.*[5] "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble." "Understanding is in the gods," says Plato,[6] "and not at all, or very little, in men." Now it is in the mean time a great consolation to a Christian man to see our frail and mortal parts so fitly suited to our holy and divine faith that, when we employ them to the subjects of their own mortal and frail nature, they are not even there more unitedly or more firmly adjusted. Let us see, then, if man has in his power other more forcible and convincing reasons than those of Sebond; that is to say, if it be in him to arrive at any certainty by argument and reason. For St. Augustin,[7] disputing against these people, has good cause to reproach them with injustice, "In that they maintain the part of our belief to be false that our reason cannot establish." And to show that a great many things may be, and have been, of which our nature could not sound the reason and causes, he proposes to them certain known and undoubted experiments, wherein men confess they see nothing; and this he does, as all other things, with a curious and ingenious inquisition. We must do more than this, and make them know that, to convince the weakness of their reason, there is no necessity of culling out uncommon examples: and that it is so defective and so blind that there is no faculty clear enough for it;

Answer to the charge against Sebond's book, that the arguments are weak.

Wisdom only belongs to the Divinity.

[1] *Romans*, i. 20.
[2] Horace, *Epist.* i. 5, 6.
[3] Herod. vii. 10.
[4] Manil. iv. 907.
[5] *Epist. St. Peter*, v. 5.
[6] In the *Timæus*.
[7] *De Civit. Dei*, xi. 5.

that to it the easy and the hard are all one; that all subjects equally, and nature in general, disclaim its authority and reject its mediation.

What does truth mean when she preaches to us to fly worldly philosophy,[1] when she so often inculcates to us,[2] "That our wisdom is but folly in the sight of God: that the vainest of all vanities is man: that the man who presumes upon his wisdom does not yet know what wisdom is; and that man, who is nothing, if he thinks himself to be anything, does seduce and deceive himself?" These sentences of the Holy Spirit do so clearly and vividly express that which I would maintain that I should need no other proof against men who would with all humility and obedience submit to his authority: but these will be whipped at their own expense, and will not suffer a man to oppose their reason but by itself.

The wisdom of the world folly with God.

Let us then, for once, consider a man alone, without foreign assistance, armed only with his own proper arms, and unfurnished of the divine grace and wisdom, which is all his honour, strength, and the foundation of his being. Let us see how he stands in this fine equipage. Let him make me understand, by the force of his reason, upon what foundations he has built those great advantages he thinks he has over other creatures. Who has made him believe that this admirable motion of the celestial arch, the eternal light of those luminaries that roll so high over his head, the wondrous and fearful motions of that infinite ocean, should be established and continue so many ages for his service and convenience? Can any thing be imagined so ridiculous, that this miserable and wretched creature, who is not so much as master of himself, but subject to the injuries of all things, should call himself master and emperor of the world, of which he has not power to know the least part, much less to command the whole? And the privilege which he attributes to himself of being the only creature in this vast fabric who has the understanding to discover the beauty and the parts of it; the only one who can return thanks to the architect, and keep account of the revenues and disbursements of the world; who, I wonder, sealed him this patent? Let us see his commission for this great employment. Was it granted in favour of the wise only? Few people will be concerned in it. Are fools and wicked persons worthy so extraordinary a favour, and, being the worst part of the world,[3] to be preferred before the rest? Shall we believe this man?—*Quorum igitur causa quis dixerit effectum esse mundum? Eorum scilicet animantium, quæ ratione utuntur; hi sunt dii et homines, quibus profecto nihil est melius:* "For whose sake shall we, therefore, conclude that the world was made? For theirs who have the use of reason: these are gods and men, than whom certainly nothing can be better:" we can never sufficiently decry the impudence of this conjunction. But, wretched creature, what has he in himself worthy of such an advantage? Considering the incorruptible existence of the celestial bodies, their beauty, magnitude, and continual revolution by so exact a rule;

> Cum suspicimus magni cælestia mundi
> Templa super, stellisque micantibus æthera fixum,
> Et venit in mentem lunæ solisque viarum;[4]
>
> "When we the heavenly arch above behold,
> And the vast sky adorned with stars of gold,
> And mark the reg'lar courses that the sun
> And moon in their alternate progress run;"

considering the dominion and influence those bodies have, not only over our lives and fortunes;

> Facta etenim et vitas hominum suspendit ab astris;[5]
>
> "Men's lives and actions on the stars depend;"

but even over our inclinations, our thoughts and wills, which they govern, incite and agitate at the mercy of their influences, as our reason teaches us;

> Speculataque longe
> Deprendit tacitis dominantia legibus astra,
> Et totum alterna mundum ratione moveri,
> Fatorumque vices certis discurrere signis;[6]
>
> "Contemplating the stars he finds that they
> Rule by a secret and a silent sway;
> And that the enamell'd spheres which roll above
> Do ever by alternate causes move.
> And, studying these, he also can foresee,
> By certain signs, the turns of destiny;"

seeing that not only a man, not only kings, but that monarchies, empires, and all this lower world follow the influence of the celestial motions,

> Quantaque quam parvi faciant discrimina motus * * *
> Tantum est hoc regnum, quod regibus imperat ipsis![7]
>
> "How great a change a little motion brings!
> So great this kingdom is that governs kings:"

if our virtue, our vices, our knowledge, and this very discourse we are upon of the power of the stars, and the comparison we are making betwixt them and us, proceed, as our reason supposes, from their favour;

> Furit alter amore,
> Et pontum tranare potest, et vertere Trojam:
> Alterius sors est scribendis legibus apta.
> Ecce patrem nati perimunt, natosque parentes;
> Mutuaque armati coeunt in vulnere fratres.
> Non nostrum hoc bellum est; coguntur tanta movere,
> Inque suas ferri pœnas, laceranda que membra.
> * * * * * * * *
> Hoc quoque fatale est, sic ipsum expendere fatum;[8]
>
> "One mad in love may cross the raging main,
> To level lofty Ilium with the plain;
> Another's fate inclines him more by far
> To study laws and statutes for the bar.

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[1] St. Paul, *Epis. to the Colossians*, ii. 8.
[2] Id. *Corinthians*, i. 3, 19.
[3] *Balbus, apud* Cicero, *de Nat. Deor.* ii. 54.
[4] Lucret. v. 1203.
[5] Manilus, iii. 53. The original has *fata quoque*.
[6] Id. i. 60.
[7] Id. i. 55, iv. 93.
[8] Id. iv. 79, 118.

Sons kill their fathers, fathers kill their sons,
And one arm'd brother 'gainst another runs.
This war's not their's, but fate's, that spurs them on
To shed the blood which, shed, they must bemoan;
And I ascribe it to the will of fate
That on this theme I now expatiate:

if we derive this little portion of reason we have from the bounty of heaven, how is it possible that reason should ever make us equal to it? How subject its essence and condition to our knowledge? Whatever we see in those bodies astonishes us: *Quæ molitio, quæ ferramenta, qui vectes, quæ machinæ, qui ministri tanti operis fuerunt?*[1] "What contrivance, what tools, what materials, what engines, were employed about so stupendous a work?" Why do we deprive them of soul, of life, and discourse? Have we discovered in them any immoveable or insensible stupidity, we who have no commerce with them but by obedience? Shall we say that we have discovered in no other creature but man the use of a reasonable soul? What! have we seen any thing like the sun? Does he cease to be, because we have seen nothing like him? And do his motions cease, because there are no other like them? If what we have not seen is not, our knowledge is marvellously contracted: *Quæ sunt tantæ animi angustiæ!*[2] "How narrow are our understandings!" Are they not dreams of human vanity, to make the moon a celestial earth? there to fancy mountains and vales, as Anaxagoras did? there to fix habitations and human abodes, and plant colonies for our convenience, as Plato and Plutarch have done? And of our earth to make a luminous and resplendent star? *Inter cætera mortalitatis incommoda, et hoc est, caligo mentium; nec tantum necessitas errandi, sed errorum amor.*[3] — *Corruptibile corpus aggravat animam, et deprimit terrena inhabitatio sensum multa cogitantem.*[4] "Amongst the other inconveniences of mortality this is one, that darkness of the understanding which leads men astray, not so much from a necessity of erring, but from a love of error. The corruptible body stupifies the soul, and the earthly habitation dulls the faculties of the imagination."

Presumption an infirmity natural to man.

Presumption is our natural and original disease. The most wretched and frail of all creatures is man, and withal the proudest. He feels and sees himself lodged here in the dirt and filth of the world, nailed and rivetted to the worst and deadest part of the universe, in the lowest story of the house, the most remote from the heavenly arch, with animals of the worst condition of the three; and yet in his imagination will be placing himself above the circle of the moon, and bringing the heavens under his feet. 'Tis by the same vanity of imagination that he equals himself to God, attributes to himself divine qualities, withdraws and separates himself from the crowd of other creatures, cuts out the shares of the animals, his fellows and companions, and distributes to them portions of faculties and force, as himself thinks fit. How does he know, by the strength of his understanding, the secret and internal motions of animals?—from what comparison betwixt them and us does he conclude the stupidity he attributes to them? When I play with my cat who knows whether I do not make her more sport than she makes me? We mutually divert one another with our play. If I have my hour to begin or to refuse, she also has hers. Plato, in his picture of the golden age under Saturn,[5] reckons, among the chief advantages that a man then had, his communication with beasts, of whom, inquiring and informing himself, he knew the true qualities and differences of them all, by which he acquired a very perfect intelligence and prudence, and led his life more happily than we could do. Need we a better proof to condemn human impudence in the concern of beasts? This great author was of opinion that nature, for the most part, in the corporal form she gave them, had only regard to the use of prognostics that were derived thence in his time. The defect that hinders communication betwixt them and us, why may it not be in our part as well as theirs? 'Tis yet to determine where the fault lies that we understand not one another,—for we understand them no more than they do us; and by the same reason they may think us to be beasts as we think them. 'Tis no great wonder if we understand not them, when we do not understand a Basque or a Troglodyte.[6] And yet some have boasted that they understood them, as Apollonius Tyanæus,[7] Melampus, Tiresias, Thales, and others. And seeing, as cosmographers report, that there are nations that have a dog for their king,[8] they must of necessity be able to interpret his voice and motions. We must observe the parity betwixt us: we have some tolerable apprehension of their meaning, and so have beasts of ours,—much about the same. They caress us, threaten us, and beg of us, and we do the same to them.

By what right he claims the superiority over the animals.

Communication of beasts amongst themselves.

As to the rest, we manifestly discover that they have a full and absolute communication amongst themselves, and that they perfectly understand one another, not only those of the same, but of divers kinds:

Et mutæ pecudes, et denique secla ferarum
Dissimiles solerant voces variasque ciere,
Cum metus aut dolor est, aut cum jam gaudia gliscunt.[9]

[1] Cicero, *De Nat. Deor.* i. 8.
[2] Cicero, *ib.* i. 21.
[3] Seneca, *de Ira*, ii. 9.
[4] *Book of Wisdom*; quoted by St. Augustine, *De Civit. Dei*, xii. 15.
[5] In his *Politics*.
[6] *Troglodyte*: one who inhabits caves of the earth.—*Howell.*
[7] Philostratus, *in vitâ.*
[8] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* vi. 30.
[9] Lucret. v. 1056.

"The tamer herds, and wilder sort of brutes,
Though we of higher race conclude them mutes,
Yet utter dissonant and various notes,
From gentler lungs or more distended throats,
As fear, or grief, or anger, do them move,
Or as they do approach the joys of love."

In one kind of barking of a dog the horse knows there is anger, of another sort of bark he is not afraid. Even in the very beasts that have no voice at all, we easily conclude, from the society of offices we observe amongst them, some other sort of communication: their very motions discover it:

Non alia longè ratione, atque ipse videtur
Protrahere ad gestum pueros infantia linguæ.[1]

"As infants who, for want of words, devise
Expressive motions with their hands and eyes."

And why not, as well as our dumb people, dispute, argue, and tell stories by signs? Of whom I have seen some, by practice, so clever and active that way that, in fact, they wanted nothing of the perfection of making themselves understood. Lovers are angry, reconciled, intreat, thank, appoint, and, in short, speak all things by their eyes:

E'l silenzio ancor suole
Haver prieghi e parole.[2]

"Even silence in a lover
Love and passion can discover."

What with the hands? We require, promise, call, dismiss, threaten, pray, supplicate, deny, refuse, interrogate, admire, number, confess, repent, fear, express confusion, doubt, instruct, command, incite, encourage, swear, testify, accuse, condemn, absolve, abuse, despise, defy, provoke, flatter, applaud, bless, submit, mock, reconcile, recommend, exalt, entertain, congratulate, complain, grieve, despair, wonder, exclaim, and what not! And all this with a variety and multiplication, even emulating speech. With the head we invite, remand, confess, deny, give the lie, welcome, honour, reverence, disdain, demand, rejoice, lament, reject, caress, rebuke, submit, huff, encourage, threaten, assure, and inquire. What with the eyebrows?—what with the shoulders? There is not a motion that does not speak, and in an intelligible language without discipline, and a public language that every one understands: whence it should follow, the variety and use distinguished from others considered, that these should rather be judged the property of human nature. I omit what necessity particularly does suddenly suggest to those who are in need;—the alphabets upon the fingers, grammars in gesture, and the sciences which are only by them exercised and expressed; and the nations that Pliny reports have no other language.[3] An ambassador of the city of Abdera, after a long conference with Agis, King of Sparta, demanded of him, "Well, sir, what answer must I return to my fellow-citizens?" "That I have given thee leave," said he, "to say what thou wouldest, and as much as thou wouldest, without ever speaking a word."[4] Is not this a silent speaking, and very easy to be understood?

As to the rest, what is there in us that we do not see in the operations of animals? Is there a polity better ordered, the offices better distributed, and more inviolably observed and maintained, than that of bees? Can we imagine that such, and so regular, a distribution of employments can be carried on without reasoning and deliberation?

The capacity which is observed in the behaviour of the brute part of the creation.

His quidam signis atque hæc exempla sequuti,
Esse apibus partem divinæ mentis, et haustus
Æthereos, dixere.[5]

"Hence to the bee some sages have assigned
Some portion of the god and heavenly mind."

The swallows that we see at the return of the spring, searching all the corners of our houses for the most commodious places wherein to build their nest; do they seek without judgment, and amongst a thousand choose out the most proper for their purpose, without discretion? And in that elegant and admirable contexture of their buildings, can birds rather make choice of a square figure than a round, of an obtuse than of a right angle, without knowing their properties and effects? Do they bring water, and then clay, without knowing that the hardness of the latter grows softer by being wetted? Do they mat their palace with moss or down without foreseeing that their tender young will lie more safe and easy? Do they secure themselves from the wet and rainy winds, and place their lodgings against the east, without knowing the different qualities of the winds, and considering that one is more wholesome than another? Why does the spider make her web tighter in one place, and slacker in another; why now make one sort of knot, and then another, if she has not deliberation, thought, and conclusion? We sufficiently discover in most of their works how much animals excel us, and how unable our art is to imitate them. We see, nevertheless, in our rougher performances, that we employ all our faculties, and apply the utmost power of our souls; why do we not conclude the same of them? Why should we attribute to I know not what natural and servile inclination the works that excel all we can do by nature and art? wherein, without being aware, we give them a mighty advantage over us in making nature, with maternal gentleness and love, accompany and lead them, as it were, by the hand to all the actions

The superiority of nature to art, an inference which Montaigne draws from this principle in favour of the beasts against men.

[1] Lucretius, v. 1029.
[2] Tasso, *Amintas*, ii.
[3] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* vi. 30.
[4] Plutarch, *Apoth. of the Laced.*
[5] Virg. *Georg.* iv. 29.

and commodities of their life, whilst she leaves us to chance and fortune, and to seek out by art the things that are necessary to our conservation, at the same time denying us the means of being able, by any instruction or effort of understanding, to arrive at the natural sufficiency of beasts; so that their brutish stupidity surpasses, in all conveniences, all that our divine intelligence can do. Really, at this rate, we might with great reason call her an unjust stepmother: but it is nothing so, our polity is not so irregular and unformed.

Nature has universally cared for all her creatures, and there is not one she has not amply furnished with all means necessary for the conservation of its being. For the common complaints I hear men make (as the license of their opinions one while lifts them up above the clouds, and then again depresses them to the antipodes), that we are the only animal abandoned naked upon the bare earth, tied and bound, not having wherewithal to arm and clothe us but by the spoil of others; whereas nature has covered all other creatures either with shells, husks, bark, hair, wool, prickles, leather, down, feathers, scales, or silk, according to the necessities of their being; has armed them with talons, teeth, or horns, wherewith to assault and defend, and has herself taught them that which is most proper for them, to swim, to run, to fly, and sing, whereas man neither knows how to walk, speak, eat, or do any thing but weep, without teaching;

> Tum porro puer, ut sævis projectus ab undis,
> Navita, nudus humi jacet, infans, indignus omni
> Vitali auxilio, cùm primùm in luminis oras
> Nixibus ex alvo matris natura profudit,
> Vagitusque locum lugubri complet; ut æquum est,
> Cui tantùm in vita restet transire malorum.
> At variæ crescunt pecudes, armenta, feræque,
> Nec crepitacula eis opus est, nec cuiquam adhibenda est
> Almæ nutricis blanda atque infracta loquela;
> Nec varias quærunt vestes pro tempore cœli;
> Denique non armis opus est, non mœnibus altis,
> Queis sua tutentur, quando omnibus omnia largè
> Tellus ipsa parit, naturaque dædala rerum:[1]

> "Like to the wretched mariner, when toss'd
> By raging seas upon the desert coast,
> The tender babe lies naked on the earth,
> Of all supports of life stript by his birth;
> When nature first presents him to the day,
> Freed from the cell wherein before he lay,
> He fills the ambient air with doleful cries,
> Foretelling thus life's future miseries;
> But beasts, both wild and tame, greater and less,
> Do of themselves in strength and bulk increase;
> They need no rattle, nor the broken chat,
> By which the nurse first teaches boys to prate;
> They look not out for different robes to wear,
> According to the seasons of the year;
> And need no arms nor walls their goods to save,
> Since earth and liberal nature ever have,
> And will, in all abundance, still produce
> All things whereof they can have need or use:"

these complaints are false; there is in the polity of the world a greater equality and more uniform relation. Our skins are as sufficient to defend us from the injuries of the weather as theirs are; witness several nations that yet know not the use of clothes. Our ancient Gauls were but slenderly clad, any more than the Irish, our neighbours, though in so cold a climate; but we may better judge of this by ourselves: for all those parts that we are pleased to expose to the air are found very able to endure it: the face, the feet, the hands, the arms, the head, according to the various habit; if there be a tender part about us, and that would seem to be in danger from cold, it should be the stomach where the digestion is; and yet our forefathers were there always open, and our ladies, as tender and delicate as they are, go sometimes half-bare as low as the navel. Neither is the binding or swathing of infants any more necessary; and the Lacedæmonian mothers brought up theirs in all liberty of motion of members, without any ligature at all.[2] Our crying is common with the greatest part of other animals, and there are but few creatures that are not observed to groan, and bemoan themselves a long time after they come into the world; forasmuch as it is a behaviour suitable to the weakness wherein they find themselves. As to the custom of eating, it is in us, as in them, natural, and without instruction;

The skin of a man sufficient proof against weather.

The swathing of infants not necessary.

> Sentit enim vim quisque suam quam possit abuti:[3]

> "For every one soon finds his natural force,
> Which he, or better may employ, or worse."

Who doubts but an infant, arrived to the strength of feeding himself, may make shift to find something to eat. And the earth produces and offers him wherewithal to supply his necessity, without other culture and artifice; and if not at all times, no more does she do it to beasts, witness the provision we see ants and other creatures hoard up against the dead seasons of the year. The late discovered nations, so abundantly furnished with natural meat and drink, without care, or without cookery, may give us to understand that bread is not our only food, and that, without tillage, our mother nature has provided us sufficiently of all we stand in need of: nay, it appears more fully and plentifully than she does at present, now that we have added our own industry:

> Et tellus nitidas fruges, vinetaque læta
> Sponte sua primum mortalibus ipsa creavit;
> Ipsa dedit dulces fœtus, et pabula læta;
> Quæ nunc vix nostro grandescunt aucta labore,
> Conterimusque boves, et vires agricolarum:[4]

> "The earth did first spontaneously afford
> Choice fruits and wines to furnish out the board;
> With herbs and flow'rs unsown in verdant fields,
> But scarce by art so good a harvest yields;
> Though men and oxen mutually have strove,
> With all their utmost force, the soil t' improve:"

the debauchery and irregularity of our appe-

[1] Lucret. v. 223.
[2] Plutarch, *Life of Lycurgus*.
[3] Lucret. v. 1032.
[4] Lucret. ii. 1157.

tites outstrips all the inventions we can contrive to satisfy it.

The natural arms of men.

As to arms, we have more natural ones than most other animals, more various motions of limbs, and naturally and without lesson extract more service from them. Those that are trained to fight naked are seen to throw themselves into the like hazards that we do. If some beasts surpass us in this advantage, we surpass many others. And the industry of fortifying the body, and covering it by acquired means, we have by instinct and natural precept. That it is so, the elephant shows, who sharpens and whets the teeth he makes use of in war (for he has particular ones for that service, which he spares, and never employs them at all to any other use); when bulls go to fight, they toss and throw the dust about them; boars whet their tusks; and the ichneumon, when he is about to engage with the crocodile, fortifies his body, and covers and crusts it all over with close-wrought and well-tempered slime, as with a cuirass. Why shall we not say that it is also natural for us to arm ourselves with wood and iron?

The elephant's teeth.

Whether speech is natural to man.

As to speech, it is certain that if it be not natural it is not necessary. Nevertheless I believe that a child which had been brought up in an absolute solitude, remote from all society of men (which would be an experiment very hard to make), would have some kind of speech to express his meaning by. And 'tis not to be supposed that nature should have denied that to us which she has given to several other animals: for what is this faculty we observe in them, of complaining, rejoicing, calling to one another for succour, and inviting each other to love, which they do with the voice, other than speech? And why should they not speak to one another? They speak to us, and we to them. In how many several sorts of ways do we speak to our dogs, and they answer us? We converse with them in another sort of language, and use other appellations, than we do with birds, hogs, oxen, horses, and alter the idiom according to the kind.

The beasts have a language of their own.

> Cosi per entro loro schiera bruna
> S' ammussa l' una con l' altra formica,
> Forse a spiar lor via et lor fortuna.[1]
>
> "Thus from one swarm of ants some sally out,
> To spy another's stock or mark its rout."

Lactantius[2] seems to attribute to beasts not only speech, but laughter also. And the difference of language which is seen amongst us, according to the difference of countries, is also observed in animals of the same kind. Aristotle,[3] in proof of this, instances the various calls of partridges, according to the situation of places:

Risibility attributed to beasts.

> Variæque volucres
> Longè alias alio jaciunt in tempore voces . . . .
> Et partim mutant cum tempestatibus una
> Raucisonos cantus.[4]
>
> "And various birds do from their warbling throats,
> At various times, utter quite different notes,
> And some their hoarse songs with the seasons change."

But it is yet to be known what language this child would speak; and of that what is said by guess has no great appearance. If a man will allege to me, in opposition to this opinion, that those who are naturally deaf speak not, I answer that this is not only because they could not receive the instruction of speaking by ear, but rather because the sense of hearing, of which they are deprived, relates to that of speaking, and that these hold together by a natural and inseparable tie, in such manner that what we speak we must first speak to ourselves within, and make it sound in our own ears, before we can utter it to others.

Why those who are born deaf do not speak.

All this I have said to prove the resemblance there is in human things, and to bring us back and join us to the crowd. We are neither above nor below the rest. All that is under heaven, says the sage, runs one law and one fortune:

> Indupedita suis fatalibus omnia vinclis.[5]
>
> "All things remain
> Bound and entangled in one fatal chain."

There is, indeed, some difference,—there are several orders and degrees; but it is under the aspect of one and the same nature:

> Res . . . . quæque suo ritu procedit; et omnes
> Fœdere naturæ certo discrimina servant.[6]
>
> "All things by their own rites proceed, and draw
> Towards their ends, by nature's certain law."

Man must be compelled and restrained within the bounds of this polity. Miserable creature! he is not in a condition really to step over the rail. He is fettered and circumscribed, he is subjected to the same necessity that the other creatures of his rank and order are, and of a very mean condition, without any prerogative or true and real pre-eminence. That which he attributes to himself, by vain fancy and opinion, has neither body nor taste. And if it be so, that he only, of all the animals, has this liberty of imagination and irregularity of thoughts, representing to him that which is, that which is not, and that he would have, the false and the true, 'tis an advantage dearly bought, and of which he has very little reason to be proud; for thence springs the principal and original fountain of all the evils that befal him,—sin,

[1] Dante, *Purgat.* xxvi. 34.
[2] *Instit. Divin.* iii. 40.
[3] *Hist. of Animals*, iv. 9.
[4] Lucret. v. 1077, 1080, 1082, 1083.
[5] Id. *ib.* 874.
[6] Id. *ib.* 921.

sickness, irresolution, affliction, despair. I say, then, to return to my subject, that there is no appearance to induce a man to believe that beasts should, by a natural and forced inclination, do the same things that we do by our choice and industry. We ought from like effects to conclude like faculties, and from greater effects greater faculties; and consequently confess that the same reasoning, and the same ways by which we operate, are common with them, or that they have others that are better. Why should we imagine this natural constraint in them, who experience no such effect in ourselves? added that it is more honourable to be guided and obliged to act regularly by a natural and inevitable condition, and nearer allied to the divinity, than to act regularly by a temerarious and fortuitous liberty, and more safe to entrust the reins of our conduct in the hands of nature than our own. The vanity of our presumption makes us prefer rather to owe our sufficiency to our own exertions than to her bounty, and to enrich the other animals with natural goods, and abjure them in their favour, in order to honour and ennoble ourselves with goods acquired, very foolishly in my opinion; for I should as much value parts and virtues naturally and purely my own as those I had begged and obtained from education. It is not in our power to obtain a nobler reputation than to be favoured of God and nature.

Animals free agents as well as mankind.

For instance, take the fox, the people of Thrace make use of when they wish to pass over the ice of some frozen river, and turn him out before them to that purpose; when we see him lay his ear upon the bank of the river, down to the ice, to listen if from a more remote or nearer distance he can hear the noise of the waters' current, and, according as he finds by that the ice to be of a less or greater thickness, to retire or advance,[1]—have we not reason to believe thence that the same rational thoughts passed through his head that we should have upon the like occasions; and that it is a ratiocination and consequence, drawn from natural sense, that that which makes a noise runs, that which runs is not frozen, what is not frozen is liquid, and that which is liquid yields to impression? For to attribute this to a mere quickness of the sense of hearing, without reason and consequence, is a chimæra that cannot enter into the imagination. We are to suppose the same of the many sorts of subtleties and inventions with which beasts secure themselves from, and frustrate, the enterprizes we plot against them.

And if we will make an advantage even of this, that it is in our power to seize them, to employ them in our service, and to use them at our pleasure, 'tis still but the same advantage we have over one another. We have our slaves upon these terms: the Climacidæ, were they not women in Syria who, squat on all fours,[2] served for a ladder or footstool, by which the ladies mounted their coaches? And the greatest part of free persons surrender, for very trivial conveniences, their life and being into the power of another. The wives and concubines of the Thracians contended who should be chosen to be slain upon their husband's tomb.[3] Have tyrants ever failed of finding men enough vowed to their devotion? some of them moreover adding this necessity, of accompanying them in death as well as life? Whole armies have bound themselves after this manner to their captains.[4] The form of the oath in the rude school of gladiators was in these words: "We swear to suffer ourselves to be chained, burnt, wounded, and killed with the sword, and to endure all that true gladiators suffer from their master, religiously engaging both body and soul in his service:"[5]

Men slaves to other men as well as the brutes are.

> Ure meum, si vis, flamma caput, et pete ferro
> Corpus, et intorto verbere terga seca.[3]
>
> "Wound me with steel, or burn my head with fire,
> Or scourge my shoulders with well-twisted wire."

This was an obligation indeed, and yet there, in one year, ten thousand entered into it, to their destruction. When the Scythians interred their king they strangled upon his body the most beloved of his concubines, his cup-bearer, the master of his horse, his chamberlain, the usher of his chamber, and his cook. And upon the anniversary thereof they killed fifty horses, mounted by fifty pages, that they had impaled all up the spine of the back to the throat, and there left them fixed in triumph about his tomb.[7] The men that serve us do it cheaper, and for a less careful and favourable usage than what we treat our hawks, horses, and dogs withal. To what solicitude do we not submit for the convenience of these? I do not think that servants of the most abject condition would willingly do that for their masters that princes think it an honour to do for their beasts. Diogenes seeing his relations solicitous to redeem him from servitude: "They are fools," said he; "'tis he that keeps and nourishes me that in reality serves me."[8] And they who entertain beasts ought rather to be said to serve them, than to be served by them. And withal in this these have something more gene-

Obsequies of the Scythian kings.

[1] Plutarch, *on the Craftiness of Animals.*
[2] Id. *How to distinguish a Flatterer from a Friend.*
[3] Herod. v. 5. Pomponius Mela, ii. 2.
[4] Cæsar, *de Bell. Gall.* iii. 22.
[5] Petron. *Sat.* c. 117.
[6] Tib. l. 3. 21.
[7] Herod. iv. 71.
[8] Laertius, *in vitâ.*

rous, in that one lion never submitted to another lion, nor one horse to another, for want of courage. As we go to the chase of beasts, so do tigers and lions to the chase of men, and do the same execution upon one another; dogs upon hares, pikes upon tench, swallows upon grass-hoppers, and sparrow-hawks upon blackbirds and larks:

Serpente ciconia pullos
Nutrit, et inventa per devia rura lacerta . . . .
Et leporem aut capream famulæ Jovis et generosæ
In saltu venantur aves.[1]

"The stork with snakes and lizards from the wood
And pathless wilds supports her callow brood,
While Jove's own eagle, bird of noble blood,
Scours the wide country for undaunted food;
Sweeps the swift hare or swifter fawn away,
And feeds her nestlings with the generous prey."

We divide the quarry, as well as the pains and labour of the chase, with our hawks and hounds. And about Amphipolis, in Thrace, the hawkers and wild falcons equally divide the prey in the half.[2] As also along the lake Mæotis, if the fisherman does not honestly leave the wolves an equal share of what he has caught, they presently go and tear his nets in pieces. And as we have a way of sporting that is carried on more by subtlety than force, as springing hares, and angling with line and hook, there is also the like amongst other animals. Aristotle says[3] that the cuttle-fish casts a gut out of her throat as long as a line, which she extends and draws back at pleasure; and as she perceives some little fish approach her she lets it nibble upon the end of this gut, lying herself concealed in the sand or mud, and by little and little draws it in, till the little fish is so near her that at one spring she may catch it.

The strength of man inferior to that of animals.

As to strength, there is no creature in the world exposed to so many injuries as man. We need not a whale, an elephant, or a crocodile, nor any such-like animals, of which one alone is sufficient to dispatch a great number of men, to do our business; lice are sufficient to vacate Sylla's dictatorship;[4] and the heart and life of a great and triumphant emperor is the breakfast of a little contemptible worm!

Beasts distinguish what may be of use to them in their maladies.

Why should we say that it is only for man, by knowledge built up by art and meditation, to distinguish the things useful for his being, and proper for the cure of his diseases, and those which are not; to know the virtues of rhubarb and polypody. When we see the goats of Candia, when wounded with an arrow, among a million of plants choose out dittany for their cure; and the tortoise, when she has eaten a viper, immediately go out to look for origanum to purge her; the dragon to rub and clear his eyes with fennel; the storks to give themselves clysters of sea-water; the elephants to draw not only out of their own bodies, and those of their companions, but out of the bodies of their masters too (witness the elephant of King Porus,[5] whom Alexander defeated), the darts and javelins thrown at them in battle, and that so dexterously that we ourselves could not do it with so little pain to the patient;—why do we not say here also that this is knowledge and reason? For to allege, to their disparagement, that 'tis by the sole instruction and dictate of nature that they know all this, is not to take from them the dignity of knowledge and reason, but with greater force to attribute it to them than to us, for the honour of so infallible a mistress. Chrysippus,[6] though in other things as scornful a judge of the condition of animals as any other philosopher whatever, considering the motions of a dog, who coming to a place where three ways met, either to hunt after his master he has lost, or in pursuit of some game that flies before him, goes snuffing first in one of the ways, and then in another, and, after having made himself sure of two, without finding the trace of what he seeks, dashes into the third without examination, is forced to confess that this reasoning is in the dog: "I have traced my master to this place; he must of necessity be gone one of these three ways; he is not gone this way nor that, he must then infallibly be gone this other;" and that assuring himself by this conclusion, he makes no use of his nose in the third way, nor ever lays it to the ground, but suffers himself to be carried on there by the force of reason. This sally, purely logical, and this use of propositions divided and conjoined, and the right enumeration of parts, is it not every whit as good that the dog knows all this of himself as well as from Trapezuntius?[7]

Animals capable of being instructed.

Animals are not incapable, however, of being instructed after our method. We teach blackbirds, ravens, pies, and parrots, to speak; and the facility wherewith we see they lend us their voices, and render both them and their breath so supple and pliant, to be formed and confined within a certain number of letters and syllables, does evince that they have a reason within, which renders them so docile and willing to learn. Everybody, I believe, is glutted with the several sorts of tricks that tumblers teach their dogs; the dances, where they do not miss any one cadence of the sound they hear; the several various motions and

[1] Juvenal, *Sat.* 14.
[2] Pliny, x. 8.
[3] Plutarch, *on the Craftiness of Animals.*
[4] Sylla died of the *morbus pediculosus* at the age of sixty.
[5] Plutarch, *ut supra.*
[6] Sextus Empiric. *Pyrrh. Hypothyp.* i. 14.
[7] George Trapezuntius, a learned Greek, who, flying from the East, and taking refuge in Italy in the fifteenth century, was by Pope Eugenius IV. entrusted with the direction of one of the colleges at Rome, where he greatly contributed to the revival of letters.

leaps they make them perform by the command of a word. But I observe this effect with the greatest admiration, which nevertheless is very common, in the dogs that lead the blind, both in the country and in cities: I have taken notice how they stop at certain doors, where they are wont to receive alms; how they avoid the encounter of coaches and carts, even there where they have sufficient room to pass; I have seen them, by the trench of a town, forsake a plain and even path and take a worse, only to keep their masters further from the ditch;—how could a man have made this dog understand that it was his office to look to his master's safety only, and to despise his own conveniency to serve him? And how had he the knowledge that a way was wide enough for him that was not so for a blind man? Can all this be apprehended without ratiocination?

I must not omit what Plutarch says[1] he saw of a dog at Rome with the Emperor Vespasian, the father, at the theatre of Marcellus. This dog served a player, that played a farce of several parts and personages, and had therein his part. He had, amongst other things, to counterfeit himself for some time dead, by reason of a certain drug he was supposed to eat. After he had swallowed a piece of bread, which passed for the drug, he began after awhile to tremble and stagger, as if he was taken giddy: at last, stretching himself out stiff, as if dead, he suffered himself to be drawn and dragged from place to place, as it was his part to do; and afterward, when he knew it to be time, he began first gently to stir, as if awaking out of a profound sleep, and lifting up his head looked about him after such a manner as astonished all the spectators.

The oxen that served in the royal gardens of Susa, to water them, and turn certain great wheels to draw water for that purpose, to which buckets were fastened (such as there are many in Languedoc), being ordered every one to draw a hundred turns a day, they were so accustomed to this number that it was impossible by any force to make them draw one turn more; but, their task being performed, they would suddenly stop and stand still.[2] We are almost men before we can count a hundred, and have lately discovered nations that have no knowledge of numbers at all.

There is more understanding required in the teaching of others than in being taught. Now, setting aside what Democritus held[3] and proved, "That most of the arts we have were taught us by other animals," as by the spider to weave and sew; by the swallow to build; by the swan and nightingale music; and by several animals to make medicines:—Aristotle is of opinion[4] "That the nightingales teach their young ones to sing, and spend a great deal of time and care in it;" whence it happens that those we bring up in cages, and which have not had the time to learn of their parents, want much of the grace of their singing: we may judge by this that they improve by discipline and study; and, even amongst the wild, it is not all and every one alike—every one has learnt to do better or worse, according to their capacity. And so jealous are they one of another, whilst learning, that they contend with emulation, and by so vigorous a contention that sometimes the vanquished fall dead upon the place, the breath rather failing than the voice. The younger ruminate pensively and begin to mutter some broken notes; the disciple listens to the master's lesson, and gives the best account he is able; they are silent by turns; one may hear faults corrected and observe some reprehensions of the teacher. "I have formerly seen," says Arrian,[5] "an elephant having a cymbal hung at each leg, and another fastened to his trunk, at the sound of which all the others danced round about him, rising and bending at certain cadences, as they were guided by the instrument; and 'twas delightful to hear this harmony." In the spectacles of Rome there were ordinarily seen elephants taught to move and dance to the sound of the voice, dances wherein were several changes and cadences very hard to learn.[6] And some have been known so intent upon their lesson as privately to practice it by themselves, that they might not be chidden nor beaten by their masters.

Elephants wearing cymbals.

Elephants taught to dance.

But this other story of the pie, of which we have Plutarch himself for a warrant,[7] is very strange. She lived in a barber's shop at Rome, and did wonders in imitating with her voice whatever she heard. It happened one day that certain trumpeters stood a good while sounding before the shop. After that, and all the next day, the pie was pensive, dumb, and melancholic; which every body wondered at, and thought the noise of the trumpets had so stupified and astonished her that her voice was gone with her hearing. But they found at last that it was a profound meditation and a retiring into herself, her thoughts exercising and preparing her voice to imitate the sound of those trumpets, so that the first voice she uttered was perfectly to imitate their strains, stops, and changes; having by this new lesson quitted and taken in disdain all she had learned before.

The story of a magpie at Rome.

I will not omit this other example of a dog, also, which the same Plutarch (I am sadly confounding all order, but I do not propose arrange-

[1] Plutarch, *on the Craftiness of Animals.*
[2] Id. *ib.*
[3] Id. *ib.*
[4] Id. *ib.*
[5] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* x. 29.
[6] *Hist. Indic.* c. 14.
[7] Plutarch, *on the Craftiness of Animals*; whence also the five following instances are taken.

ment here any more than elsewhere throughout my book) which Plutarch says he saw on board a ship. This dog being puzzled how to get the oil that was in the bottom of a jar, which he could not reach with his tongue by reason of the narrow mouth of the vessel, went and fetched stones and let them fall into the jar till he made the oil rise so high that he could reach it. What is this but an effect of a very subtle capacity? 'Tis said that the ravens of Barbary do the same, when the water they would drink is too low. This action is somewhat akin to what Juba, a king of their nation, relates of the elephants: "That when, by the craft of the hunter, one of them is trapped in certain deep pits prepared for them, and covered over with brush to deceive them, all the rest, in great diligence, bring a great many stones and logs of wood to raise the bottom so that he may get out." But this animal, in several other effects, comes so near to human capacity that, should I particularly relate all that experience hath delivered to us, I should easily have what I usually maintain granted: namely, that there is more difference betwixt such and such a man than betwixt such a beast and such a man. The keeper of an elephant in a private house of Syria robbed him every meal of the half of his allowance. One day his master would himself feed him, and poured the full measure of barley he had ordered for his allowance into his manger; at which the elephant, casting an angry look at his keeper, with his trunk separated the one-half from the other, and thrust it aside, by that declaring the wrong was done him. And another, having a keeper that mixed stones with his corn to make up the measure, came to the pot where he was boiling meat for his own dinner, and filled it with ashes. These are particular effects: but that which all the world has seen, and all the world knows, that in all the armies of the Levant one of the greatest force consisted in elephants, with whom they did, without comparison, much greater execution than we now do with our artillery; which takes, pretty nearly, their place in a day of battle (as may easily be supposed by such as are well read in ancient history);

The cunning of a dog to get the oil out of a jar.

The subtlety of elephants to disengage one another.

An elephant discovers the cheat of his keeper.

Siquidem Tyrio servire solebant
Annibali, et nostris ducibus, regique Molosso,
Horum Majores, et dorso ferre cohortes,
Partem aliquam belli, et euntem in prælia turrim:[1]

"The sires of these huge animals were wont
The Carthaginian Hannibal to mount;
Our leaders also did these beasts bestride,
And mounted thus Pyrrhus his foes defied;
Nay, more, upon their backs they used to bear
Castles with armed cohorts to the war."

They must necessarily have very confidently relied upon the fidelity and understanding of these beasts when they entrusted them with the vanguard of a battle, where the least stop they should have made, by reason of the bulk and heaviness of their bodies, and the least fright that should have made them face about upon their own people, had been enough to spoil all: and there are but few examples where it has happened that they have fallen foul upon their own troops, whereas we ourselves break into our own battalions and rout one another. They had the charge not of one simple movement only, but of many several things to be performed in the battle: as the Spaniards did to their dogs in their new conquest of the Indies,[2] to whom they gave pay and allowed them a share in the spoil; and those animals shewed as much dexterity and judgment in pursuing the victory and stopping the pursuit; in charging and retiring, as occasion required; and in distinguishing their friends from their enemies, as they did ardour and fierceness.

We more admire and value things that are unusual and strange than those of ordinary observation. I had not else so long insisted upon these examples: for I believe whoever shall strictly observe what we ordinarily see in those animals we have amongst us may there find as wonderful effects as those we seek in remote countries and ages. 'Tis one and the same nature that rolls on her course, and whoever has sufficiently considered the present state of things, might certainly conclude as to both the future and the past. I have formerly seen men, brought hither by sea from very distant countries, whose language not being understood by us, and moreover their mien, countenance, and habit, being quite differing from ours; which of us did not repute them savages and brutes? Who did not attribute it to stupidity and want of common sense to see them mute, ignorant of the French tongue, ignorant of our salutations and cringes, our port and behaviour, from which all human nature must by all means take its pattern and example. All that seems strange to us, and that we do not understand, we condemn. The same thing happens also in the judgments we make of beasts. They have several conditions like to ours; from those we may, by comparison, draw some conjecture: but by those qualities that are particular to themselves, what know we what to make of them? The horses, dogs, oxen, sheep, birds, and most of the animals that live amongst us, know our voices, and suffer themselves to be governed by them: so did Crassus's lamprey,[3] and came when he called it; as also do the eels that are found in the Lake Arethusa; and I have seen several ponds where the fishes come to eat at a certain call of those who use to feed them.

[1] Juvenal, xii. 107.

[2] Some of the ancient nations did the same. Pliny, *Natur. Histor.* viii. 40. Œlian, *Var. Histor.* xiv. 48.

[3] Plutarch, *ut supra.*

Nomen habent, et ad magistri
Vocem quisque sui venit citatus:[1]

"They every one have names, and one and all
Straightway appear at their own master's call:"

we may judge of that. We may also say that the elephants have some participation of religion,[2] forasmuch as after several washings and purifications they are observed to lift up their trunk like arms, and, fixing their eyes towards the rising of the sun, continue long in meditation and contemplation, at certain hours of the days, of their own motion, without instruction or precept. But because we do not see any such signs in other animals, we cannot for that conclude that they are without religion, nor make any judgment of what is concealed from us. As we discern something in this action which the philosopher Cleanthes took notice of,[3] because it something resembles our own. He saw, he says, "Ants go from their ant-hill, carrying the dead body of an ant towards another ant-hill, whence several other ants came out to meet them, as if to speak with them; where, after having been a while together, the last returned to consult, you may suppose, with their fellow-citizens, and so made two or three journeys, by reason of the difficulty of capitulation. In the conclusion, the last comers brought the first a worm out of their burrow, as it were for the ransom of the defunct, which the first laid upon their backs and carried home, leaving the dead body to the others." This was the interpretation that Cleanthes gave of this transaction, giving us by that to understand that those creatures that have no voice are not, nevertheless, without intercourse and mutual communication, whereof 'tis through our own defect that we do not participate; and for that reason foolishly take upon us to pass our censure. But they yet produce other effects far beyond our capacity, to which we are so far from being able to arrive by imitation that we cannot so much as by imitation conceive it. Many are of opinion that in the great and last naval engagement that Antony lost to Augustus, his admiral galley was stayed in the middle of her course by the little fish the Latins call *remora*, by reason of the property she has of staying all sorts of vessels to which she fastens herself.[4] And the Emperor Caligula, sailing with a great navy upon the coast of Romania, his galley only was suddenly stayed by the same fish, which he caused to be taken, fastened as it was to the keel of his ship, very angry that such a little animal could resist both the sea, the wind, and the force of all his oars, by being only fastened by the beak to his galley (for it is a shell-fish); and was moreover, not without great reason, astonished that, being brought to him in the vessel, it had no longer the strength it had without. A citizen of Cyzicus formerly acquired the reputation of a good mathematician for having learnt the quality of the hedge-hog: he has his burrow open in divers places, and to several winds, and, foreseeing the wind that is to come, stops the hole on that side, which that citizen observing, gave the city certain predictions of the wind which was presently to blow.[6] The cameleon takes her colour from the place upon which she is laid;[6] but the polypus gives himself what colour he pleases, according to occasion, either to conceal himself from what he fears, or from what he has a design to seize:[7] in the cameleon 'tis a passive, but in the polypus 'tis an active, change. We have some changes of colour, as in fear, anger, shame, and other passions, that alter our complexions; but it is by the effect of suffering, as with the cameleon. It is in the power of the jaundice, indeed, to make us turn yellow, but 'tis not in the power of our own will. Now these effects that we discover in other animals, much greater than ours, seem to imply some more excellent faculty in them unknown to us; as 'tis to be presumed there are several other qualities and abilities of, theirs, of which no appearances have arrived at us.

Whether elephants have any sentiments of religion.

Remarkable instance of a sort of conference betwixt ants.

Change of colour in the cameleon and polypus.

Amongst all the predictions of elder times, the most ancient and the most certain were those taken from the flight of birds;[8] we have nothing like it, nor any thing to be so much admired. That rule and order of the moving of the wing, whence they derived the consequences of future things, must of necessity be guided by some excellent means to so noble an operation: for to attribute this great effect to any natural disposition, without the intelligence, consent, and meditation of him by whom it is produced, is an opinion evidently false. That it is so, the cramp-fish[9] has this

The flight of birds the most certain way of prediction.

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[1] Martial, iv. 29, 6.
[2] Pliny, viii. 1.
[3] Plutarch, *ut supra*.
[4] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xxxii. 1.
[5] Id. *ib.*
[6] Plutarch, *ut supra*.
[7] Id. *ib.*
[8] Sextus Empiricus, *Pyrrh. Hypoth.* i. 14.
[9] Or *Torpedo*. Montaigne (observes Mr. Coste) would mislead us here, or, rather, is misled himself; for, because the cramp-fish benumbs the members of those who touch it, and because the cranes, swallows, and the other birds of passage change their climate according to the seasons of the year, it by no means follows that the predictions, pretended to be derived from the flight of birds, are founded on certain faculties, which those birds have, of discovering things future to such as take the pains to watch their various motions. The vivacity of our author's genius has made him, in this place, confound things together that are very different. For the properties of the cramp-fish, cranes, and swallows, appear from sensible effects: but the predictions said to be derived from the flight of certain birds, by virtue of the rule and method of the motion of their wings, are only founded upon human imaginations, the reality whereof was never proved; which have varied according to times and places, and which, at length, have lost all credit with the very people that were most possessed with them; but I am of opinion that Montaigne only makes use here of the divining faculty of the birds, to puzzle those dogmatists who decide so positively that the animals have neither reason nor intellect. In this he has imitated Sextus Empiricus, *Pyrrh. Hypot.* i. 14, who, attacking the dogmatists on this very article, says ex-

quality, not only to benumb all the members that *touch* her, but even through the nets *transmit* a heavy dulness into the hands of those that move and handle them; nay, it is further said that if one pour water upon her, he will feel this numbness mount up the water to the hand, and stupify the feeling through the water. This is a miraculous force; but 'tis not useless to the cramp-fish; she knows it, and makes use on't; for, to catch the prey she desires, she will bury herself in the mud, that other fishes swimming over her, struck and benumbed with this coldness of hers, may fall into her power. Cranes, swallows, and other birds of passage, by shifting their abode according to the seasons, sufficiently manifest the knowledge they have of their divining faculty, and put it in use. Huntsmen assure us that to cull out from amongst a great many puppies that which ought to be preserved as the best, the best way is to refer the choice to the mother; as thus, take them and carry them out of the kennel, and the first she brings back will certainly be the best; or if you make a shew as if you would environ the kennel with fire, that one she first catches up to save. By which it appears they have a sort of prognostic which we have not; or that they have some virtue in judging of their whelps other and more certain than we have.

The manner of coming into the world, of engendering, nourishing, acting, moving, living and dying of beasts, is so near to ours that whatever we retrench from their moving causes, and add to our own condition above theirs, can by no means proceed from any meditation of our own reason. For the regimen of our health, physicians propose to us the example of the beasts' manners and way of living; for this saying (out of Plutarch) has in all times been in the mouth of these people: "Keep warm thy feet and head, as to the rest, live like a beast."

The chief of all natural actions is generation: we have a certain disposition of members which is the most proper for us to that end; nevertheless, we are ordered by Lucretius to conform to the gesture and posture of the brutes as the most effectual:

> More ferarum,
> Quadrupedumque magis ritu, plerumque putantur
> Concipere uxores: Quia sic loca sumere possunt,
> Pectoribus positis, subtatis semina lumbis;[1]

and the same authority condemns, as hurtful, those indiscreet and impudent motions which the women have added of their own invention, to whom it proposes the more temperate and modest pattern and practice of the beasts of their own sex:

> Nam mulier prohibet se concipere atque repugnat,
> Clunibus ipsa viri Venerem si læta retractet,
> Atque exossato ciet omni pectore fluctus.
> Ejicit enim sulci recta regione viaque
> Vomerem, atque locis avertit seminis ictum.[2]

If it be justice to render to every one their due, the beasts that serve, love, and defend their benefactors, and that pursue and fall upon strangers and those who offend them, do in this represent a certain air of our justice; as also in observing a very equitable equality in the distribution of what they have to their young. And as to friendship, they have it without comparison more lively and constant than men have. King Lysimachus's dog, Hyrcanus, his master being dead, lay on his bed, obstinately refusing either to eat or drink; and, the day that his body was burnt, he took a run and leaped into the fire, where he was consumed.[3] As also did the dog of one Pyrrhus, for he would not stir from off his master's bed from the time he died; and when they carried him away let himself be carried with him, and at last leaped into the pile where they burnt his master's body."[4] There are inclinations of affection which sometimes spring in us, without the consultation of reason; and by a fortuitous temerity, which others call sympathy: of which beasts are as capable as we. We see horses take such an acquaintance with one another that we have much ado to make them eat or travel, when separated: we observe them to fancy a particular colour in those of their own kind, and, where they meet it, run to it with great joy and demonstrations of good will, and have a dislike and hatred for some other colour. Animals have choice, as well as we, in their amours, and cull out their mistresses; neither are they exempt from our jealousies and implacable malice.

The love of dogs to their masters.

Desires are either natural and necessary, as to eat and drink; or natural and not necessary, as the coupling with females; or neither natural nor necessary: of which last sort are almost all the desires of men: they are all superfluous and artificial. For 'tis marvellous how little will satisfy nature, how little she has left us to desire; our ragouts and kickshaws are not of her ordering. The Stoics say that a man may live on an olive a day. The delicacy of our wines is no part of her instruction, nor the refinements we introduce into the indulgence of our amorous appetites:

> Neque illa
> Magno prognatum deposcit consule cunnum.[5]
>
> "Nature, in her pursuit of love, disclaims
> The pride of titles, and the pomp of names."

These irregular desires, that the ignorance of

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pressly—"That it cannot be denied that the birds have the use of speech, and more penetration than we have; because, not only by their knowledge of the present, but also of things future, they discover the latter, to such as are capable of understanding them, by their voice and several other means."

[1] Lucretius, iv. 1261. The meaning of the passage is rendered in the preceding sentence of the text.
[2] *Id. ib.* 1266. The meaning of this quotation, also, is conveyed by the paragraph which precedes it.
[3] Plutarch, *ut supra.* [4] Id. *ib.*
[5] Horace, i. 2, 69.

good and a false opinion have infused into us, are so many that they almost exclude all the natural; just as if there were so great a number of strangers in the city as to thrust out the natural inhabitants, or, usurping upon their ancient rights and privileges, should extinguish their authority and introduce new laws and customs of their own. Animals are much more regular than we, and keep themselves with greater moderation within the limits nature has prescribed; but yet not so exactly that they have not sometimes an analogy with our debauchs. And as there have been furious desires that have impelled men to the love of beasts, so there have been examples of beasts that have fallen in love with us, and been seized with monstrous affection betwixt kinds: witness the elephant who was rival to Aristophanes the grammarian in the love of a young herb-wench in the city of Alexandria, who was nothing behind him in all the offices of a very passionate suitor: for going through the market where they sold fruit, he would take some in his trunk and carry them to her. He would as much as possible keep her always in his sight, and would sometimes put his trunk under her handkerchief into her bosom, to feel her breasts.[1] They tell also of a dragon in love with a girl, and of a goose enamoured of a child; of a ram that was suitor to the minstrelless Glaucia, in the town of Asopus;[2] and we see not unfrequently baboons furiously in love with women. We see also certain male animals that are fond of the males of their own kind. Oppian[3] and others give us some examples of the reverence that beasts have to their kindred in their copulations:[4] but experience often shews us the contrary:

Animals more regular than we.

Nec habetur turpe juvencæ
Ferre patrem tergo; fit equo sua filia conjux;
Quæque creavit, init pecudes caper; ipsaque cujus
Semine concepta est, ex illo concipit ales.[5]

"The heifer thinks it not a shame to take
Her lusty sire upon her willing back:
The horse his daughter leaps, goats scruple not
T' increase the herd by those they have begot;
And birds of all sorts do in common live,
And by the seed they have conceived conceive."

And for subtle cunning, can there be a more pregnant example than in the philosopher Thales' mule?[6] who fording a river, laden with salt, and by accident stumbling there, so that the sacks he carried were all wet, perceiving that by the melting of the salt his burden was something lighter, he never failed, so oft as he came to any river, to lie down with his load; till his master, discovering the knavery, ordered that he should be laden with wool: wherein, finding himself mistaken, he ceased to practise that device. There are several that very vividly represent the true image of our avarice; for we see them infinitely solicitous to get all they can, and hide it with exceeding great care, though they never make any use of it at all. As to thrift, they surpass us not only in the foresight and laying up, and saving for the time to come, but they have, moreover, a great deal of the science necessary thereto. The ants bring abroad into the sun their grain and seed to air, refresh and dry them when they perceive them to mould and grow musty, lest they should decay and rot. But the caution and prevention they use in gnawing their grains of wheat surpass all imagination of human prudence: for by reason that the wheat does not always continue sound and dry, but grows soft, thaws and dissolves as if it were steeped in milk, whilst hasting to germination; for fear lest it should shoot and lose the nature and property of a magazine for their subsistence, they nibble off the end by which it should shoot and sprout.

Animals that seem tainted with avarice, and others that are very saving.

As to what concerns war, which is the greatest and most magnificent of human actions, I would very fain know whether we would use it for an argument of some prerogative, or, on the contrary, for a testimony of our weakness and imperfection; as, in truth, the science of undoing and killing one another, and of ruining and destroying our own kind, has nothing in it so tempting as to make it be coveted by beasts who have it not.

The passion for war, a proof of weakness in human beings, is in certain animals.

Quando leoni
Fortior eripuit vitam leo? quo nemore unquam
Expiravit aper majoris dentibus apri?[7]

"No lion drinks a weaker lion's gore,
No boar expires beneath a stronger boar."

Yet are they not universally exempt; witness the furious encounters of bees, and the enterprizes of the princes of the contrary armies:

Wars betwixt bees.

Sæpe duobus
Regibus incessit magno discordia motu;
Continuoque animos vulgi, et trepidantia bella
Corda licet longè præsciscere.[8]

"But if contending factions arm the hive,
When rival kings in doubtful battle strive,
Tumultuous crowds the dread event prepare,
And palpitating hearts that beat to war.

I never read this divine description but that, methinks, I there see human folly and vanity represented in their true and lively colours.

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[1] Plutarch, *ut supra*.
[2] Id. *ib.*
[3] *On Hunting*, i. 336.
[4] Of this there is a very remarkable instance in *Varro de Re Rustica*, ii. 7. "As incredible as it may seem, it ought to be remembered that a stallion, refusing absolutely to leap his mother, the groom thought fit to carry him to her with a cloth over his head, which blinded him, and by that means he forced him to cover her; but, taking off the veil as soon as he got off her, the stallion furiously rushed upon the groom, and bit him till he killed him."
[5] Ovid, *Metam.* x. 325.
[6] Plutarch, *ut supra*.
[7] Juvenal, xv. 160.
[8] Virgil, *Georg. iv.* 67.

For these warlike movements, that so ravish us with their astounding noise and horror, this rattle of guns, drums, and cries,

Fulgur ibi ad cœlum se tollit, totaque circùm
Ære renidescit tellus, subterque virum vi
Excitur pedibus sonitus, clamoreque montes
Icti rejectant voces ad sidera mundi ;[1]

" When burnish'd arms to heaven dart their rays,
And many a steely beam !' th' sun-light plays,
When trampled is the earth by horse and man,
Until the very centre groans again,
And that the rocks, struck by the various cries,
Reverberate the sound unto the skies ;" .

in the dreadful embattling of so many thousands of armed men, and so great fury, ardour, and courage, 'tis pleasant to consider by what idle occasions they are excited, and by how light ones appeased :

Paridis propter narratur amorem
Græciæ Barbariæ diro collisa duello :[2]

" Of wanton Paris the illicit love
Did Greece and Troy to ten years' warfare move :"

all Asia was ruined and destroyed for the lust of Paris : the envy of one single man, a despite, a pleasure, a domestic jealousy, causes that ought not to set two oyster-wenches by the ears, is the mover of all this mighty bustle. Shall we believe those very men who are themselves the principal authors of these mischiefs? Let us then hear the greatest, the most powerful, the most victorious emperor that ever was, turning into a jest, very pleasantly and ingeniously, several battles fought both by sea and land, the blood and lives of five hundred thousand men that followed his fortune, and the strength and riches of two parts of the world drained for the expense of his expeditions :

Quod fuit Glaphyran Antonius, hanc mihi pœnam
Fulvia constituit, se quoque uti futuam.
Fulviam ego ut futuam ! quid, si me Manius oret
Pœdicem, faciam ? Non puto, si sapiam.
Aut futue, aut pugnemus, ait. Quid, si mihi vita
Charior est ipsa mentula ? Signa canant.[3]

(I use my Latin with the liberty of conscience you are pleased to allow me.[4]) Now this great body, with so many fronts, and so many motions, which seems to threaten heaven and earth ;

Quam multi Lybico volvuntur marmore fluctus,
Sævis ubi Orion hibernis conditur undis,
Vel quam sole novo densæ torrentur aristæ,
Aut Hermi campo, aut Lyciæ flaventibus arvis ;
Scuta sonant, pulsuque pedum tremit excita tellus ;[5]

" Not thicker billows beat the Lybian main,
When pale Orion sits in wintry rain ;
Nor thicker harvests on rich Hermus rise,
Or Lycian fields, when Phœbus burns the skies,
Than stand these troops : their bucklers ring around ;
Their trampling turns the turf and shakes the solid ground ;"

this furious monster, with so many heads and arms, is yet man—feeble, calamitous, and miserable man ! 'Tis but an ant-hill disturbed and provoked :

It nigrum campis agmen :[6]

" The black troop marches to the field :".

a contrary blast, the croaking of a flight of ravens, the stumble of a horse, the casual passage of an eagle, a dream, a voice, a sign, a morning mist, are any one of them sufficient to beat down and overturn him. Dart but a sunbeam in his face, he is melted and vanished. Blow but a little dust in his eyes, as our poet says of the bees, and all our ensigns and legions, with the great Pompey himself at the head of them, are routed and crushed to pieces : for it was he, as I take it,[7] that Sertorius beat in Spain with those fine arms, which also served Eumenes against Antigonus, and Surena against Crassus :

Hi motus animorum, atque hæc certamina tanta,
Pulveris exigui jactu compressa quiescent.[8]

" Yet at thy will these dreadful conflicts cease
Throw but a little dust and all is peace."

Let us but slip our flies after them, and they will have the force and courage to defeat them. Of fresh memory, the Portuguese having besieged the city of Tamly, in the territory of Xiatine, the inhabitants of the place brought a great many hives, of which are great plenty in that place, upon the wall ; and with fire drove the bees so furiously upon the enemy that they gave over the enterprise, not being able to stand their attacks and endure their stings : and so the citizens, by this new

The siege of Tamly raised by the bees.

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[1] Lucret. ii. 325.

[2] Horace, *Epist.* i. 2, 6.

[3] This epigram was composed by Augustus, but the luscious Latin conveys such gross and licentious ideas that there would be no excuse for translating the lines without softening them. The following French version, by M. de Fontenelle, in one of his incomparable Dialogues of the Dead, though the language is so very polished, lets us entirely into Augustus's meaning :

Parce qu'Antoine est charmé de Glaphyre
Fulvie a ses beaux yeux me veut assujettir.
Antoine est infidele. Eh bien donc ? Est ce à dire
Que des fautes d'Antoine on me fera patir ?
Qui ? moy ! que je serve Fulvie !
Suffit-il quelle en ait tenire ?
A ce compte, on verroit se retirer vers moi
Mille epouses mal satisfaites.
Aime moy, me dit elle, *ou combattons*. Mais quoy ?
Elle est bien laide ! Allons, sonnez, trompettes.

" 'Cause Anthony is fired with Glaphire's charms,
Fain would his Fulvia tempt me to her arms.
If Anthony be false, what then ? must I
Be slave to Fulvia's lustful tyranny ?
Then would a thousand wanton, waspish wives,
Swarm to my bed like bees into their hives.
Declare for love, or war, she said ; and frown'd :
No love I'll grant : to arms bid trumpets sound."[2a]

[4] This chapter is believed to have been addressed to Margaret de Valois, Queen of Navarre, authoress of the *Heptameron*.

[5] *Æneid*, vii. 718.

[6] *Ib.* iv. 404.

[7] Here Montaigne's memory really fails him ; for it was not against Pompey that Sertorius employed this stratagem, but against the Garacitanians, a people of Spain, who dwelt in deep caverns, hollowed out of the rock, whence 'twas impossible to force them. Plutarch, *Life of Sertorius*, c. 6.

[8] Virg. *Georg.* iv. 86.

sort of relief, gained liberty and the victory with so wonderful a fortune, that at the return of their defenders from the battle they found they had not lost so much as one. The souls of emperors and cobblers are cast in the same mould: the weight and importance of the actions of princes considered, we persuade ourselves that they must be produced by some as weighty and important causes: but we are deceived; for they are pushed on, and pulled back in their motions, by the same springs that we are in our little undertakings. The same reason that makes us wrangle with a neighbour causes a war betwixt princes; the same reason that makes us whip a lacquey, falling into the hands of a king makes him ruin a whole province. They are as lightly moved as we, but they are able to do more. In a gnat and an elephant the passion is the same.

As to fidelity, there is no animal in the world so treacherous as man. Our histories have recorded the violent pursuits that dogs have made after the murderers of their masters. King Pyrrhus observing a dog that watched a dead man's body, and understanding that he had for three days together performed that office, commanded that the body should be buried, and took the dog along with him. One day, as he was at a general muster of his army, this dog, seeing his master's murderers, with great barking and extreme signs of anger flew upon them, and by this first accusation awakened the revenge of this murder, which was soon after perfected by form of justice.[1] As much was done by the dog of the wise Hesiod, who convicted the sons of Ganictor of Naupactus of the murder committed on the person of his master.[2] Another dog being to guard a temple at Athens, having spied a sacrilegious thief carrying away the finest jewels, fell to barking at him with all his force; but the warders not awaking at the noise, he followed him, and, day being broke, kept off at a little distance, without losing sight of him: if he offered him anything to eat he would not take it, but would wag his tail at all the passengers he met, and took whatever they gave him; and if the thief laid down to sleep, he likewise stayed upon the same place. The news of this dog being come to the warders of the temple they put themselves upon the pursuit, inquiring of the colour of the dog, and at last found him in the city of Cromyon, and the thief also, whom they brought back to Athens, where he got his reward: and the judges, in consideration of this good office, ordered a certain measure of corn for the dog's daily sustenance at the public charge, and the priests to take care of it. Plutarch delivers this story for a certain truth, and that it happened in the age wherein he lived.[3]

Dogs revenge the death of their masters.

The fidelity of a dog in pursuing a sacrilegious person.

As to gratitude (for I think we need bring this word into a little repute), this one example, which Apion[4] reports himself to have been an eye-witness of, shall suffice. "One day," says he, "at Rome, they entertained the people with the sight of the fighting of several strange beasts, and principally of lions of an unusual size: there was one amongst the rest who, by his furious deportment, by the strength and largeness of his limbs, and by his loud and dreadful roaring, attracted the eyes of all the spectators. Amongst other slaves that were presented to the people in this combat of beasts there was one Androdus, of Dacia, belonging to a Roman lord of consular dignity. This lion having seen him at a distance first made a sudden stop, as it were in a wondering posture, and then softly approached nearer in a gentle and peaceable manner, as if it were to enter into acquaintance with him. This being done, and being now assured of what he sought for, he began to wag his tail, as dogs do when they flatter their masters, and to kiss and lick the hands and thighs of the poor wretch, who was beside himself, and almost dead with fear. Androdus being by this kindness of the lion a little come to himself, and having taken so much heart as to consider and know him, it was a singular pleasure to see the joy and caresses that passed betwixt them. At which the people breaking into loud acclamations of joy, the emperor caused the slave to be called, to know from him the cause of so strange an event; who thereupon told him a new and a very strange story: "My master," said he, "being pro-consul in Africa, I was constrained, by his severity and cruel usage, being daily beaten, to steal from him and run away; and, to hide myself secretly from a person of so great authority in the province, I thought it my best way to fly to the solitudes, sands, and uninhabitable parts of that country, resolving that in case the means of supporting life should chance to fail me, to make some shift or other to kill myself. The sun being excessively hot at noon, and the heat intolerable, I lit upon a private and almost inaccessible cave, and went into it. Soon after there came in to me this lion, with one foot wounded and bloody, complaining and groaning with the pain he endured. At his coming I was exceeding afraid; but he having spied me hid in the corner of his den, came gently to me, holding out and showing me his wounded foot, as if he demanded my assistance in his distress. I then drew out a great splinter he had got there, and, growing a little more familiar with him, squeezing the wound thrust out the matter, dirt, and gravel

The gratitude of a lion towards a slave.

[1] Plutarch, *ut supra*.

[2] Id. *ib.* Pausanias, ix. 31.

[3] Plutarch, *ut supra*. Ælian, *de Animal.* vii. 19.

[4] In Aulus Gellius, v. 14. Seneca, *de Benef.* ii. 19, seems to refer to the same story. Some editors of Aulus Gellius name the hero *Androclus*, or *Androcles*, after Ælian, *Var. Hist.* vii. 48; but the old editions have the name *Androdus*.

which was got into it, and wiped and cleansed it the best I could. He, finding himself something better, and much eased of his pain, laid him down to rest, and presently fell asleep with his foot in my hand. From that time forward he and I lived together in this cave three whole years upon one and the same diet; for of the beasts that he killed in hunting he always brought me the best pieces, which I roasted in the sun for want of fire, and so ate it. At last, growing weary of this wild and brutish life, the lion being one day gone abroad to hunt for our ordinary provision, I departed thence, and the third day after was taken by the soldiers, who brought me from Africa to this city to my master, who presently condemned me to die, and to be thus exposed to the wild beasts. Now, by what I see, this lion was also taken soon after, who has now sought to recompense me for the benefit and cure that he received at my hands." This is the story that Androdus told the emperor, which he also conveyed from hand to hand to the people: wherefore, at the general request, he was absolved from his sentence and set at liberty, and the lion was, by order of the people, presented to him. "We afterwards saw," says Apion, "Androdus leading this lion, in nothing but a small leash, from tavern to tavern at Rome, and receiving what money everybody would give him, the lion being so gentle as to suffer himself to be covered with the flowers that the people threw upon him, every one that met him saying, 'There goes the lion that entertained the man; there goes the man that cured the lion.'"

Weeping of beasts for the loss of those they love.

We often lament the loss of beasts we love, and so do they the loss of us:

Post, bellator equus, positis insignibus, Æthon
It lacrymans, guttisque humectat grandibus ora.[1]

"To close the pomp, Æthon, the steed of state,
Is led, the fun'ral of his lord to wait.
Stripped of his trappings, with a sullen pace
He walks, and the big tears run rolling down his face."

As some nations have their wives in common, and some others have every one his own, is not the same seen among beasts, and marriages better kept than ours? As to the society and confederation they make amongst themselves, to league together and to give one another mutual assistance, is it not known that oxen, hogs, and other animals, at the cry of any of their kind that we offend, all the herd run to his aid and embody for his defence? The fish Scarus, when he has swallowed the angler's hook, his fellows all crowd about him and gnaw the line in pieces; and if, by chance, one be got into the bow-net, the others present him their tails on the outside, which he holding fast with his teeth, they after that manner disengage and draw him out.[2]

Society amongst beasts.

Mullets, when one of their companions is engaged, cross the line over their back, and, with a fin they have there, indented like a saw, cut and saw it asunder.[3] As to the particular offices that we receive from one another for the service of life, there are several like examples amongst them. 'Tis said that the whale never moves that she has not always before her a little fish like the sea-gudgeon, for this reason called the guide-fish, whom the whale follows, suffering himself to be led and turned with as great facility as the rudder guides the ship: in recompense of which service also, whereas all the other things, whether beast or vessel, that enter into the dreadful gulf of this monster's mouth, are immediately lost and swallowed up, this little fish retires into it in great security, and there sleeps, during which time the whale never stirs: but so soon as ever it goes out he immediately follows it; and if by accident he loses the sight of his little guide, he goes wandering here and there, and strikes his sides against the rocks like a ship that has lost her helm: which Plutarch affirms to have seen in the island of Anticyra.[4] There is a like society betwixt the little bird called the wren and the crocodile. The wren serves for a centinel over this great animal; and if the ichneumon, his mortal enemy, approach to fight him, this little bird, for fear lest he should surprise him asleep, both with his voice and bill rouses him and gives him notice of his danger. He feeds of this monster's leavings, who receives him familiarly into his mouth, suffering him to peck in his jaws and betwixt his teeth, and thence to pick out the bits of flesh that remain; and when he has a mind to shut his mouth, he first gives the bird warning to go out by closing it by little and little, and without bruising or doing it any harm at all.[5] The shell-fish called the naker lives in the same intelligence with the shrimp, a little sort of animal of the lobster kind, which serves him in the nature of a porter, sitting at the opening of the shell, which the naker keeps always gaping and open till the shrimp sees some little fish, proper for their prey, within the hollow of the shell, where she enters too, and pinches the naker so to the quick that she is forced to close her shell, where they two together devour the prey they have trapped in their fort.[6] In the manner of living of the tunnies we observe a singular knowledge of the three parts of mathematics. As to astrology, they teach it men, for they stay in the place where they are surprised by the brumal solstice, and never stir thence till the next equinox: for which reason Aristotle himself attributes to them this science. As to geometry and arithmetic, they always form their numbers in the figure of a cube, every way square, and make up the body of a battalion, solid, close,

[1] *Æneid*, xi. 89. Pliny, viii. 42.
[2] Plutarch, *ut supra*.
[3] Id. *ib*.
[4] Plutarch, *ut supra*.
[5] Id. *ib*. Pliny, viii. 25, &c.
[6] Id. *ib*. Cicero, *de Nat. Deor*. ii. 48.

and environed round with six equal sides, and swim in this square order, as large behind as before; so that whoever in seeing them can count one rank may easily number the whole troop, by reason that the depth is equal to the breadth, and the breadth to the length.[1]

Magnanimity of an Indian dog.

As to magnanimity, it will be hard to exhibit a better instance of it than in the example of the great dog sent to Alexander the Great from the Indies. They first brought him a stag to encounter, next a boar, and after that a bear, all which he slighted, and disdained to stir from his place; but when he saw a lion he then immediately roused himself, evidently manifesting that he declared that alone worthy to enter the lists with him.[2] Touching repentance and the acknowledgment of faults, 'tis reported of an elephant that, having in the impetuosity of his rage killed his keeper, he fell into so extreme a sorrow that he would never after eat, but starved himself to death.[3] And as to clemency, 'tis said of a tiger, the most cruel of all beasts, that a kid having been put in to him, he suffered a two days' hunger rather than hurt it, and the third broke the grate he was shut up in, to seek elsewhere for prey; so unwilling he was to fall upon the kid, his familiar and his guest.[4] And as to the laws of familiarity and agreement, formed by conversation, it ordinarily happens that we bring up cats, dogs, and hares, tame together.

Repentance of an elephant.

But that which seamen by experience know, and particularly in the Sicilian Sea, of the quality of the halcyons, surpasses all human thought. Of what kind of animal has nature even so much honoured the birth? The poets indeed say that one only island, Delos, which was before a floating island, was fixed for the service of Latona's lying-in: but God has ordered that the whole ocean should be stayed, made stable and smooth, without waves, without winds or rain, whilst the halcyon produces her young, which is just about the solstice, the shortest day of the year; so that by her privilege we have seven days and seven nights in the very heart of winter wherein we may sail without danger. Their females never have to do with any other male but their own, whom they serve and assist all their lives, without ever forsaking him. If he becomes weak and broken with age, they take him upon their shoulders and carry him from place to place, and serve him till death. But the most inquisitive into the secrets of nature could never yet arrive at the knowledge of the wonderful fabric wherewith the halcyon builds her nest for her little ones, nor guess at the materials. Plutarch,[5]

Marvellous condition of the halcyons.

The structure of their nests.

[1] Plutarch, *ut supra*.—Aristotle, *on Animals*, viii. 13.—Ælian, *on Animals*, ix. 42.
[2] Plutarch, *ut supra*.
[3] Arrian, *Indian History*, c. 14.

who has seen and handled many of them, thinks it is the bones of some fish which she joins and binds together, interlacing them, some lengthwise and others across, and adding ribs and hoops in such manner that she forms at last a round vessel fit to launch; which being done, and the building finished, she carries it to the beach, where the sea beating gently against it shows where she is to mend what is not well jointed and knit, and where better to fortify the seams that are leaky, that open at the beating of the waves; and, on the contrary, what is well built and has had the due finishing, the beating of the waves does so close and bind together that it is not to be broken or cracked by blows either of stone or iron without very much ado. And that which is more to be admired is the proportion and figure of the cavity within, which is composed and proportioned after such a manner as not to receive or admit any other thing than the bird that built it: for to anything else it is so impenetrable, close, and shut, nothing can enter, not so much as the water of the sea. This is a very clear description of this building, and borrowed from a very good hand; and yet methinks it does not give us sufficient light into the difficulty of this architecture. Now from what vanity can it proceed to despise and look down upon, and disdainfully to interpret, effects that we can neither imitate nor comprehend?

The faculty of imagination common to the beasts as well as human beings.

To pursue a little further this equality and correspondence betwixt us and beasts, the privilege our soul so much glorifies herself upon, of bringing all things she conceives to her own law, of stripping all things that come to her of their mortal and corporeal qualities, of ordering and placing things she conceives worthy her taking notice of, stripping and divesting them of their corruptible qualities, and making them to lay aside length, breadth, depth, weight, colour, smell, roughness, smoothness, hardness, softness, and all sensible accidents, as mean and superfluous vestments, to accommodate them to her own immortal and spiritual condition; as Rome and Paris, for example, that I have in my fancy, Paris that I imagine, I imagine and comprehend it without greatness and without place, without stone, without plaster, and without wood: this very same privilege, I say, seems evidently to be in beasts; for a courser accustomed to trumpets, to musket-shots, and battles, whom we see start and tremble in his sleep and stretched upon his litter, as if he were in a fight; it is almost certain that he conceives in his soul the beat of a drum without noise, and an army without arms and without body:

[4] Plutarch, *ut supra*.
[5] Plutarch, *ut supra*.—Ælian, *H. of Animals*, ix. 17.—Pliny, x. 32.

Quippe videbis equos fortes, cum membra jacebunt
In somnis, sudare tamen, spirareque sæpe,
Et quasi de palma summas contendere vires :[1]

" You shall see maneg'd horses in their sleep
Sweat, snort, start, tremble, and a clutter keep,
As if with all their force they striving were
The victor's palm proudly away to bear :"

the hare, that a greyhound imagines in his sleep, after which we see him pant so whilst he sleeps, stretch out his tail, shake his legs, and perfectly represents all the motions of a course, is a hare without fur and without bones :

Venantumque canes in molli sæpe quiete
Jactant crura tamen subito, vocesque repente
Mittunt, et crebras reducunt naribus auras,
Ut vestigia si teneant inventa ferarum :
Expergefactique sequuntur inania sæpe
Cervorum simulacra, fugæ quasi dedita cernant;
Donec discussis redeant erroribus ad se: [2]

" And hounds stir often in their quiet rest,
Spending their mouths, as if upon a quest,
Snuff, and breathe quick and short, as if they went
In a full chase upon a burning scent :
Nay, being wak'd, imagin'd stags pursue,
As if they had them in their real view,
Till, having shook themselves more broad awake,
They do at last discover the mistake :"

the watch-dogs, that we often observe to snarl in their dreams, and afterwards bark out, and start up as if they perceived some stranger at hand; the stranger that their soul discerns is a man spiritual and imperceptible, without dimension, without colour, and without being :

Consueta domi catulorum blanda propago
Degere, sæpe levem ex oculis volucremque soporem
Discutere, et corpus de terra corripere instant,
Proinde quasi ignotas facies atque ora tuantur.[3]

" The fawning whelps of household curs will rise,
And, shaking the soft slumber from their eyes,
Oft bark and stare at ev'ry one within,
As upon faces they had never seen."

What constitutes beauty.

As to the beauty of the body, before I proceed any further I should know whether or no we are agreed about the description. 'Tis likely we do not well know what beauty is in nature and in general, since to our own human beauty we give so many divers forms, of which, were there any natural rule and prescription, we should know it in common, as the heat of the fire. But we fancy the forms according to our own appetite and liking :

Turpis Romano Belgicus ore color :[4]

" A German hue ill suits a Roman face."

Beauty of the Indians.

The Indians paint it black and tawny, with great swelled lips, wide flat noses, and load the cartilage betwixt the nostrils with great rings of gold, to make it hang down to the mouth ; as also the under lip with great hoops, enriched with precious stones, that weigh them down to fall upon the chin, it being with them a singular grace to show their teeth, even below the roots. In Peru the greatest ears are the most beautiful, which they stretch out as far as they can by art. And a man now living says that he has seen in an eastern nation this care of enlarging them in so great repute, and the ear loaded with so ponderous jewels, that he did with great ease put his arm, sleeve and all, through the hole of an ear. There are elsewhere nations that take great care to black their teeth, and hate to see them white, whilst others paint them red. The women are reputed more beautiful, not only in Biscay, but elsewhere, for having their heads shaved ; and, which is more, in certain frozen countries, as Pliny reports.[5] The Mexicans esteem a low forehead a great beauty, and though they shave all other parts, they nourish hair on the forehead and increase it by art, and have great breasts in so great reputation that they affect to give their children suck over their shoulders. We should paint deformity so. The Italians fashion it gross and massy ; the Spaniards gaunt and slender ; and amongst us one has it white, another brown ; one soft and delicate, another strong and vigorous ; one will have his mistress soft and gentle, others haughty and majestic. Just as the preference in beauty that Plato attributes to the spherical figure the Epicureans gave rather to the pyramidal or square, and cannot swallow a god in the form of a bowl.[6] But, be it how it will, nature has no more privileged us in this from her common laws than in the rest. And if we will judge ourselves aright, we shall find that, if there be some animals less favoured in this than we, there are others, and in greater number, that are more : *a multis animalibus decore vincimur*,[7] " Many animals surpass us in beauty," even among the terrestrial, our compatriots : for as to those of sea, setting the figure aside, which cannot fall into any manner of proportion, being so much another thing in colour, clearness, smoothness, and arrangement, we sufficiently give place to them ; and no less, in all qualities, to the aërial. And this prerogative that the poets make such a mighty matter of, our erect stature, looking towards heaven our original,

White teeth despised.

Men are not privileged, in point of beauty, above the beasts.

Pronaque cùm spectent animalia cætera terram,
Os homini sublime dedit, cœlumque tueri
Jussit, et erectos ad sidera tollere vultus,[8]

" Whilst all the brutal creatures downward bend
Their sight, and to their earthly mother tend,
He set man's face aloft, that, with his eyes
Uplifted, he might view the starry skies,"

is truly poetical ; for there are several little beasts who have their sight absolutely turned towards heaven ; and I find the gesture of camels and ostriches much higher raised and

1 Lucret. iv. 988.
2 Id. *ib.* 992.
3 Id. iv. 999.
4 Propert. ii. 17, 26.
5 *Nat. Hist.* vi. 13.
6 Plato, *Timæus*.
7 Seneca. *Epist.* 124.
8 Ovid, *Metam.* i. 84.

more erect than ours. What animals have not their faces above and not before, and do not look opposite, as we do; and that do not in their natural posture discover as much of heaven and earth as man? And what qualities of our bodily constitution, in Plato and Cicero,[1] may not indifferently serve a thousand sorts of beasts? Those that most resemble us are the most despicable and deformed of all the herd: for those, as to outward appearance and form of visage, are baboons:

Simia quam similis, turpissima bestia, nobis?[2]

"How like to man, in visage and in shape,
Is, of all beasts the most uncouth, the ape?"

as to the internal and vital parts, the hog. In earnest, when I consider man stark naked, even in that sex which seems to have the greatest share of beauty, his defects, natural subjection, and imperfections, I find that we have more reason than any other animal to cover ourselves; and are to be excused from borrowing of those to whom nature has in this been kinder than to us, to trick ourselves out with their beauties, and hide ourselves under their spoils, their wool, feathers, hair, and silk. Let us observe, as to the rest, that man is the sole animal whose nudities offend his own companions, and the only one who in his natural actions withdraws and hides himself from his own kind. And really 'tis also an effect worth consideration, that they who are masters in the trade prescribe, as a remedy for amorous passions, the full and free view of the body a man desires; for that to cool the ardour there needs no more but freely and fully to see what he loves:

Man has more reason to be covered than any other animal.

Ille quod obscenas in aperto corpore partes
Viderat, in cursu qui fuit hæsit amor."[3]

"The love that's tilting when those parts appear
Open to view, flags in the hot career."

And, although this receipt may peradventure proceed from a nice and cold humour, it is notwithstanding a very great sign of our deficiencies that use and acquaintance should make us disgust one another. It is not modesty, so much as cunning and prudence, that makes our ladies so circumspect to refuse us admittance into their cabinets before they are painted and tricked up for the public view:

Nec Veneres nostras hoc fallit; quo magis ipsæ
Omnia summopere hos vitæ postscenia celant,
Quos retinere volunt, adstrictoque esse in amore:[3]

"Of this our ladies are full well aware,
Which make them, with such privacy and care,
Behind the scene all those defects remove,
Likely to check the flame of those they love."

whereas in several animals there is nothing that we do not love, and that does not please our senses; so that from their very excrements we do not only extract wherewith to heighten our sauces, but also our richest ornaments and perfumes. This discourse reflects upon none but the ordinary sort of women, and is not so sacrilegious as to comprehend those divine, supernatural, and extraordinary beauties, which we see shine occasionally among us like stars under a corporeal and terrestrial veil.

As to the rest, the very share that we allow to beasts of the bounty of nature, by our own confession, is very much to their advantage. We attribute to ourselves imaginary and fantastic good, future and absent good, for which human capacity cannot of herself be responsible: or good, that we falsely attribute to ourselves by the license of opinion, as reason, knowledge, and honour, and leave to them for their dividend, essential, durable, and palpable good, as peace, repose, security, innocence, and health: health, I say, the fairest and richest present that nature can make us. Insomuch that philosophy, even the Stoic,[4] is so bold as to say, "That Heraclitus and Pherecides, could they have trucked their wisdom for health, and have delivered themselves, the one of his dropsy, and the other of the lousy disease that tormented him, they had done well." By which they set a greater value upon wisdom, comparing and putting it into the balance with health, than they do with this other proposition, which is also theirs: they say that if Circe had presented Ulysses with the two potions, the one to make a fool become a wise man, and the other to make a wise man become a fool, that Ulysses ought rather to have chosen the last, than consent to that by which Circe changed his human figure into that of a beast; and say that wisdom itself would have spoke to him after this manner: "Forsake me, let me alone, rather than lodge me under the body and figure of an ass." How! the philosophers then will abandon this great and divine wisdom for this corporeal and terrestrial covering? It is then no more by reason, by discourse, and by the soul, that we excel beasts; 'tis by our beauty, our fair complexion, and our fine symmetry of parts, for which we must quit our intelligence, our prudence, and all the rest. Well, I accept this open and free confession: certainly they knew that those parts, upon which we so much value ourselves, are no other than vain fancy. If beasts then had all the virtue, knowledge, wisdom, and stoical perfection, they would still be beasts, and would not be comparable to man, miserable, wicked, mad, man. For, in short, whatever is not as we are is nothing worth; and God, to procure himself an esteem among

Health the best and richest gift of nature.

Wherein consists the superior excellence of man to the beasts.

[1] By Plato, in his *Timæus*; and by Cicero, *de Nat. Deor.* ii. 54.

[2] Ennius, *apud* Cicero, *ut supra*, i. 35.

[3] Lucretius, iv. 1182.

[4] Plutarch, *On the common Opinions against the Stoics.*

us, must put himself into that shape, as we shall shew anon. By which it appears that it is not upon any true ground of reason, but by a foolish pride and vain opinion, that we prefer ourselves before other animals, and separate ourselves from their society and condition.

But to return to what I was upon before: we have for our part inconstancy, irresolution, incertitude, sorrow, superstition, solicitude of things to come, even after we shall be no more, ambition, avarice, jealousy, envy, irregular, frantic, and untamed appetites, war, lying, disloyalty, detraction, and curiosity. Doubtless, we have strangely over-paid this fine reason, upon which we so much glorify ourselves, and this capacity of judging and knowing, if we have bought it at the price of this infinite number of passions to which we are eternally subject. Unless we shall also think fit, as even Socrates does,[1] to add to the counterpoise that notable prerogative above beasts, "That whereas nature has prescribed them certain seasons and limits for the delights of Venus, she has given us the reins at all hours and all seasons." *Ut vinum ægrotis, quia prodest rarò, nocet sæpissimè, melius est non adhibere omnino, quam, spe dubiæ salutis, in apertam perniciem incurrere: sic haud scio an melius fuerit, humano generi motum istum celerem cogitationis, acumen, solertiam, quam rationem vocamus, quoniam pestifera sint multis, admodum paucis salutaria, non dari omnino, quam tam munificè et tam largè dari.*[2] "As it falls out that wine often hurting the sick, and very rarely doing them good, it is better not to give them any at all than to run into an apparent danger out of hope of an uncertain benefit, so I know not whether it had not been better for mankind that this quick motion, this penetration, this subtlety that we call reason, had not been given to man at all; considering how pestiferous it is to many, and useful but to few, than to have been conferred in so abundant manner, and with so liberal a hand." Of what advantage can we conceive the knowledge of so many things was to Varro and Aristotle? Did it exempt them from human inconveniences? Were they by it freed from the accidents that lay heavy upon the shoulders of a porter? Did they extract from their logic any consolation for the gout? Or, for knowing how this humour is lodged in the joints, did they feel it the less? Did they enter into composition with death by knowing that some nations rejoice at his approach: or with cuckoldry, by knowing that in some parts of the world wives are in common? On the contrary, having been reputed the greatest men for knowledge, the one amongst the Romans, and the other amongst the Greeks, and in a time when learning did most flourish, we have not heard, nevertheless, that they had any particular excellence in their lives; nay, the Greek had enough to do to clear himself from some notable blemishes in his. Have we observed that pleasure and health have a better relish with him that understands astrology and grammar than with others?

Illiterati num minus nervi rigent?[3]

"Th' illiterate ploughman is as fit
For Venus' service as the wit:"

or shame and poverty less troublesome to the first than to the last?

Scilicet et morbis, et debilitate carebis,
Et luctum et curam effugies, et tempora vitæ
Longa tibi post hæc fato meliore debuntur.[4]

"Disease thy couch shall flee,
And sorrow and care; yes, thou, be sure, wilt see
Long years of happiness, till now unknown."

I have known in my time a hundred artisans, a hundred labourers, wiser and more happy than the rectors of the university, and whom I had much rather have resembled. Learning, methinks, has its place amongst the necessary things of life, as glory, nobility, dignity, or at the most, as beauty, riches, and such other qualities, which indeed are useful to it, but remotely, and more by opinion than by nature. We stand very little more in need of offices, rules, and laws of living in our society, than cranes and ants do in theirs; and yet we see that these carry themselves very regularly without erudition. If man was wise, he would take the true value of every thing according as it was useful and proper to his life. Whoever will number us by our actions and deportments will find many more excellent men amongst the ignorant than among the learned; aye, in all sorts of virtue. Old Rome seems to me to have been of much greater value, both for peace and war, than that learned Rome that ruined itself. And, though all the rest should be equal, yet integrity and innocency would remain to the ancients, for they cohabit singularly well with simplicity. But I will leave this discourse, that would lead me farther than I am willing to follow; and shall only say this farther, 'tis only humility and submission that can make a complete good man. We are not to leave the knowledge of his duty to every man's own judgment; we are to prescribe it to him, and not suffer him to choose it at his own discretion: otherwise, according to the imbecility, and infinite variety of our reasons and opinions, we should at large forge ourselves duties that would, as Epicurus says,[5] enjoin us to eat one another.

Humility and submission the parents of virtue.

The first law that ever God gave to man was a law of pure obedience: it was a commandment naked and simple, wherein man had nothing to inquire after, nor to dispute; foras-

Pure obedience the first law of God to man.

[1] Xenophon, *On Socrates*, i. 4, 12.
[2] Cicero, *De Nat. Deor.* iii. 27.
[3] Horace, *Epod.* 8, 17.
[4] Juv. *Sat.* 14, 156.
[5] Or rather the Epicurean *Colotes*, as may be seen in the treatise that Plutarch wrote against him.

much as to obey is the proper office of a rational soul, acknowledging a heavenly superior and benefactor. From obedience and submission spring all other virtues, as all sin does from self-opinion. And, on the contrary, the first temptation that by the devil was offered to human nature, its first poison, insinuated itself into us by the promise made us of knowledge and wisdom: *Eritis sicut Dii, scientes bonum et malum.*[1] "Ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." And the syrens, in Homer, to allure Ulysses, and draw him within the danger of their snares, offered to give him knowledge.[2] The plague of man is the opinion of wisdom; and for this reason it is that ignorance is so recommended to us, by our religion, as proper to faith and obedience: *Cavete ne quis vos decipiat per philosophiam et inanes seductiones, secundum elementa mundi.*[3] "Take heed, lest any man deceive you by philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, and the rudiments of the world." There is in this a general consent amongst all sorts of philosophers, that the sovereign good consists in the tranquillity of the soul and body: but where shall we find it?

> Ad summum, sapiens uno minor est Jove, dives,
> Liber, honoratus, pulcher, rex denique regum;
> Præcipue sanus, nisi cum pituita molesta est:
>
> "In short, the wise is only less than Jove,
> Rich, free, and handsome; nay, a king above
> All earthly kings; with health supremely blest,
> Excepting when a cold disturbs his rest!"

It seems, in truth, that nature, for the consolation of our miserable and wretched state, has only given us presumption for our inheritance. 'Tis as Epictetus says, that man has nothing properly his own, but the use of his opinion:[4] we have nothing but wind and smoke for our portion. The gods have health in essence, says philosophy, and sickness in intelligence. Man, on the contrary, possesses his goods by fancy, his ills in essence. We have reason to magnify the power of our imagination; for all our goods are only in dream. Hear this poor calamitous animal huff! "There is nothing," says Cicero, "so charming as the employment of letters; of letters, I say, by means whereof the infinity of things, the immense grandeur of nature, the heavens, even in this world, the earth, and the seas are discovered to us: 'tis they that have taught us religion, moderation, and the grandeur of courage, and that have rescued our souls from darkness, to make her see all things, high, low, first, last, and middling: 'tis they that furnish us wherewith to live happily and well, and conduct us to pass over our lives without displeasure, and without offence."[5] Does not this man seem to speak of the condition of the ever-living and almighty God? But as to effects, a thousand little countrywomen have lived lives more equal, more sweet, and constant than his.

> Deus ille fuit, deus, inclyte Memmi,
> Qui princeps vitæ rationem invenit eam, quæ
> Nunc appellatur sapientia; quique per artem
> Fluctibus è tantis vitam, tantisque tenebris,
> In tam tranquilla et tam clara luce locavit:[6]
>
> "That god, great Memmus, was a god no doubt,
> Who, prince of life, first found that reason out
> Now wisdom called; and by his art, who did
> That life in tempests tost, and darkness hid,
> Place in so great a calm, and clear a light:"

here are brave ranting words: but a very slight accident put this man's[7] understanding in a worse condition than that of the meanest shepherd, notwithstanding this instructing god, this divine wisdom. Of the same stamp and impudence is the promise of Democritus's book: "I am going to speak of all things:"[8] and that foolish title that Aristotle prefixes to one of his, Of the Mortal Gods;[9] and the judgment of Chrysippus, that "Dion was as virtuous as God;"[10] and my Seneca himself says, that "God had given him life; but that to live well was his own;" conformably to this other, *In virtute verè gloriamur; quod non contingeret, si id donum à Deo, non à nobis haberemus:*[11] "We truly glory in our virtue: which would not be, if it was given us of God, and not by ourselves:" this is also Seneca's saying: "that the wise man hath fortitude equal with God, but that his is in spite of human frailty, wherein therefore he more than equals God."[12] There is nothing so ordinary as to meet with sallies of the like temerity: there is none of us, who take so much offence to see himself equalled with God, as he does to see himself undervalued by being ranked with other creatures; so much more are we jealous of our own interest than that of our Creator.

Temerity and presumption of some philosophers.

But we must trample under foot this foolish vanity, and briskly and boldly shake the ridiculous foundation upon which these false opinions are founded. So long as man shall believe he has any means and power of himself, he will never acknowledge what he owes to his Maker;

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1 *Genesis*, iii. 5.
2 *Odyssey*, xii. 188. Cicero, *de Fin.* v. 18.
3 St. Paul, Coloss. ii. 8.
4 *Manual*, c. 11.
5 *Tusc. Quæs.* i. 26.
6 Lucret. v. 8.
7 This was Lucretius, who, in the preceding verses, speaks so pompously of Epicurus and his doctrine; for a love-potion, that was given him either by his wife or his mistress, so much disturbed his reason that the violence of his disorder only afforded him a few lucid intervals, which he employed in composing his book, and at last made him kill himself.—Eusebius's *Chronicon.*

8 "Qui ita sit ausus ordiri hæc loquor de universis nihil excepit de quo *non* profitetur: quid enim esse potest extra universa?"—Cic. *Acad. Quest.* ii. 23.

9 Apud Ciceronem *de Finibus*, ii. 13. "Cyrenaici philosophi non viderunt, ut ad cursum, equum; ad arandum bovem; ad indagandum canem; sic hominem ad duas res, ut ait Aristoteles, intelligendum et agendum, esse natum, quasi mortalem deum."

10 Plutarch, *Of the Common Conceptions of the Stoics.*

11 Cic. *de Nat. Deor.* lib. 36.

12 *Epist.* 53. *sub finem.*

his eggs shall always be chickens, as the saying is: we must therefore strip him to his shirt. Let us see some notable examples of the effects of his philosophy: Posidonius being tormented with a disease so painful as made him writhe his arms and gnash his teeth, thought he sufficiently scorned the dolour, by crying out against it:—"Thou mayst do thy worst, I will not confess that thou art an evil."[1] He was as sensible of the pain as my footman, but he made a bravado of bridling his tongue, at least, and restraining it within the laws of his sect: *Re succumbere non oportebat, verbis gloriantem.*[2] "It did not become him, that spoke so big, to confess his frailty when he came to the test." Arcesilas being ill of the gout, and Carneades, who had come to see him, going away troubled at his condition, he called him back, and showing him his feet and breast:—"There is nothing comes thence hither," said he.[3] This has something a better grace, for he feels himself in pain, and would be disengaged from it; but his heart, notwithstanding, is not conquered nor subdued by it. The other stands more obstinately to his point, but, I fear, rather verbally than really. And Dionysius Heracleotes, afflicted with a vehement smarting in his eyes, was reduced to quit these stoical resolutions.[4] But even though knowledge should, in effect, do as they say, and could blunt the point, and dull the edge, of the misfortunes that attend us, what does she, more than what ignorance does more purely and evidently?—The philosopher Pyrrho, being at sea in very great danger, by reason of a mighty storm, presented nothing to the imitation of those who were with him, in that extremity, but a hog they had on board, that was fearless and unconcerned at the tempest.[5] Philosophy, when she has said all she can, refers us at last to the example of a gladiator, wrestler, or muleteer, in which sort of people we commonly observe much less apprehension of death, sense of pain, and other inconveniences, and more of endurance, than ever knowledge furnished any one withal, that was not born and bred to hardship. What is the cause that we make incisions, and cut the tender limbs of an infant, and those of a horse, more easily than our own—but ignorance only? How many has mere force of imagination made sick? We often see men cause themselves to be let blood, purged, and physicked, to be cured of diseases they only feel in opinion.—When real infirmities fail us, knowledge lends us her's: that colour, that complexion, portend some catarrhous defluxion: this hot season threatens us with a fever: this breach in the life-line of your left hand gives you notice of some near and dangerous indisposition; and at last she roundly attacks health itself; saying, this sprightliness and vigour of youth cannot continue in this posture; there must be blood taken, and the heat abated, lest it turn against yourself. Compare the life of a man subjected to such imaginations, to that of a labourer that suffers himself to be led by his natural appetite, measuring things only by the present sense, without knowledge, and without prognostic, that feels no pain or sickness, but when he is really ill. Whereas the other has the stone in his soul, before he has it in his bladder: as if it were not time enough to suffer the evil when it shall come, he must anticipate it by fancy, and run to meet it.

Diseases caused by imagination.

What I say of physic may generally serve in example for all other sciences. Thence is derived that ancient opinion of the philosophers[6] that placed the sovereign good in the discovery of the weakness of our judgment. My ignorance affords me as much occasion of hope as of fear; and having no other rule for my health than that of the examples of others, and of events I see elsewhere upon the like occasion, I find of all sorts, and rely upon those which by comparison are most favourable to me. I receive health with open arms, free, full and entire, and by so much the more whet my appetite to enjoy it, by how much it is at present less ordinary and more rare: so far am I from troubling its repose and sweetness with the bitterness of a new and constrained manner of living. Beasts sufficiently shew us how much the agitation of our minds brings infirmities and diseases upon us. That which is told us of those of Brazil, that they never die but of old age, is attributed to the serenity and tranquillity of the air they live in; but I rather attribute it to the serenity and tranquillity of their souls, free from all passion, thought, or employment, extended or unpleasing, a people that pass over their lives in a wonderful simplicity and ignorance, without letters, without law, without king, or any manner of religion. And whence comes that, which we find by experience, that the heaviest and dullest men are most able, and the most to be desired in amorous performances; and that the love of a muleteer often renders itself more acceptable than that of a gentleman, if it be not that the agitation of the soul in the latter disturbs his physical ability, dissolves and tires it, as it also ordinarily troubles and tires itself. What puts the soul beside itself, and more usually throws it into madness, but her own promptness, vigour, and agility, and, finally, her own proper force? Of what is the most subtle folly made but of the most subtle wisdom? As great friendships spring from great enmities, and vigorous health from mortal diseases, so from the rare and vivid agitations of our souls proceed the most wonderful and most distracted frenzies; 'tis but half a turn of the toe from the one to the other. In the actions of madmen we see how infinitely madness resembles the most vigorous operations of

[1] Cicero, *Tusc. Quæst.* ii. 25.
[2] Id. *ib.* 13.
[3] Cicero, *de Finib.* v. 31.
[4] Cicero, *de Finib.* v. 31.
[5] Laertius, *in vitâ.*
[6] The Sceptics.

the soul. Who does not know how indiscernible the difference is betwixt folly and the sprightly elevations of a free soul, and the effects of a supreme and extraordinary virtue? Plato says that melancholy persons are the most capable of discipline, and the most excellent; and accordingly in none is there so great a propension to madness. Great wits are ruined by their own proper force and pliability: into what a condition, through his own agitation and promptness of fancy, is one of the most judicious, ingenious, and nearest formed, of any other Italian poet, to the air of the ancient and true poesy, lately fallen? Has he not vast obligation to this vivacity that has destroyed him? to this light that has blinded him? to this exact and subtle apprehension of reason that has put him beside his own? to this curious and laborious search after sciences, that has reduced him to imbecility? and to this rare aptitude to the exercises of the soul, that has rendered him without exercise and without soul? I was more angry, if possible, than compassionate, to see him at Ferrara in so pitiful a condition surviving himself, forgetting both himself and his works, which, without his knowledge, though before his face, have been published unformed and incorrect.[1]

Would you have a man healthy, would you have him regular, and in a steady and secure posture? Muffle him up in the shades of stupidity and sloth. We must be made beasts to be made wise, and hoodwinked before we are fit to be led. And if one shall tell me that the advantage of having a cold and dull sense of pain and other evils, brings this disadvantage along with it, to render us consequently less sensible also in the fruition of good and pleasure, this is true; but the misery of our condition is such that we have not so much to enjoy as to avoid, and that the extremest pleasure does not affect us to the degree that a light grief does: *Segnius homines bona quam mala sentiunt*.[2] We are not so sensible of the most perfect health as we are of the least sickness.

Stupidity accompanied by vigour and health.

Pungit

In cute vix summa violatum plagula corpus;
Quando valere nihil quemquam movet. Hoc juvat unum,
Quod me non torquet latus, aut pes: Cætera quisquam
Vix queat aut sanum sese, aut sentire valentem.[3]

"The body with a little sting is griev'd,
When the most perfect health is not perceiv'd,
This only pleases me, that spleen nor gout
Neither offend my side nor wring my foot;
Excepting these, scarce any one can tell,
Or e'er observes, when he's in health and well."

Our well-being is nothing but the not being ill. Which is the reason why that sect of philosophers, which sets the greatest value upon pleasure, has yet fixed it chiefly in unconsciousness of pain. To be freed from ill is the greatest good that man can hope for or desire; as Ennius says,

Nimium boni est cui nihil est mali;[4]

for that every tickling and sting which are in certain pleasures, and that seem to raise us above simple health and passiveness, that active, moving, and, I know not how, itching and biting pleasure; even that very pleasure itself aims at nothing but insensibility as its mark. The appetite that carries us headlong to women's embraces has no other end but only to cure the torment of our ardent and furious desires, and only requires to be glutted and laid at rest, and delivered from the fever. And so of the rest. I say, then, that if simplicity conducts us to a state free from evil, she leads us to a very happy one according to our condition. And yet we are not to imagine it so stupid an insensibility as to be totally without sense: for Crantor had very good reason to controvert the insensibility of Epicurus, if founded so deep that the very first attack and birth of evils were not to be perceived: "I do not approve such an insensibility as is neither possible nor to be desired. I am very well content not to be sick; but if I am, I would know that I am so; and if a caustic be applied, or incisions made in any part, I would feel them."[5] In truth, whoever would take away the knowledge and sense of evil, would at the same time eradicate the sense of pleasure, and finally annihilate man himself: *Istud nihil dolere non sine magna mercede contingit immanitatis in animo, stuporis in corde*.[6] "An insensibility that is not to be purchased but at the price of inhumanity in the soul, and of stupidity of the body." Evil appertains to man of course. Neither is pain always to be avoided, nor pleasure always pursued.

Perfect insensibility neither possible nor desirable.

'Tis a great advantage to the honour of ignorance that knowledge itself throws us into its arms, when she finds herself puzzled to fortify us against the weight of evil; she is constrained to come to this composition, to give us the reins, and permit us to fly into the lap of the other, and to shelter ourselves under her protection from the strokes and injuries of fortune. For what else is her meaning when she instructs us to divert our thoughts from the ills that press upon us, and entertain them with the meditation of pleasures past and gone; to comfort our-

Knowledge refers us to ignorance to screen us from the injuries of fortune.

[1] Montaigne here refers to Tasso, whom he saw at Ferrara, in November, 1580, confined in the Hospital of St. Anne, where he remained from March, 1579, till July, 1586. Curiously enough, Montaigne does not mention the circumstance in his journey. It is almost equally curious that Mr. Cotton refers his reader to Ariosto, instead of Tasso, though Ariosto was 59 years old when Montaigne came into the world.

[2] Livy, xxx. 21.

[3] Stephen de la Boëtie, in the Latin satire already quoted Book i. c. 27.

[4] *Apud* Cicero, *de Finib.* ii. 13.

[5] Cicero, *Tusc. Quæs.* iii. 7.

[6] *Id. ib.* 6.

selves in present afflictions with the remembrance of fled delights, and to call to our succour a vanished satisfaction, to oppose it to the discomfort that lies heavy upon us? *Levationes ægritudinum in avocatione à cogitanda molestia, et revocatione ad contemplandas voluptates, ponit*;[1] "he directs us to alleviate our grief and pains by rejecting unpleasant thoughts, and recalling agreeable ideas;" if it be not that where her power fails she would supply it with policy, and make use of sleight of hand where force of limbs will not serve her turn? For not only to a philosopher, but to any man in his right wits, when he has upon him the thirst of a burning fever, what satisfaction can it be to him to remember the pleasure he took in drinking Greek wine a month ago? It would rather only make matters worse to him:

Che ricordarsi il ben doppia la noia.[2]

"The thinking of pleasure doubles trouble."

Of the same stamp is this other counsel that philosophy gives, only to remember the happiness that is past, and to forget the misadventures we have undergone: as if we had the science of oblivion in our own power, and counsel, wherein we are yet no more to seek.

Suavis laborum est præteritorum memoria.[3]

"Sweet is the memory of by-gone pain."

How does philosophy, that should arm me to contend with fortune, and steel my courage to trample all human adversities under foot, arrive to this degree of cowardice to make me hide my head at this rate, and save myself by these pitiful and ridiculous shifts? For the memory represents to us not what we choose, but what she pleases; nay, there is nothing that so much imprints anything in our memory as a desire to forget it. And 'tis a good way to retain and keep anything safe in the soul to solicit her to lose it. And this is false: *Est situm in nobis, ut et adversa quasi perpetua oblivione obruamus, et secunda jucunde et suaviter meminerimus*;[4] "it is in our power to bury, as it were, in a perpetual oblivion all adverse accidents, and to retain a pleasant and delightful memory of our successes;" and this is true: *Memini etiam quæ nolo; oblivisci non possum quæ volo.*[5] "I do also remember what I would not; but I cannot forget what I would." And whose counsel is this? His,[6] *qui se unus sapientem profiteri sit ausus*;[7] "who alone durst profess himself a wise man."

Qui genus humanum ingenio superavit, et omnes
Præstinxit, stellas exortus uti æthereus Sol.[8]

"Who from mankind the prize of knowledge won,
And put the stars out like the rising sun."

To empty and disfurnish the memory, is not this the true way to ignorance?

Iners malorum remedium ignorantia est.[9]

"Ignorance is but a dull remedy for evils."

We find several other like precepts, whereby we are permitted to borrow frivolous appearances from the vulgar, where we find the strongest reason will not answer the purpose, provided they administer satisfaction and comfort. Where they cannot cure the wound they are content to palliate and benumb it. I believe they will not deny this, that if they could add order and constancy in a state of life that could maintain itself in ease and pleasure by some debility of judgment, they would accept it:

Potare, et spargere flores
Incipiam, patiarque vel inconsultus haberi.[10]

"Give me to drink, and, crown'd with flowers, despise
The grave disgrace of being thought unwise."

There would be a great many philosophers of Lycas's mind; this man, being otherwise of very regular manners, living quietly and contentedly in his family, and not failing in any office of his duty, either towards his own or strangers, and very carefully preserving himself from hurtful things, became, nevertheless, by some distemper in his brain, possessed with a conceit that he was perpetually in the theatre, a spectator of the finest sights and the best comedies in the world; and being cured by the physicians of his frenzy, was hardly prevented from endeavouring by suit to compel them to restore him again to his pleasing imagination:

Pol! me occidistis, amici,
Non servastis, ait; cui sic extorta voluptas,
Et demptus per vim mentis gratissimus error;[11]

"By heaven! you've killed me, friends, outright,
And not preserved me; since my dear delight
And pleasing error, by my better sense
Unhappily return'd, is banished hence:"

with a madness like that of Thrasylaus the son of Pythodorus, who made himself believe that all the ships that weighed anchor from the port of Piræus, and that came into the haven, only made their voyages for his profit: congratulating them upon their successful navigation, and receiving them with the greatest joy; and when his brother Crito caused him to be restored to his better understanding, he infinitely regretted that sort of condition wherein he had lived with so much delight and free from all anxiety of mind.[12] 'Tis according to the old Greek verse, that "there is a great deal of convenience in not being over-wise:"

Ἐν τῷ φρονεῖν γαρ μηδὲν, ἥδιστος βίος.[13]

[1] Cicero, *Tusc. Quæs.* 15.
[2] Id. *ib.*
[3] Euripides, *apud* Cicer. *de Finib.* ii. 32.
[4] Cicero, *de Finib.* i. 17.
[5] Id. *ib.* ii. 32.
[6] Epicurus.
[7] Cicero, *ut supra*, ii. 3.
[8] Lucretius, iii. 1056.
[9] Seneca, *Œdipus*, iii. 7.
[10] Horace, *Epist.* ii. 2, 138.
[11] Id. *ib.*
[12] Athenæus, xii. Ælian, *Var. Hist.* iv. 25, where the name is Thrasyllus.
[13] Sophocles, in Ajace Μαστιγοφόρῳ, ver. 554.

And Ecclesiastes,[1] "In much wisdom there is much sorrow;" and "Who gets wisdom gets labour and trouble."

Even that to which philosophy consents in general, that last remedy which she applies to all sorts of necessities, to put an end to the life we are not able to endure. *Placet?—Pare. Non placet?—Quacumque vis, exi*[2]*—Pungit dolor?—Vel fodiat sane. Si nudus es, da jugulum; sin tectus armis Vulcaniis, id est fortitudine, resiste*;[3] "Does it please?—Obey it. Not please?—Go where thou wilt. Does grief prick thee,—nay, stab thee?—If thou art naked present thy throat: if covered with the arms of Vulcan, that is fortitude, resist it." And this word, so used in the Greek festivals, *aut bibat aut abeat*,[4] "either drink or go," which sounds better upon the tongue of a Gascon,[5] who naturally changes the *b* into *v*, than on that of Cicero:

> Vivere si recte nescis, decede peritis.
> Lusisti satis, edisti satis, atque bibisti;
> Tempus abire tibi est, ne potum largius æquo
> Rideat, et pulset lasciva decentius ætas.[6]
>
> "If to live well and right thou dost not know,
> Give way, and leave thy place to those that do.
> Thou'st eaten, drunk, and play'd to thy content,
> 'Tis time to make thy parting compliment,
> Lest youth, more decent in their follies, scoff
> The nauseous scene, and hiss thee reeling off:"

What is it other than a confession of his impotency, and a sending back not only to ignorance, to be there in safety, but even to stupidity, insensibility, and non-entity?

> Democritum postquam matura vetustas
> Admonuit memorem, motus languescere mentis;
> Sponte sua letho caput obvius obtulit ipse.[7]
>
> "Soon as, through age, Democritus did find
> A manifest decadence in his mind,
> He thought he now surviv'd to his own wrong,
> And went to meet his death, that stay'd too long."

'Tis what Antisthenes said, "That a man should either make provision of sense to understand, or of a halter to hang himself;"[8] and what Chrysippus[9] alleged upon this saying of the poet Tyrtæus:

> "Or to arrive at virtue or at death:"

and Crates said, "That love would be cured by hunger, if not by time; and whoever disliked these two remedies, by a rope."[10] That Sextius,[11] of whom both Seneca and Plutarch speak with so high an encomium, having applied himself, all other things set aside, to the study of philosophy, resolved to throw himself into the sea, seeing the progress of his studies too tedious and slow. He ran to find death, since he could not overtake knowledge. These are the words of the law upon the subject: "If peradventure some great inconvenience happen, for which there is no remedy, the haven is near, and a man may save himself by swimming out of his body, as out of a leaky skiff; for 'tis the fear of dying, and not the love of life, that ties the fool to his body."

How love is to be cured.

As life renders itself by simplicity more pleasant, so more innocent and better, also it renders it as I was saying before: "The simple and ignorant," says St. Paul, "raise themselves up to heaven and take possession of it; and we, with all our knowledge, plunge ourselves into the infernal abyss." I am neither swayed by Valentinian,[12] a professed enemy to all learning and letters, nor by Licinius, both Roman emperors, who called them the poison and pest of all political government; nor by Mahomet, who, as 'tis said, interdicted all manner of learning to his followers: but the example of the great Lycurgus, and his authority, with the reverence of the divine Lacedæmonian policy, so great, so admirable, and so long flourishing in virtue and happiness, without any institution or practice of letters, ought certainly to be of very great weight. Such as return from the new world discovered by the Spaniards in our fathers' days testify to us how much more honestly and regularly those nations live, without magistrate and without law, than ours do, where there are more officers and lawyers than there are of other sorts of men and business:

The Lacedæmonian policy without letters.

The new world without law or magistrate.

> Di cittatorie piene et di libelli,
> D'esamine et di carte di procure,
> Hanno le mani et il seno, et gran fastalli
> Di chiose, di consigli, et di letture:
> Per cui le facultà de poverelli
> Non sono mai nelle città sicure;
> Hanno dietro et dinanzi, et d'ambi i lati,
> Notai, procuratori e avvocati.[13]
>
> "Their bags were full of writs, and of citations,
> Of process, and of actions and arrests,
> Of bills, of answers, and of replications,
> In courts of delegates, and of requests,
> To grieve the simple sort with great vexations:
> They had resorting to them as their guests,
> Attending on their circuit, and their journeys,
> Scriv'ners, and clerks, and lawyers, and attorneys."

It was what a Roman senator of the latter ages said, that their predecessors' breath stunk of

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[1] I. 18.

[2] An alteration of Seneca, *Epist.* 70, whose words are—"Placet? — Vive. Non placet? — Licet eo reverti, unde venisti."

[3] Cicero, *Tusc. Quæs.* ii. 14.

[4] An application from Cicero, whose words are these: "Mihi quidem in vitâ servandâ videtur illa lex quæ in Græcorum conviviis obtinetur," &c. *Tusc. Quæs.* v. 4.

[5] This remark upon the Gascon pronunciation (observes Mr. Coste), which chooses to alter *b* into *v*, is only to be applied to the word *bibat*, otherwise it would not be very clearly intended here: because if the *b* in the word *abeat* was changed into *v* it would mar the construction which Montaigne would put, according to Cicero, upon this phrase: "Aut bibat aut abeat."

[6] Hor. *Epist.* ii. 2, 213.

[7] Lucret. iii. 1052.

[8] Plutarch, *Contradictions of the Stoic Philosophers.*

[9] Id. *ib.*

[10] Laertius, *in vitâ.*

[11] The Pythagorean, who is also frequently referred to by Seneca.

[12] *Valens.*

[13] Ariosto, *Cant.* 14. *Stanz.* 84.

garlick, but their stomachs were perfumed with a good conscience:[1] and that, on the contrary, those of his time were all sweet odour without, but stunk within of all sorts of vices; that is to say, as I interpret it, that they abounded with learning and eloquence, but were very defective in moral honesty. Incivility, ignorance, simplicity, roughness, are the natural companions of innocence: curiosity, subtlety, knowledge, bring malice in their train: humility, fear, obedience, and affability, which are the principal things that support and maintain human society, require an empty and docile soul, and little presuming upon itself. Christians have a particular knowledge, how natural and original an evil curiosity is in man; the thirst of knowledge, and the desire to become more wise, was the first ruin of man, and the way by which he precipitated himself into eternal damnation. Pride was his ruin and corruption. 'Tis pride that diverts him from the common path, and makes him embrace novelties, and rather choose to be head of a troop, lost and wandering in the path of error; to be a master and a teacher of lies, than to be a disciple in the school of truth, suffering himself to be led and guided by the hand of another, in the right and beaten road. 'Tis peradventure, the meaning of this old Greek saying, that superstition follows pride, and obeys it as if it were a father: ἡ δεισιδαιμονία καθάπερ πατρί τῷ τυφῷ πείθεται.[2] Ah! presumption, how much dost thou hinder us?

Fatal effects of curiosity and pride.

After that Socrates was told that the god of wisdom had assigned to him the title of sage, he was astonished at it, and, searching and examining himself throughout, could find no foundation for this divine judgment. He knew others as just, temperate, valiant, and learned as himself; and more eloquent, more handsome, and more profitable to their country than he. At last he concluded that he was not distinguished from others, nor wise, but only because he did not think himself so; and that his God considered the opinion of knowledge and wisdom as a singular absurdity in man; and that his best doctrine was the doctrine of ignorance, and simplicity his best wisdom.[3] The sacred word declares those miserable among us who have an opinion of themselves: "Dust and ashes," says it to such, "what hast thou wherein to glorify thyself?" And, in another place, "God has made man like unto a shadow," of whom who can judge, when by removing the light it shall be vanished? Man is a thing of nothing.

Our force is so far from being able to comprehend the divine height that, of the works of our Creator, those best bear his mark, and are with better title his, which we the least understand. To meet with an incredible thing is an occasion to Christians to believe; and it is so much the more according to reason, by how much it is against human reason.

Too curious an inquiry into the divine nature is to be condemned.

If it were according to reason, it would be no more a miracle; and if it were according to example, it would be no longer a singular thing. *Melius scitur Deus, nesciendo*:[4] "God is better known by not knowing him," says St. Austin: and Tacitus,[5] *Sanctius est ac reverentius de actis Deorum credere, quam scire;* "it is more holy and reverent to believe the works of God than to know them;" and Plato thinks there is something of impiety in inquiring too curiously into God, the world, and the first causes of things: *Atque illum quidem parentem hujus universitatis invenire, difficile; et quum jam in veneris, indicare in vulgus, nefas*:[6] "to find out the parent of the world is very difficult; and when found out, to reveal him to the vulgar is sin," says Cicero.

What our notions of the divine Being amount to.

We talk indeed of power, truth, justice; which are words that signify some great thing; but that thing we neither see nor conceive at all. We say that God fears, that God is angry, that God loves,

Immortalia mortali sermone notantes:[7]

"Giving to things immortal mortal names:"

These are all agitations and emotions that cannot be in God, according to our form, nor can we imagine them, according to his. It only belongs to God to know himself, and to interpret his own works; and he does it in our language, going out of himself, to stoop to us who grovel upon the earth. How can prudence, which is the choice between good and evil, be properly attributed to him whom no evil can touch? How can reason and intelligence, which we make use of, to arrive by obscure at apparent things; seeing that nothing is obscure to him? How justice, which distributes to every one what appertains to him, a thing begot by the society and community of men, how is that in God? How temperance, which is the moderation of corporal pleasures, that have no place in the Divinity? Fortitude to support pain, labour, and dangers, as little appertains to him as the rest; these three things have no access to him."[8] For which reason Aristotle[9] holds him equally exempt from virtue and vice: *Neque gratia, neque ira teneri potest; quod quæ talia essent, imbecilla essent omnia.*[10] "He can neither be affected with favour nor indignation, because both these are the effects of frailty."

[1] A remark of Varro, which may be seen in Nonius Marcellus, at the word *Cepe*.
[2] Socrates, *apud* Stobœum. *Serm.* xxii.
[3] Plato, *Apology for Socrates*.
[4] *De Ordine*, ii. 16.
[5] *De Mor. German.* c. 34.
[6] Cicero, translation of the *Timæus* of Plato, c. 2.
[7] Lucret. v. 122.
[8] Cicero, *de Nat. Deorum*. iii. 15.
[9] Ethics, vii. 1.
[10] Cicero, *de Nat. Deor.* i. 17.

Whence comes our knowledge of the truth.

The participation we have in the knowledge of truth, such as it is, is not acquired by our own force: God has sufficiently given us to understand that, by the witnesses he has chosen out of the common people, simple and ignorant men, that he has been pleased to employ to instruct us in his admirable secrets. Our faith is not of our own acquiring; 'tis purely the gift of another's bounty: 'tis not by meditation, or by virtue of our own understanding, that we have acquired our religion, but by foreign authority and command; wherein the imbecility of our own judgment does more assist us than any force of it; and our blindness more than our clearness of sight: 'tis more by the mediation of our ignorance than of our knowledge that we know any thing of the divine wisdom. 'Tis no wonder if our natural and earthly parts cannot conceive that supernatural and heavenly knowledge: let us bring nothing of our own, but obedience and subjection; for, as it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that, in the wisdom of God, the world knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."[1]

Finally, should I examine whether it be in the power of man to find out that which he seeks, and if that quest, wherein he has busied himself so many ages, has enriched him with any new force, or any solid truth; I believe he will confess, if he speaks from his conscience, that all he has got by so long inquiry is only to have learned to know his own weakness. We have only by a long study confirmed and verified the natural ignorance we were in before. The same has fallen out to men truly wise, which befals the ears of corn; they shoot and raise their heads high and pert, whilst empty; but when full and swelled with grain in maturity, begin to flag and droop. So men, having tried and sounded all things, and having found in that mass of knowledge, and provision of so many various things, nothing solid and firm, and nothing but vanity, have quitted their presumption, and acknowledged their natural condition. 'Tis what Velleius reproaches Cotta withal and Cicero, "that they had learned of Philo, that they had learned nothing."[2] Pherecydes, one of the seven sages, writing to Thales upon his death-bed, "I have," said he, "given order to my people, after my interment, to carry my writings to thee. If they please thee and the other sages, publish; if not, suppress them. They contain no certainty with which I myself am satisfied. Neither do I pretend to know the truth, or to attain to it. I rather open than discover things."[3] The wisest man that ever was, being asked what he knew, made answer, "He knew this, that he knew nothing."[4] By which he verified what has been said, that the greatest part of what we know is the least of what we do not; that is to say, that even what we think we know is but a piece, and a very little one, of our ignorance. We know things in dreams, says Plato, and are ignorant of them in truth. *Omnes pene veteres, nihil cognosci, nihil percipi, nihil sciri posse dixerunt; angustos sensus, imbecilles animos, brevia curricula vitæ.*[5] "Almost all the ancients have declared that there is nothing to be known, nothing to be perceived or understood: the senses are too limited, men's minds too weak, and the course of life too short." And of Cicero himself, who stood indebted to his learning for all he was worth, Valerius says,[6] "That he began to disrelish letters in his old age; and when at his studies, it was with great independency upon any one party; following what he thought probable, now in one sect, and then in another, evermore wavering under the doubts of the academy." *Dicendum est, sed ita ut nihil affirmem, quæram omnia, dubitans plerumque, et mihi diffidens.*[7] "Something I must say, but so as to affirm nothing: I inquire into all things, but for the most part in doubt and distrust of myself."

I should have too fair a game should I consider man in his common way of living and in gross; yet I might do it by his own rule, who judges truth not by weight, but by the number of votes. Let us set the people aside,

> Qui vigilans stertit,
> Mortua cui vita est prope jam, vivo atque videnti;[8]
>
> "Half of his life by lazy sleep's possess'd,
> And when awake his soul but nods at best;"

who neither feel nor judge, and let most of their natural faculties lie idle: I will take man in his highest ground. Let us consider him in that little number of men, excellent and culled out from the rest, who, having been endowed with a remarkable and particular natural force, have moreover hardened and whetted it by care, study, and art, and raised it to the highest pitch of wisdom to which it can possibly arrive. They have adjusted their souls to all ways and all

Of the knowledge to which the greatest geniuses have attained by study and art.

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1 1 Corinthians, i. 19.
2 Cicero, *de Nat. Deor.* i. 17.
3 Laertius, *in vitâ.*
4 *Socrates.* Cicero, *Acad.* i. 4. In the edition of 1588, after "the wisest man that ever was," Montaigne added, "and who never said a thing which more entitled him to the distinction than this."
5 Cicero, *Acad.* i. 12.
6 The reader will have some difficulty in finding any thing of the sort stated in Valerius Maximus. M. de la Monnoye suggests that Montaigne was led into the mistake by some incorrect passage in the old editions of this author, but Barbeyrac shows that this passage had already deceived John of Salisbury (*Policrat.* viii. 12.), from whom Montaigne probably contented himself with translating, without referring to the original at all.
7 Cicero, *de Divinat.* ii. 3.
8 Lucret. iii. 1061, 1059.

biases; have propped and supported them with all foreign helps proper for them, and enriched and adorned them with all they could borrow for their advantage, both within and without the world: 'tis in these is placed the utmost and most supreme height to which human nature can attain. They have regulated the world with policies and laws. They have instructed it with arts and sciences, and by the example of their admirable manners. I shall make account of none but such men as these, their testimony, and experience. Let us examine how far they have proceeded, and where they stopped. The errors and defects that we shall find amongst these men the world may boldly avow as their own.

All philosophy divided into three kinds.

Whoever goes in search of any thing must come to this, either to say that he has found it, or that it is not to be found, or that he is yet upon the search. All philosophy is divided into these three kinds; her design is to seek out truth, knowledge, and certainty. The Peripatetics, Epicureans, Stoics, and others, have thought they have found it. These established the sciences we have, and have treated of them as of certain knowledge. Clitomachus, Carneades, and the Academics, have despaired in their search, and concluded that truth could not be conceived by our understandings. The result of these is weakness and human ignorance. This sect has had the most and the most noble followers. Pyrrho, and other sceptics or epechists, whose dogmas are held by many of the ancients to be taken from Homer, the seven sages, and from Archilochus and Euripides, and to whose number these are added, Zeno, Democritus, and Xenophanes, say that they are yet upon the enquiry after truth. These conclude that the others, who think they have found it out, are infinitely deceived; and that it is too daring a vanity in the second sort to determine that human reason is not able to attain unto it; for this establishing a standard of our power, to know and judge the difficulty of things, is a great and extreme knowledge, of which they doubt whether man is capable:[1]

> Nil sciri si quis putat, id quoque nescit
> An sciri possit quo se nil scire fatetur.[2]
>
> "He that says nothing can be known, o'erthrows
> His own opinion, for he nothing knows,
> So knows not that."

The ignorance that knows itself, judges and condemns itself, is not an absolute ignorance: to be such, it must be ignorant of itself; so that the profession of the Pyrrhonians is to waver, doubt, and enquire, not to make themselves sure of, or responsible to themselves for any thing. Of the three actions of the soul, imaginative, appetitive, and consentive, they receive the two first; the last they kept ambiguous, without inclination or approbation, either of one thing or another, so light as it is. Zeno represented the motion of his imagination upon these divisions of the faculties of the soul thus: "An open and expanded hand signified appearance; a hand half shut, and the fingers a little bending, consent; a clenched fist, comprehension; when with the left he yet thrust the right fist closer, knowledge."[3] Now this situation of their judgment upright and inflexible, receiving all objects without application or consent, leads them to their ataraxy, which is a peaceable condition of life, *temperate*, and exempt from the agitations we receive by the impression of opinion and knowledge that we think we have of things: whence spring fear, avarice, envy, immoderate desires, ambition, pride, superstition, love of novelty, rebellion, disobedience, obstinacy, and the greatest part of bodily ills; nay, and by that they are exempt from the jealousy of their discipline: for they debate after a very gentle manner; they fear no requital in their disputes; when they affirm that heavy things descend they would be sorry to be believed, and love to be contradicted, to engender doubt and suspense of judgment, which is their end.

Doubt and suspense of judgment the principle of Pyrrhonism.

They only put forward their propositions to contend with those they think we have in our belief. If you take their arguments, they will as readily maintain the contrary: 'tis all one to them, they have no choice. If you maintain that snow is black, they will argue on the contrary that it is white; if you say it is neither the one nor the other, they will maintain that it is both. If you hold, of certain judgment, that you know nothing, they will maintain that you do. Yea, and if by an affirmative axiom you assure them that you doubt, they will argue against you that you doubt not; or that you cannot judge and determine that you doubt. And by this extremity of doubt, which justles itself, they separate and divide themselves from many opinions, even of those they have several ways maintained, both concerning doubt and ignorance. "Why shall not they be allowed to doubt," say they, "as well as the dogmatists, one of whom says green, another yellow? Can any thing be proposed to us to grant, or deny, which it shall not be permitted to consider as ambiguous?" And where others are carried away, either by the custom of their country, or by the instruction of parents, or by accident, as by a tempest, without judgment and without choice, nay, and for the most part before the age of discretion, to such and such an opinion, to the sect whether Stoic

[1] In this very style does Sextus Empiricus, the famous Pyrrhonian, from whom Montaigne has taken many things, begin his treatise of the Pyrrhonian hypothesis; and infers, as Montaigne does, that there are three general methods of philosophising, the one dogmatic, the other academic, and the other sceptic. The first affirm they have found the truth, the next declare it to be above our comprehension, and the others are still in quest of it.

[2] Lucret. iv. 470.

[3] Cicero, *Acad.* ii. 47.

or Epicurean, with which they are prepossessed, enslaved, and fast bound, as to a thing they cannot forsake: *Ad quamcumque disciplinam, velut tempestate, delati, ad eam, tanquam ad saxum, adhærescunt*;[1] "every one cleaves to the doctrine he has happened upon, as to a rock against which he has been thrown by tempest;" why shall not these likewise be permitted to maintain their liberty, and consider things without obligation or slavery? *hoc liberiores et solutiores, quod integra illis est judicandi potestas*:[2] "in this more unconstrained and free, because they have the greater power of judging." Is it not of some advantage to be disengaged from the necessity that curbs others? Is it not better to remain in suspense than to entangle one's-self in the innumerable errors that human fancy has produced? Is it not much better to suspend one's persuasion than to intermeddle with these wrangling and seditious divisions: "What shall I choose?" "What you please, provided you will choose."[3] A very foolish answer; but such a one, nevertheless, as all dogmatism seems to point at, and by which we are not permitted to be ignorant of what we are ignorant of.

Take the most eminent side, that of the greatest reputation; it will never be so sure that you shall not be forced to attack and contend with a hundred and a hundred adversaries to defend it. Is it not better to keep out of this hurly-burly? You are permitted to embrace Aristotle's opinions of the immortality of the soul with as much zeal as your honour and life, and to give the lie to Plato thereupon, and shall they be interdicted to doubt him? If it be lawful for Panætius[4] to maintain his opinion about augury, dreams, oracles, vaticinations, of which the Stoics made no doubt at all; why may not a wise man dare to do the same in all things that he dared to do in those he had learned of his masters, established by the common consent of the school, whereof he is a professor and a member? If it be a child that judges, he knows not what it is; if a wise man, he is prepossessed. They have reserved for themselves a marvellous advantage in battle, having eased themselves of the care of defence. If you strike them, they care not, provided they strike too, and they turn every thing to their own use. If they overcome, your argument is lame; if you, theirs; if they fall short, they verify ignorance; if you fall short, you do it; if they prove that nothing is known, 'tis well; if they cannot prove it, 'tis also well: *Ut quum in eadem re paria contrariis in partibus momenta inveniuntur, facilius ab utraque parte assensio sustineatur*:[5] "That when like sentiments happen *pro* and *con* in the same thing, the assent may on both sides be more easily suspended." And they make account to find out, with much greater facility, why a thing is false than why 'tis true; that which is not, than that which is; and what they do not believe, than what they do. Their way of speaking is:—

The common style of the Pyrrhonians.

"I assert nothing; it is no more so than so, or than neither one nor t'other: I understand it not. Appearances are every where equal: the law of speaking, *pro* or *con*, is the same. Nothing seems true, that may not seem false." Their sacramental word is ἐπέχω, that is to say, "I hold, I stir not." This is the burden of their song, and others of like stuff. The effect of which is a pure, entire, perfect, and absolute suspension of judgment. They make use of their reason to inquire and debate, but not to fix and determine. Whoever shall imagine a perpetual confession of ignorance, a judgment without bias, propension, or inclination, upon any occasion whatever, conceives a true idea of Pyrrhonism. I express this fancy as well as I can, by reason that many find it hard to conceive, and the authors themselves represent it a little variously and obscurely.

Their manner of life.

As to what concerns the actions of life, they are in this of the common fashion. They yield and give up themselves to their natural inclinations,[6] to the power and impulse of passions, to the constitution of laws and customs, and to the tradition of arts: *Non enim nos Deus ista scire, sed tantummodo uti voluit*.[7] "For God would not have us know, but only use those things." They suffer their ordinary actions to be guided by those things, without any dispute or judgment. For which reason I cannot consent to what is said of Pyrrho, by those[8] who represent him heavy and immovable, leading a kind of savage and unsociable life, standing the justle of carts, going upon the edge of precipices, and refusing to accommodate himself to the laws. This is to enhance upon his discipline: he would never make himself a stock or a stone, he would show himself a living man, discoursing, reasoning, enjoying all reasonable conveniences and pleasures, employing and making use of all his corporal and spiritual faculties in rule and reason. The fantastic, imaginary, and false privileges that man had usurped of lording it, ordaining, and establishing, he has utterly quitted and renounced. Yet there is no sect but is constrained to permit her sage to follow several things not comprehended, perceived, or consented to, if he means to live. And if he goes to sea, he follows that design, not knowing whether his voyage shall be successful or no; and only insists upon the tightness of the vessel, the experience of the

The wise man is determined in life by appearances.

[1] Cicero, *Acad.* ii. 3.
[2] Id. *ib.* ii.
[3] Id. *ib.* ii. 43.
[4] Montaigne continues to quote Cicero, *Acad.* ii.
[5] Cicero, *Acad.* i. 12.
[6] So Sextus Empiricus declares expressly, and in so many words. *Pyrrh. Hypot.* i. 6.
[7] Cicero, *de Divin.* i. 18.
[8] Laertius, Lucian, Aulus Gellius, and others.

pilot, and the convenience of the season, and such probable circumstances; after which he is bound to go, and suffer himself to be governed by appearances, provided there be no express and manifest contrariety in them. He has a body, he has a soul; the senses push them, the mind spurs them on. And although he does not find in himself this proper and singular sign of judging, and that he perceives that he ought not to engage his consent, considering that there may be some false, equal to these true, appearances, yet does he not, for all that, fail of carrying on the offices of his life with great liberty and convenience. How many arts are there that profess to consist more in conjecture than knowledge; that decide not on true and false, and only follow that which seems so! There are, say they, true and false, and we have in us wherewith to seek it; but not to make it stay when we touch it. We are much more prudent, in letting ourselves be regulated by the order of the world, without inquiry. A soul clear from prejudice has a marvellous advance towards tranquillity and repose. Men that judge and control their judges, do never duly submit to them.

What minds are best disposed to submit to religion, and the rules of vernment.

How much more docile and easy to be governed, both by the laws of religion and civil polity, are simple and incurious minds, than those over-vigilant wits, that will still be prating of divine and human causes! There is nothing in human invention that carries so great a show of likelihood and utility as this; this presents man, naked and empty, confessing his natural weakness, fit to receive some foreign force from above, unfurnished of human, and therefore more apt to receive into him the divine knowledge, making nought of his own judgment, to give more room to faith; neither disbelieving nor establishing any dogma against common observances; humble, obedient, disciplinable, and studious; a sworn enemy of heresy; and consequently freeing himself from vain and irreligious opinions, introduced by false sects. 'Tis a blank paper prepared to receive such forms from the finger of God as he shall please to write upon it. The more we resign and commit ourselves to God, and the more we renounce ourselves, of the greater value we are. "Take in good part," says Ecclesiastes, "the things that present themselves to thee, as they seem and taste from hand to mouth: the rest is out of thy knowledge."[1] *Dominus novit cogitationes hominum, quoniam vanæ sunt:* "The Lord knoweth the hearts of men, that they are but vanity."[2]

Thus we see that of the three general sects of philosophy, two make open profession of doubt and ignorance; and in that of the dogmatists, which is the third, it is easy to discover that the greatest part of them only assume this face of confidence and assurance that they may produce the better effect; they have not so much thought to establish any certainty for us, as to show us how far they have proceeded in their search of truth: *Quam docti fingunt magis quam norunt:*[3] "Which the learned rather feign than know." Timæus, being to instruct Socrates in what he knew of the gods, the world, and men, proposes to speak to him as a man to a man; and that it is sufficient, if his reasons are probable as those of another; for that exact reasons were neither in his nor any other mortal hand; which one of his followers has thus imitated: *Ut potero explicabo: nec tamen, ut Pythius Apollo, certa ut sint et fixa quæ dixero; sed, ut homunculus, probabilia conjectura sequens;*[4] "I will, as well as I am able, explain; affirming, yet not as the Pythian oracle, that what I say is fixed and certain, but like a mere man, that follows probabilities by conjecture." And this, upon the natural and common subject of the contempt of death: he has elsewhere translated from the very words of Plato: *Si forte, de Deorum natura ortuque mundi disserentes, minus id quod habemus in animo consequimur, haud erit mirum: æquum est enim meminisse, et me, qui disseram, hominem esse, et vos, qui judicetis, ut, si probabilia dicentur, nihil ultra requiratis.*[5] "If perchance, when we discourse of the nature of God, and the world's original, we cannot do it as we desire, it will be no great wonder. For it is just you should remember that both I who speak and you who are to judge, are men: so that if probable things are delivered, you shall require and expect no more." Aristotle ordinarily heaps up a great number of other men's opinions and beliefs, to compare them with his own, and to let us see how much he has gone beyond them, and how much nearer he approaches to the likelihood of truth; for truth is not to be judged by the authority and testimony of others; which made Epicurus religiously avoid quoting them in his writings. This is the prince of all dogmatists, and yet we are told by him that the more we know the more we have room for doubt.[6] In earnest, we sometimes see him shroud and muffle up himself in so thick and so inextricable an obscurity that we know not what to make of his advice; it is, in effect, a Pyrrhonism under a resolutive form. Hear Cicero's protestation, who expounds to us another's fancy by his own: *Qui requirunt quid de quaque re ipsi sentiamus curiosius id faciunt quam necesse est. . . Hæc in philosophia ratio contra omnia disserendi, nullamque*

The result of the profession of the Dogmatists.

[1] iii. 22.
[2] Psalm xciii. 11.
[3] Plato, *Timæus.*
[4] Cicero, *Tusc. Ques.* i. 9.
[5] Cicero, *Translation of the Timæus*, c. 3.
[6] *Qui plura novit, eum majora sequuntur dubia.* This is a saying, not of Aristotle, but of Æneas Sylvius, who became Pope, under the title of Pius II.

rem apertè judicandi, profecta à Socrate, repetita ab Arcesilao, confirmata à Carneade, usque ad nostram viget ætatem. . . . . Hi sumus, qui omnibus veris falsa quædam adjuncta esse dicamus, tanta similitudine ut in iis nulla insit certe judicandi et assentiendi nota.[1] "They who desire to know what we think of every thing are therein more inquisitive than is necessary. This practice in philosophy of disputing against every thing, and of absolutely concluding nothing, begun by Socrates, repeated by Arcesilaus, and confirmed by Carneades, has continued in use even to our own times. We are they who declare that there is so great a mixture of things false amongst all that are true, and they so resemble one another, that there can be in them no certain mark to direct us either to judge or assent." Why hath not Aristotle only, but most of the philosophers, affected difficulty, if not to set a greater value upon the vanity of the subject, and amuse the curiosity of our minds by giving them this hollow and fleshless bone to pick? Clitomachus affirmed "That he could never discover by Carneades's writings what opinion he was of."[2] This was it that made Epicurus affect to be abstruse, and that procured Heraclitus the epithet of σκοτεινὸς.[3] Difficulty is a coin the learned make use of, like jugglers, to conceal the vanity of their art, and which human sottishness easily takes for current pay.

Clarus, ob obscuram linguam, magis inter inanes . . .
Omnia enim stolidi magis admirantur, amantque
Inversis quæ sub verbis latitantia cernunt.[4]

"Bombast and riddle best do puppies please,
For fools admire and love such things as these;
And a dull quibble, wrapt in dubious phrase,
Up to the height doth their wise wonder raise."

Cicero[5] reprehends some of his friends for giving more of their time to the study of astrology, logic, and geometry, than they were really worth; saying that they were by these diverted from the duties of life, and from more profitable and proper studies. The Cyrenaick philosophers, in like manner, despised physics and logic. Zeno, in the very beginning of the books of the commonwealth, declared all the liberal arts of no use.[6] Chrysippus said "That what Plato and Aristotle had writ, concerning logic, they had only done in sport, and by way of exercise;" and could not believe that they spoke in earnest of so vain a thing.[7] Plutarch says the same of metaphysics. And Epicurus would have said as much of rhetoric, grammar, poetry, mathematics, and, natural philosophy excepted, of all the sciences; and Socrates of them all, excepting that which treats of manners and of life. Whatever any one required to be instructed in, by him, he would ever, in the first place, demand an account of the conditions of his life present and past, which he examined and judged, esteeming all other learning subsequent to that and supernumerary: *Parum mihi placeant eæ litteræ, quæ ad virtutem doctoribus nihil profuerunt.*[8] "That learning is in small repute with me which nothing profited the teachers themselves to virtue." Most of the arts have been in like manner decried by the same knowledge; but they did not consider that it was from the purpose to exercise their wits in those very matters wherein there was no solid advantage.

The liberal arts despised by some of the sects of the philosophers.

As to the rest, some have looked upon Plato as a dogmatist, others as a doubter, others in some things the one, and in other things the other. Socrates, the conductor of his dialogues, is eternally upon questions and stirring up disputes, never determining, never satisfying, and professes to have no other science but that of opposing himself. Homer, their author, has equally laid the foundations of all the sects of philosophy, to shew how indifferent it was which way we should choose. 'Tis said that

[1] Cicero, *de Nat. Deor.* i. 5.

[2] Montaigne (remarks Mr. Coste) has supposed this to be the meaning of Cicero, whose words are these:—"The opinion of which Calliphon Carneades so studiously defended that he even seemed to approve of it, although Clitomachus affirmed that he never could understand what was approved by Carneades."—*Acad. Quæst.* x. 45. But this is not saying "That Clitomachus asserted that, by the writings of Carneades, he could never discover his opinion." The dispute is not what were the opinions of Carneades in the general, but what he used to say in defence of Calliphon's private opinion concerning what constitutes man's chief good. Forasmuch as Carneades was an Academician, he could not advance any thing positive or clearly decisive upon this important question, which was the reason that Clitomachus never could understand what was the opinion of Carneades in this matter. Calliphon made the chief good consist in pleasure and virtue both together, which, says Cicero, Carneades also was not willing to contradict, "not that he approved it, but that he might oppose the Stoics; not to decide the thing, but to embarrass the Stoics."—*Acad. Quæst.* iv. 42. In this same book Cicero explains to us several of Carneades's opinions; and, what is very remarkable, he only does it as they are set forth by Clitomachus. "Having," says he, "explained all that Carneades says upon this subject, all those opinions of Antiochus (the Stoic) will fall to the ground. But, for fear lest I should be suspected of making him say what I think, I shall deliver nothing but what I collect from Clitomachus, who passed his life with Carneades till he was an old man, and, being a Carthaginian, was a man of great penetration, very studious, moreover, and very exact." *Acad. Quæst.* iv. 31. "I have," says Cicero, "a little before explained to you, from the words of Clitomachus, in what sense Carneades declared these matters." These very things Cicero repeats afterwards, where he transcribes them from a book which Clitomachus had composed and addressed to the poet Lucilius. After this, how could Cicero make Clitomachus say that, by the writings of Carneades in general he could never discover what were his sentiments? The truth is that Clitomachus had not read the writings of Carneades; for, except some letters that he wrote to Anarathes, king of Cappadocia, which ran in his name, the rest of his opinions, as Diogenes Laertius says expressly, were preserved in the books of his disciples.—*In Vita Carneadis.* The same historian tells us that Clitomachus, who composed above 400 volumes, applied himself above all things to illustrate the sentiments of Carneades, whom he succeeded.

[3] *Obscure.* Cicero, *de Fin.* ii. 5.

[4] Lucret. i. 640.

[5] *De Offic.* i. 6.

[6] Laertius, ii. 92.

[7] *Id. in vitâ.*

[8] Plutarch, *Contradictions of the Stoic Philosophers*, where, however, Chrysippus says just the contrary to what is here attributed to him.

[9] Sallust, *Bell. Jug.* c. 85, where the text is somewhat different.

ten several sects sprung from Plato; yet, in my opinion, never did any instruction halt and stumble, if his does not.[1]

Socrates said that midwives,[2] in taking upon them the trade of helping others to bring forth, left the trade of bringing forth themselves; and that by the title of a wise man or sage, which the gods had conferred upon him, he was disabled, in his virile and mental love, of the faculty of bringing forth, contenting himself to help and assist those that could; to open their nature, anoint the passes, and facilitate their birth; to judge of the infant, baptize, nourish, fortify, swath, and circumcise it, exercising and employing his understanding in the perils and fortunes of others.

It is so with the most part of this third sort of authors, as the ancients have observed in the writings of Anaxagoras, Democritus, Parmenides, Xenophanes, and others. They have a way of writing, doubtful in substance and design, rather enquiring than teaching, though they mix their style with some dogmatical periods. Is not the same thing seen in Seneca and Plutarch? How many contradictions are there to be found if a man pry narrowly into them! So many that the reconciling lawyers ought first to reconcile them every one to themselves. Plato seems to have affected this method of philosophising in dialogues; to the end that he might with greater decency, from several mouths, deliver the diversity and variety of his own fancies. It is as well to treat variously of things as to treat of them conformably, and better, that is to say, more copiously and with greater profit. Let us take example from ourselves: judgments are the utmost point of all dogmatical and determinative speaking; and yet those *arrêts* that our parliaments give the people, the most exemplary of them, and those most proper to nourish in them the reverence due to that dignity, principally through the sufficiency of the persons acting, derive their beauty not so much from the conclusion, which with them is quotidian and common to every judge, as from the dispute and heat of divers and contrary arguments that the matter of law and equity will permit. And the largest field for reprehension that some philosophers have against others is drawn from the diversities and contradictions wherein every one of them finds himself perplexed, either on purpose to shew the vacillation of the human mind concerning every thing, or ignorantly compelled by the volubility and incomprehensibility of all matter; which is the meaning of the maxim—"*In* a slippery and sliding place let us suspend our belief;" for, as Euripides says,

"God's various works perplex the thoughts of men."[3]

Like that which Empedocles, as if transported with a divine fury, and compelled by truth, often strewed here and there in his writings: "No, no, we feel nothing, we see nothing; all things are concealed from us; there is not one thing of which we can positively say what it is;"[4] according to the divine saying: *Cogitationes mortalium timidæ, et incertæ ad inventiones nostræ et providentiæ.*[5] "For the thoughts of mortal men are doubtful; and our devices are but uncertain." It is not to be thought strange if men, despairing to overtake what they hunt after, have not however lost the pleasure of the chace; study being of itself so pleasant an employment; and so pleasant that amongst the pleasures, the Stoics forbid that also which proceeds from the exercise of the mind, will have it cubred, and find a kind of intemperance in too much knowledge.

The search of truth a very agreeable occupation.

Democritus having eaten figs[6] at his table that tasted of honey, fell presently to considering with himself whence they should derive this unusual sweetness; and, to be satisfied in it, was about to rise from the table to see the place whence the figs had been gathered; which his maid observing, and having understood the cause, smilingly told him that "he need not trouble himself about that, for she had put them into a vessel in which there had been honey." He was vexed at this discovery, and that she had deprived him of the occasion of this enquiry, and robbed his curiosity of matter to work upon: "Go thy way," said he, "thou hast done me an injury; but, for all that, I will seek out the cause as if it were natural;" and would willingly have found out some true reason for a false and imaginary effect. This story of a famous and great philosopher very clearly represents to us that studious passion that puts us upon the pursuit of things, of the acquisition of which we despair. Plutarch gives a like example of some one who would not be satisfied in that whereof he was in doubt, that he might not lose the pleasure of enquiring into it: like the other who would not that his physician should allay the thirst of his fever, that he might not lose the pleasure of quenching it by drinking. *Satius est supervacua discere, quam nihil.*[7] "'Tis better to learn more than necessary than nothing at all." As in all sorts of feeding, the pleasure of eating is very often single and alone, and that what we take, which is acceptable to the palate, is not always nourishing or wholesome; so that which our minds extract from science does not cease to be pleasant, though there be nothing in it either nutritive or healthful. Thus they say: "The consideration of nature is a diet proper for our

[1] Plato, *Meetetes.*
[2] In French, *sages-femmes.*
[3] Plutarch, *Of the Oracles that have ceased.*
[4] Cicero, *Quæst. Acad.* iv. 5.
[5] *Wisdom*, ix. 14.
[6] The word in Plutarch (*Table Talk*, ques. 19) is τὸν σίκυον, a cucumber, and not τὸν σῦκον, a fig, as Montaigne has translated it, copying after Amyot and Xylander.
[7] Seneca, *Epist.* 88.

minds, it raises and elevates us, makes us disdain low and terrestrial things, by comparing them with those that are celestial and high. The mere inquisition into great and occult things is very pleasant, even to those who acquire no other benefit than the reverence and fear of judging it." This is what they profess.[1] The vain image of this sickly curiosity is yet more manifest in this other example which they so often urge. "Eudoxus wished and begged of the gods that he might once see the sun near at hand, to comprehend the form, greatness, and beauty of it; even though he should thereby be immediately burned."[2] He would at the price of his life purchase a knowledge, of which the use and possession should at the same time be taken from him: and for this sudden and vanishing knowledge lose all the other knowledge he had in present, or might afterwards have acquired.

The atoms of Epicurus, the ideas of Plato, the numbers of Pythagoras, to what end they were advanced.

I cannot easily persuade myself that Epicurus, Plato, and Pythagoras, have given us their atoms, ideas, and numbers, for current pay. They were too wise to establish their articles of faith upon things so disputable and uncertain. But in that obscurity and ignorance in which the world then was, every one of these great men endeavoured to present some kind of image or reflection of light, and worked their brains for inventions that might have a pleasant and subtle appearance; provided that, though false, they might make good their ground against those that would oppose them. *Unicuique ista pro ingenio finguntur, non ex scientiæ vi.*[3] "These things every one fancies according to his wit, and not by any power of knowledge."

What is true philosophy. Conduct of the philosophers with regard to religion and to the laws.

One of the ancients, who was reproached, "That he professed philosophy, of which he nevertheless in his own judgment made no great account," made answer, "That this was truly to philosophize." They wished to consider all, to balance every thing, and found that an employment well suited to our natural curiosity. Some things they wrote for the benefit of public society, as their religions; and for that consideration it was but reasonable that they should not examine public opinions to the quick, that they might not disturb the common obedience to the laws and customs of their country.

Plato treats of this mystery with a raillery manifest enough: for where he writes according to his own method he gives no certain rule. When he plays the legislator he borrows a magisterial and positive style, and boldly there foists in his most fantastic inventions, as fit to persuade the vulgar, as impossible to be believed by himself; knowing very well how fit we are to receive all sorts of impressions, especially the most immoderate and preposterous: and yet, in his *Laws*, he takes singular care that nothing be sung in public but poetry, of which the fiction and fabulous relations tend to some advantageous end; *it being so easy to imprint all sorts of phantasms in human minds*, that it were injustice not to feed them rather with profitable untruths than with untruths that are unprofitable and hurtful. He says very roundly, in his *Republic*,[4] "That it is often necessary, for the benefit of men, to deceive them." It is very easy to distinguish that some of the sects have more followed truth, and the others utility, by which the last have gained their reputation. 'Tis the misery of our condition that often that which presents itself to our imagination for the truest does not appear the most useful to life. The boldest sects, as the Epicurean, Pyrrhonian, and the new Academic, are yet constrained to submit to the civil law at the end of the account.

There are other subjects that they have tumbled and tossed about, some to the right and others to the left, every one endeavouring, right or wrong, to give them some kind of colour; for, having found nothing so abstruse that they would not venture to speak of, they are very often forced to forge weak and ridiculous conjectures; not that they themselves looked upon them as any foundation, or establishing any certain truth, but merely for exercise. *Non tam id sensisse quod dicerent, quam exercere ingenia materiæ difficultate videntur voluisse.* "They seem not so much themselves to have believed what they said, as to have had a mind to exercise their wits in the difficulty of the matter." And if we did not take it thus, how should we palliate so great inconstancy, variety, and vanity of opinions, as we see have been produced by those excellent and admirable men? As, for example, what can be more vain than to imagine, to guess at God, by our analogies and conjectures? To direct and govern him and the world by our capacities and our laws? And to serve ourselves, at the expense of the divinity, with that small portion of capacity he has been pleased to impart to our natural condition; and because we cannot extend our sight to his glorious throne, to have brought him down to our corruption and our miseries?

The most probable of all human opinions touching religion.

Of all human and ancient opinions concerning religion, that seems to me the most likely and most *excusable*, that acknowledged God as an incomprehensible power, the original and preserver of all things, all goodness, all perfection, receiving and taking

[1] Cicero, *Acad.* ii. 41. Seneca, *Nat. Quæst.* i.

[2] Plutarch, *That you cannot live joyously according to the doctrine of Epicurus.* See also Laertius in the *Life of Eudoxus*, who was a celebrated Pythagorean, contemporary with Plato.

[3] M. Seneca, *Suasor.* 4.

[4] Book v.

in good part the honour and reverence that man paid him, under what method, name, or ceremonies soever:

> Jupiter omnipotens rerum, regumque, deumque,
> Progenitor, genitrixque.[1]
>
> "Jove, the almighty, author of all things,
> The father, mother, of both gods and kings."

This zeal has universally been looked upon from heaven with a gracious eye. All governments have reaped fruit from their devotion: impious men and actions have everywhere had suitable events. Pagan histories acknowledge dignity, order, justice, prodigies, and oracles, employed for their profit and instruction in their fabulous religions: God, through his mercy, vouchsafing, by these temporal benefits, to cherish the tender principles of a kind of brutish knowledge that natural reason gave them of him, through the deceiving images of their dreams. Not only deceiving and false, but impious also and injurious, are those that man has forged from his own invention; and of all the religions that St. Paul found in repute at Athens, that which they had dedicated "to the unknown God seemed to him the most to be excused.[2]

What the knowledge of God was among the Pagans.

The unknown God adored at Athens.

Pythagoras shadowed the truth a little more closely, judging that the knowledge of this first cause and being of beings ought to be indefinite, without limitation, without declaration; that it was nothing else than the extreme effort of our imagination towards perfection, every one amplifying the idea according to the talent of his capacity. But if Numa attempted to conform the devotion of his people to this project; to attach them to a religion purely mental, without any prefixed object and material mixture, he undertook a thing of no use: the human mind could never support itself floating in such an infinity of inform thoughts; there is required some certain image to be presented according to its own model. The divine majesty has thus, in some sort, suffered himself to be circumscribed in corporal limits for our advantage. His supernatural and celestial sacraments have signs of our earthly condition; his adoration is by sensible offices and words; for 'tis man that believes and prays. I shall omit the other arguments upon this subject: but a man would have much ado to make me believe that the sight of our crucifixes, that the picture of our Saviour's passion, that the ornaments and ceremonious motions of our churches, that the voices accommodated to the devotion of our thoughts, and that emotion of the senses, do not warm the souls of the people with a religious passion of very advantageous effect.

Of those to whom they have given a body, as necessity required in that universal blindness, I should, I fancy, most incline to those who adored the sun:

> La Lumiére commune,
> L'œil du monde; et si Dieu au chef porte des yeulx,
> Les rayons du soleil sont ses yeulx radieux,
> Qui donnent vie a touts, nous maintiennent et gardent;
> Et les faicts des humains en ce monde regardent:
> Ce beau, ce grand soleil, qui nous faict les saisons,
> Selon qu'il entre ou sort de ses douze maisons;
> Qui remplit l'univers de ses vertus cogneues;
> Qui d'un traict de ses yeulx nous dissipe les nues:
> L'esprit, l'ame du monde, ardent et flamboyant,
> En la course d'un jour tout le Ciel tournoyant;
> Plein d'immense grandeur, rond, vagabond, et ferme;
> Lequel tient dessoubs luy tout le monde pour terme:
> En repos, sans repos; oysif, et sans sejour;
> Fils aisné de nature, et le pere du jour:[3]
>
> "The common light that equal shines on all,
> Diffused around the whole terrestrial ball;
> And, if the almighty Ruler of the skies
> Has eyes, the sun-beams are his radiant eyes,
> That life and safety give to young and old,
> And all men's actions upon earth behold.
> This great, this beautiful, the glorious sun,
> Who makes their course the varied seasons run;
> That with his virtues fills the universe,
> And with one glance can sullen clouds disperse;
> Earth's life and soul, that, flaming in his sphere,
> Surrounds the heavens in one day's career;
> Immensely great, moving yet firm and round,
> Who the whole world below has made his bound;
> At rest, without rest, idle without stay,
> Nature's first son, and father of the day:"

forasmuch as, beside this grandeur and beauty of his, 'tis the only piece of this machine that we discover at the remotest distance from us; and by that means so little known that they were pardonable for entering into so great admiration and reverence of it.

Thales,[4] who first inquired into this sort of matter, believed God to be a Spirit that made all things of water; Anaximander, that the gods were always dying and entering into life again; and that there were an infinite number of worlds; Anaximines, that the air was God, that he was procreate and immense, always moving. Anaxagoras the first, was of opinion that the description and manner of all things were conducted by the power and reason of an infinite spirit. Alcmæon gave divinity to the sun, moon, and stars, and to the soul. Pythagoras made God a spirit, spread over the nature of all things, whence our souls are extracted; Parmenides, a circle surrounding the heaven, and supporting the world by the ardour of light. Empedocles pronounced the four elements, of which all things are composed, to be gods; Protagoras had nothing to say, whether they were or were not, or what they were; Democritus was one while of opinion that the images and their circuitions were gods; another while, the nature that darts out those images; and then, our science and intelligence. Plato divides his belief into several opinions: he says, in his *Timæus*, that the Father of the World cannot be named; in his Laws, that men are not to in-

[1] These which are the verses of Valerius Soranus, were preserved from Varro, from whom St. Augustine has inserted them in his book *De Civitate Dei*, vii. 9, 11.

[2] *Acts of the Apostles*, xvii. 23.

[3] Ronsard.

[4] This following analysis of the Heathen Mythology is principally taken from Cicero, *de Nat. Deor.* i. 10, &c.

quire into his being; and elsewhere, in the very same books, he makes the world, the heavens, the stars, the earth, and our souls, gods; admitting, moreover, those which have been received by ancient institution in every republic. Xenophon reports a like perplexity in Socrates's doctrine; one while that men are not to inquire into the form of God, and presently makes him maintain that the sun is God, and the soul God; that there is but one God, and then that there are many. Speusippus, the nephew of Plato, makes God a certain power governing all things, and that he has a soul. Aristotle one while says it is the spirit, and another the world; one while he gives the world another master, and another while makes God the heat of heaven. Zenocrates makes eight, five named amongst the planets; the sixth composed of all the fixed stars, as of so many members; the seventh and eighth, the sun and moon. Heraclides Ponticus does nothing but float in his opinion, and finally deprives God of sense, and makes him shift from one form to another, and at last says that it is heaven and earth. Theophrastus wanders in the same irresolution amongst his fancies, attributing the superintendency of the world one while to the understanding, another while to heaven, and then to the stars. Strato says that 'tis nature, she having the power of generation, augmentation, and diminution, without form and sentiment. Zeno says 'tis the law of nature, commanding good and prohibiting evil; which law is an animal; and takes away the accustomed gods, Jupiter, Juno, and Vesta. Diogenes Apolloniates, that 'tis air.[1] Zenophanes makes God round, seeing and hearing, not breathing, and having nothing in common with human nature. Aristo thinks the form of God to be incomprehensible, deprives him of sense, and knows not whether he be an animal or something else; Cleanthes, one while supposes it to be reason, another while the world, another the soul of nature, and then the supreme heat rolling about, and environing all. Perseus, Zeno's disciple, was of opinion that men have given the title of gods to such as have been useful, and have added any notable advantage to human life, and even to profitable things themselves. Chrysippus made a confused heap of all the preceding theories, and reckons, amongst a thousand forms of gods that he makes, the men also that have been deified. Diagoras and Theodorus flatly denied that there were any gods at all. Epicurus makes the gods shining, transparent, and perflable, lodged as betwixt two forts, betwixt two worlds, secure from blows, clothed in a human figure, and with such members as we have; which members are to them of no use:

> Ego Deum genus esse semper dixi, et dicam cœlitum;
> Sed eos non curare opinor, quid agat humanum genus.[2]
>
> "I ever thought that gods above there were,
> But do not think they care what men do here."

Trust to your philosophy, my masters; and brag that you have found the bean in the cake when you see what a rattle is here with so many philosophical heads! The perplexity of so many worldly forms has gained this over me, that manners and opinions contrary to mine do not so much displease as instruct me; nor so much make me proud as they humble me, in comparing them. And all other choice than what comes from the express and immediate hand of God seems to me a choice of very little privilege. The policies of the world are no less opposite upon this subject than the schools, by which we may understand that fortune itself is not more variable and inconstant, nor more blind and inconsiderate, than our reason. The things that are most unknown are most proper to be deified; wherefore to make gods of ourselves, as the ancients did, exceeds the extremest weakness of understanding. I would much rather have gone along with those who adored the serpent, the dog, or the ox: forasmuch as their nature and being is less known to us, and that we have more room to imagine what we please of those beasts, and to attribute to them extraordinary faculties. But to have made gods of our own condition, of whom we ought to know the imperfections; and to have attributed to them desire, anger, revenge, marriages, generation, alliances, love, jealousy, our members, and bones, our fevers and pleasures, our death and obsequies; this must needs have proceeded from a marvellous inebriety of the human understanding;

To make gods of men is the utmost degree of extravagance.

> Quæ procul usque adeo divino ab numine distant,
> Inque Deum numero quæ sint indigna videri;[3]
>
> "From divine natures these so distant are,
> They are unworthy of that character."

Formæ, ætates, vestitus, ornatus noti sunt; genera, conjugia, cognationes, omniaque traducta ad similitudinem imbecillitatis humanæ: nam et perturbatis animis inducuntur; accipimus enim deorum cupiditates, ægritudines, ira-

[1] This word having been misprinted *age* in the earlier editions of the Essays, the blunder has been hitherto carefully retained, though one of the most obvious description. Cicero himself, from whom Montaigne is quoting, says expressly elsewhere (*De Nat. Deor.* i. 12.), that "air is the god of Diogenes Apolloniates;" with him agrees St. Austin, in his book *de Civitate Dei*, viii. 2. from whom it also appears that this philosopher ascribed sense to the air, and that he called it the matter out of which all things were formed, and that it was endowed with divine reason, without which nothing could be made. M. Bayle, in his dictionary at the article of "Diogenes of Apollonia," infers, "that he made a whole, or a compound, of air and the divine virtue, in which, if air was the matter, the divine virtue was the soul and form; and that, by consequence, the air, animated by the divine virtue, ought, according to that philosopher, to be styled God. As for the rest, this philosopher, by ascribing understanding to the air, differed from his master Anaximenes, who thought the air inanimate." Montaigne himself says, further on in the chapter, "Either the infinity of nature of Anaximander, or the *air* of Diogenes, or the numbers and symmetries of Pythagoras."

[2] Ennius, *apud* Cicero, *de Divin.* ii. 50.

[3] Lucret. v. 123.

cundias;[1] "Their forms, ages, clothes, and ornaments are known: their descents, marriages, and kindred, and all adapted to the similitude of human weakness; for they are represented to us with anxious minds, and we read of the lusts, sickness, and anger of the gods;" as having attributed divinity not only to faith, virtue, honour, concord, liberty, victory, and piety; but also to voluptuousness, fraud, death, envy, old age, misery; to fear, fever, ill fortune, and other injuries of our frail and transitory life:

> Quid juvat hoc, templis nostros inducere mores?
> O curvæ in terris animæ, et cœlestium inanes!"[2]
>
> "O earth-born souls! by earth-born passions led,
> To every spark of heav'nly influence dead!
> Think ye that what man values will inspire
> In minds celestial the same base desire?"

The Egyptians, with an impudent prudence, interdicted, upon pain of hanging, that any one should say that their gods, Serapis and Isis, had formerly been men; and yet no one was ignorant that they had been such; and their effigies, represented with the finger upon the mouth, signified, says Varro,[3] that mysterious decree to their priests, to conceal their mortal original, as it must by necessary consequence cancel all the veneration paid to them. Seeing that man so much desired to equal himself to God, he had done better, says Cicero,[4] to have attracted those divine conditions to himself, and drawn them down hither below, than to send his corruption and misery up on high: but, to take it right, he has several ways done both the one and the other, with like vanity of opinion.

Whether the philosophers were serious in treating of the hierarchy of their gods, and of the condition of men in another life.

When philosophers search narrowly into the hierarchy of their gods, and make a great bustle about distinguishing their alliances, offices, and power, I cannot believe they speak as they think. When Plato describes Pluto's orchard to us, and the bodily conveniences or pains that attend us after the ruin and annihilation of our bodies, and accommodates them to the feeling we have in this life:

> Secreti celant calles, et myrtea circum
> Sylva tegat; curæ non ipsa in morte relinquunt;[5]
>
> "In secret vales and myrtle groves they lie,
> Nor do cares leave them even when they die."

when Mahomet promises his followers a Paradise hung with tapestry, gilded and enamelled with gold and precious stones, furnished with wenches of excelling beauty, rare wines, and delicates dishes; it is easily discerned that these are deceivers that accommodate their promises to our sensuality, to attract and allure us by hopes and opinions suitable to our mortal appetites. And yet some amongst us are fallen into the like error, promising to themselves after the resurrection a terrestrial and temporal life, accompanied with all sorts of worldly conveniences and pleasures. Can we believe that Plato, he who had such heavenly conceptions, and was so well acquainted with the Divinity as thence to derive the name of the Divine Plato, ever thought that the poor creature, man, had any thing in him applicable to that incomprehensible power? and that he believed that the weak holds we are able to take were capable, or the force of our understanding sufficient, to participate of beatitude or eternal pains? We should then tell him from human reason: "If the pleasures thou dost promise us in the other life are of the same kind that I have enjoyed here below, this has nothing in common with infinity; though all my five natural senses should be even loaded with pleasure, and my soul full of all the contentment it could hope or desire, we know what all this amounts to, all this would be nothing: if there be any thing of mine there, there is nothing divine; if this be no more than what may belong to our present condition, it cannot be of any value. All contentment of mortals is mortal. Even the knowledge of our parents, children, and friends, if that can affect and delight us in the other world, if that still continues a satisfaction to us there, we still remain in earthly and finite conveniences. We cannot as we ought conceive the greatness of these high and divine promises, if we could in any sort conceive them: to have a worthy imagination of them we must imagine them unimaginable, inexplicable, and incomprehensible, and absolutely another thing than those of our miserable experience. "Eye hath not seen," saith St. Paul, "nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man, the things that God hath prepared for them that love him."[6] And if, to render us capable, our being were reformed and changed (as thou, Plato, sayest, by thy purifications), it ought to be so extreme and total a change that, by physical doctrine it will be no more us;

What must be the change of our being to qualify us for eternal happiness.

> Hector erat tunc cum bello certabat; at ille
> Tractus ab Æmonio non erat Hector equo;[7]
>
> "He Hector was whilst he could fight, but when
> Dragg'd by Achilles' steeds, no Hector then;"

it must be something else that must receive these recompenses:

> Quod mutatur . . . dissolvitur; interit ergo:
> Trajiciuntur enim partes, atque ordine migrant.[8]
>
> "Things changed dissolved are, and therefore die;
> Their parts are mix'd, and from their order fly."

For in Pythagoras's metempsychosis, and

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[1] Cicero, *de Nat. Deor.* ii. 28.
[2] Pers. ii. 61. Montaigne has transposed the lines, and instituted *inducere* for *immittere*.
[3] Quoted by St. Augustin, *De Civit. Dei.* xviii. 5.
[4] *Tusc. Quæs.* i. 26.
[5] *Æneid*, vi. 443.
[6] *Corinthians*, i. 2, 9; after *Isaiah*, lxiv. 4.
[7] Ovid, *Trist.* iii. 2, 27.
[8] Lucret. iii. 756.

the change of habitation that he imagined in souls, can we believe that the lion, in whom the soul of Cæsar is enclosed, does espouse Cæsar's passions, or that the lion is he? For if it was still Cæsar, they would be in the right who, controverting this opinion with Plato, reproach him that the son might be seen to ride his mother transformed into a mule, and the like absurdities. And can we believe that in the mutations that are made of the bodies of animals into others of the same kind, the new comers are not other than their predecessors? From the ashes of a phœnix, a worm, they say, is engendered, and from that another phœnix;[1] who can imagine that this second phœnix is no other than the first? We see our silk-worms, as it were, die and wither; and from this withered body a butterfly is produced; and from that another worm; how ridiculous would it be to imagine that this was still the first! That which once has ceased to be is no more:

> Nec, si materiam nostram collegerit ætas
> Post obitum, rursumque redegerit, ut sita nunc est,
> Atque iterum nobis fuerint data lumina vitæ,
> Pertineat quidquam tamen ad nos id quoque factum,
> Interrupta semel cum sit repetentia nostra.[2]
>
> "Neither tho' time should gather and restore
> Our matter to the form it was before,
> And give again new light to see withal,
> Would that new figure us concern at all;
> Or we again ever the same be seen,
> Our being having interrupted been."

And, Plato, when thou sayest in another place that it shall be the spiritual part of man that will be concerned in the fruition of the recompense of another life, thou tellest us a thing whereon there is as little appearance of truth:

> Scilicet, avolsis radicibus, ut nequit ullam
> Dispicere ipsa oculus rem, seorsum corpore toto;[3]
>
> "No more than eyes once from their optics torn,
> Can ever after any thing discern;"

for, by this account, it would no more be man, nor consequently us, who would be concerned in this enjoyment: for we are composed of two principal essential parts, the separation of which is the death and ruin of our being:

> Inter enim jecta est vitæ pausa, vageque
> Decerrarunt passim motus ab sensibus omnes;[4]
>
> "When once that pause of life is come between,
> 'Tis just the same as we had never been;"

we cannot say that the man suffers when the worms feed upon his members, and that the earth consumes them:

> Et nihil hoc ad nos, qui coitu conjugioque
> Corporis atque animæ consistimus uniter apti.[5]
>
> "What's that to us? for we are only we,
> While soul and body in one frame agree."

Moreover, upon what foundation of their justice can the gods take notice of or reward man after his death for his good and virtuous actions, since it was themselves that put them in the way and mind to do them? And why should they be offended at or punish him for wicked ones, since themselves have created in him so frail a condition, and when, with one glance of their will, they might prevent him from falling? Might not Epicurus, with great colour of human reason, object this to Plato, did he not often save himself with this sentence: "That it is impossible to establish any thing certain of the immortal nature by the mortal?" She does nothing but err throughout, but especially when she meddles with divine things. Who does more evidently perceive this than we? For although we have given her certain and infallible principles; and though we have enlightened her steps with the sacred lamp of truth that it has pleased God to communicate to us; we daily see, nevertheless, that if she swerve never so little from the ordinary path; and that she stray from, or wander out of the way set out and beaten by the church, how soon she loses, confounds and fetters herself, tumbling and floating in this vast, turbulent, and waving sea of human opinions, without restraint, and without any determinate end: so soon as she loses that great and common road, she enters into a labyrinth of a thousand several paths.

The foundation of rewards and punishments in another life.

Man cannot be anything but what he is, nor imagine beyond the reach of his capacity. "'Tis a greater presumption," says Plutarch,[6] "in them who are but men to attempt to speak and discourse of the gods and demi-gods than it is in a man utterly ignorant of music to give an opinion of singing; or in a man who never saw a camp to dispute about arms and martial affairs, presuming by some light conjecture to understand the effects of an art he is totally a stranger to." Antiquity, I believe, thought to put a compliment upon, and to add something to, the divine grandeur in assimilating it to man, investing it with his faculties, and adorning it with his ugly humours and most shameful necessities: offering it our aliments to eat, presenting it with our dances, mummeries, and farces, to divert it; with our vestments to cover it, and our houses to inhabit, coaxing it with the odour of incense and the sounds of music, with festoons and nosegays; and to accommodate it to our vicious passions, flattering its justice with inhuman vengeance, and with the ruin and dissipation of things by it created and preserved: as Tiberius Sempronius,[7] who burnt the rich spoils and arms he had gained from

The ridiculousness of pretending to know God by comparing him with man.

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1 Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* x. ii.
2 Lucret. iii. 869.
3 Id. *ib.* 862.
4 Id. *ib.* 872.
5 Lucret. 857.
6 In his treatise, *Why the Divine Justice sometimes defers the punishment of Crime.*
7 Livy, xli. 16.

the enemy in Sardinia for a sacrifice to Vulcan; and Paulus Æmilius,[1] those of Macedonia, to Mars and Minerva; and Alexander,[2] arriving at the Indian Ocean, threw several great vessels of gold into the sea, in honour of Thetes; and moreover loading her altars with a slaughter not of innocent beasts only, but of men also, as several nations, and ours among the rest, were commonly used to do; and I believe there is no nation under the sun that has not done the same:

Sulmone creatos
Quatuor hic juvenes, totidem, quos educat Ufens,
Viventes rapit, inferias quos immolet umbris.[3]

"Four sons of Sulmo, four whom Ufens bred,
He took in flight, and living victims led,
To please the ghost of Pallas, and expire
In sacrifice before his fun'ral pyre."

The Getæ[4] hold themselves to be immortal, and that their death is nothing but a journey to their god Zamolxis. Every five years they dispatch some one among them to him, to entreat of him such necessaries as they stand in need of. This envoy is chosen by lot, and the form of dispatching him, after he has been instructed by word of mouth what he is to deliver, is that of the assistants, three hold up as many javelins, upon which the rest throw his body with all their force. If he happen to be wounded in a mortal part, and that he immediately dies, 'tis held a certain argument of divine favour; but if he escapes he is looked upon as a wicked and execrable wretch, and another is dismissed after the same manner in his stead. Amestris,[5] the mother of Xerxes, being grown old, caused at once fourteen young men, of the best families of Persia, to be buried alive, according to the religion of the country, to gratify some infernal deity. And even to this day the idols of Themixtitan are cemented with the blood of little children, and they delight in no sacrifice but of these pure and infantine souls; a justice thirsty of innocent blood:

Sacrifice of fourteen young men.

Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum.[6]

"Such impious use was of religion made,
So many demon acts it could persuade."

The Carthaginians immolated their own children to Saturn; and those who had none of their own bought of others, the father and mother being in the mean time obliged to assist at the ceremony with a gay and contented countenance.[7]

Carthaginian children sacrificed to Saturn.

It was a strange fancy to think to gratify the divine bounty with our afflictions; like the Lacedæmonians,[8] who regaled their Diana with the tormenting of young boys, whom they caused to be whipped for her sake, very often to death. It was a savage humour to imagine to gratify the architect by the subversion of his building, and to think to take away the punishment due to the guilty by punishing the innocent: and that poor Iphigenia, at the port of Aulis, should by her death and immolation acquit, towards God, the whole army of the Greeks from all the crimes they had committed,

Et casta incesto, nubendi tempore in ipso,
Hostia concideret mactatu mœsta parentis;[9]

"That the chaste virgin in her nuptial band
Should die by an unnat'ral father's hand;"

and that the two noble and generous souls of the two Decii, the father and the son, to incline the favour of the gods to be propitious to the affairs of Rome, should throw themselves headlong into the thickest of the enemy: *Quæ fuit tanta deorum iniquitas, ut placari populo Romano non possent nisi tales viri occidissent?*[10] "How great an injustice in the gods was it that they could not be reconciled to the people of Rome unless such men perished?" To which may be added, that it is not for the criminal to cause himself to be scourged according to his own measure nor at his own time, but that it purely belongs to the judge, who considers nothing as chastisements but the penalty that he appoints, and cannot call that punishment which proceeds from the consent of him that suffers. The divine vengeance pre-supposes an absolute dissent in us, both for its justice and for our own penalty. And therefore it was a ridiculous humour of Polycrates, tyrant of Samos,[11] who, to interrupt the continued course of his good fortune, and to balance it, went and threw the dearest and most precious jewel he had into the sea, believing that by this voluntary and antedated mishap he bribed and satisfied the revolution and vicissitude of fortune; and she, to mock his folly, ordered it so that the same jewel came again into his hands, found in the belly of a fish. And then to what end were those tearings and dismemberments of the Corybantes, the Menades, and, in our times, of the Mahometans, who slash their faces, bosoms, and limbs, to gratify their prophet; seeing that the offence lies in the will, not in the breast, eyes, genitals, roundness of form, the shoulders, or the throat? *Tantus est perturbatæ mentis, et sedibus suis pulsæ, furor, ut sic dii placentur, quemadmodum ne homines quidem sæviunt.*[12] "So great is the fury and madness of troubled minds when once displaced from the seat of reason, as if the gods should be appeased with what even men are not so cruel as to approve." The use of this

[1] Livy, xlv. 33.
[2] Arrian, vi. 19, Diod. Sicul. 17, 104, are the only historians of Alexander who speak about golden vases thrown into the sea; but they say nothing about the slaughter of men.
[3] *Æneid*, x. 517.
[4] Herod. iv. 94.
[5] Plut. on *Superstition*. Herod. vii. 114. Amestris was wife of Xerxes.
[6] Lucret. i. 102.
[7] Plutarch. *on Superstition*.
[8] Id. *Apothegms of the Lacedæmonians*.
[9] Lucret. i. 99.
[10] Cicero, *de Nat. Deor.* iii. 6.
[11] Herod. iii. 4, and 42.
[12] St. August. *de Civit. Dei*, vi. 10.

natural contexture has not only respect to us, but also to the service of God and other men; 'tis as unjust for us voluntarily to wound or hurt it as to kill ourselves upon any pretence whatever: it seems to be great cowardice and treason to exercise cruelty upon, and to destroy, the functions of the body that are stupid and servile, to spare the soul the solicitude of governing them according to reason: *Ubi iratos deos timent, qui sic propitios habere merentur? In regiæ libidinis voluptatem castrati sunt quidam; sed nemo sibi, ne vir esset, jubente domino, manus intulit.*[1] "Where are they so afraid of the anger of the gods as to merit their favour at that rate? Some, indeed, have been made eunuchs for the lust of princes: but no man at his master's command has put his own hand to unman himself." So did they fill their religion with several ill effects:

Sæpius olim
Religio peperit scelerosa atque impia facta.[2]

"In elder times
Religion did commit most fearful crimes."

The folly of judging of the power and perfections of God according to our conceptions.

Now nothing of ours can in any sort be compared or likened unto the divine nature, which will not blemish and stain it with much imperfection. How can that infinite beauty, power, and goodness admit of any correspondence or similitude to such abject things as we are, without extreme wrong and manifest dishonour to his divine greatness? *Infirmum dei fortius est hominibus; et stultum dei sapientius est hominibus.* "For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men."[3] Stilpo, the philosopher, being asked, "Whether the gods were delighted with our adorations and sacrifices?"—"You are indiscreet," answered he; "let us withdraw apart, if you would talk of such things."[4] Nevertheless we prescribe him bounds, we keep his power besieged by our reasons (I call our ravings and dreams reason, with the dispensation of philosophy, which says, "That the wicked man, and even the fool, go mad by reason, but a particular form of reason"), we would subject him to the vain and feeble appearances of our understandings, —him who has made both us and our knowledge. Because that nothing is made of nothing, God therefore could not make the world without matter. What! has God put into our hands the keys and most secret springs of his power? Is he obliged not to exceed the limits of our knowledge? Put the case, O man! that thou hast been able here to mark some footsteps of his effects: dost thou therefore think that he has employed all he can, and has crowded all his forms and ideas in this work? Thou seest nothing but the order and revolution of this little cave in which thou art lodged, if, indeed, thou dost see so much: whereas his divinity has an infinite jurisdiction beyond. This part is nothing in comparison of the whole:

Omnia cum cælo, terraque, marique,
Nil sunt ad summam summai totius omnem.[5]

"The earth, the sea, and skies, from pole to pole,
Are small, nay, nothing to the mighty WHOLE."

'Tis a municipal law that thou allegest, thou knowest not what is universal. Tie thyself to that to which thou art subject, but not him; he is not of thy brotherhood, thy fellow-citizen, or companion. If he has in some sort communicated himself unto thee, 'tis not to debase himself unto thy littleness, nor to make thee comptroller of his power: the human body cannot fly to the clouds: rules are for thee. The sun runs every day his ordinary course: the bounds of the sea and the earth cannot be confounded: the water is unstable and without firmness: a wall, unless it be broken, is impenetrable to a solid body: a man cannot preserve his life in the flames; he cannot be both in heaven and upon earth, and corporally in a thousand places at once. 'Tis for thee that he has made these rules; 'tis thee that they concern: he has manifested to Christians that he has enfranchised himself from them all when it pleased him. And in truth, why, almighty as he is, should he have limited his power within any certain bounds? In favour of whom should he have renounced his privilege? Thy reason has in no other thing more of likelihood and foundation than in that wherein it persuades thee that there is a *plurality of* worlds:

Terramque, et solem, lunam, mare, cætera quæ sunt,
Non esse unica, sed numero magis innumerali.[6]

"That earth, sun, moon, sea, and the rest that are,
Not single, but innumerable were."

The plurality of the worlds no new opinion.

The most eminent minds of elder times believed it; and some of this age of ours, compelled by the appearances of human reason, do the same: forasmuch as in this fabric that we behold there is nothing single and one,

Cum in summa res nulla sit una,
Unica quæ gignatur, et unica solaque crescat;[7]

"Since nothing's single in this mighty place,
That can alone beget, alone increase;"

and that all the kinds are multiplied in some number; by which it seems not to be likely that God should have made this work only without a companion; and that the matter of this form should have been totally drained in this individual.

Quare etiam atque etiam tales fateare necesse est,
Esse alios alibi congressus materiali;
Qualis hic est, avido complexu quem tenet æther.[8]

[1] St. August. *de Civit. Dei*, after Seneca.
[2] Lucret. i. 83.
[3] St. Paul. 1 *Corinth.* i. 25.
[4] Laertius, *in vitâ.*
[5] Lucret. vi. 679.
[6] Lucret. ii. 1065.
[7] Id. *ib.* 1077.
[8] Id. *ib.* 1064.

"Wherefore 'tis necessary to confess
That there must elsewhere be the like congress
Of the like matter, which the airy space
Holds fast within its infinite embrace."

Especially if it be a living creature, which its motions render so credible that Plato affirms it,[1] and that many of our people do either confirm, or dare not deny it: no more than that ancient opinion that the heavens, the stars, and other members of the world, are creatures composed of body and soul, mortal in respect of their composition, but immortal by the determination of the Creator. Now if there be many worlds, as Democritus, Epicurus, and almost all philosophy has believed, what do we know that the principles and rules of this of ours in like manner concern the rest. They may peradventure have another form and another polity. Epicurus[2] supposes them either like or unlike. We see in this world an infinite difference and variety, only by distance of places; neither corn, wine, nor any of our animals are to be seen in that new corner of the world discovered by our fathers; 'tis all there another thing; and, in times past, do but consider in how many parts of the world they had no knowledge either of Bacchus or Ceres. If Pliny and Herodotus are to be believed, there are in certain places kinds of men very little resembling us,[3] mongrel and ambiguous forms, betwixt the human and brutal natures: there are countries where men are born without heads, having their mouth and eyes in their breast: where they are all hermaphrodites; where they go on all four; where they have but one eye in the forehead, and a head more like a dog than like ours: where they are half fish the lower part, and live in the water: where the women bear at five years old, and live but eight: where the head and the skin of the forehead is so hard that a sword will not touch it, but rebounds again: where men have no beards: nations that know not the use of fire: others that eject seed of a black colour. What shall we say of those that naturally change themselves into wolves, colts, and then into men again? And if it be true, as Plutarch says,[4] that in some place of the Indies there are men without mouths, who nourish themselves with the smell of certain odours, how many of our descriptions are false? He is no longer risible, nor, perhaps, capable of reason and society. The disposition and cause of our internal composition would then for the most part be to no purpose, and of no use.

Moreover, how many things are there in our own knowledge that oppose those fine rules we have cut out for and prescribe to nature? And yet we must undertake to circumscribe thereto God himself! How many things do we call miraculous and contrary to nature? This is done by every nation, and by every man, according to the proportion of his ignorance. How many occult properties and quintessences do we daily discover? For, for us to go "according to nature," is no more but to go "according to our understanding," as far as that is able to follow, and as far as we are able to see into it: all beyond that is, forsooth, monstrous and irregular. Now, by this account, all things shall be monstrous to the wisest and most understanding men; for human reason has persuaded them that there was no manner of ground nor foundation, not so much as to be assured that snow is white, and Anaxagoras affirmed it to be black;[5] if there be any thing, or if there be nothing; if there be knowledge or ignorance, which Metrodorus of Chios denied that man was able to determine;[6] or whether we live, as Euripides doubts whether the life we live is life, or whether that we call death be not life:

Many things in nature contrary to the rules we have prescribed to nature.

Τίς δ' οἶδεν εἰ ζῆν τοῦθ', ὃ κέκληται θανεῖν
Τὸ ζῆν δὲ, θνήσκειν ἔστι;[7]

and not without some appearance. For why do we derive the title of being from this instant, which is but a flash in the infinite course of an eternal night, and so short an interruption of our perpetual and natural condition, death possessing all the before and after this moment, and also a good part of the moment itself. Others swear there is no motion at all,[8] as the followers of Melissus, and that nothing stirs. For if there be but one, neither can that spherical motion be of any use to him, nor motion from one place to another, as Plato proves: "That there is neither generation nor corruption in nature." Protagoras says[9] that there is nothing in nature but doubt; that a man may equally dispute of all things; and even of this, whether a man can equally dispute of all things: Nausiphanes,[10] that of things which seem to be, nothing is more than it is not; that there is nothing certain but uncertainty: Parmenides,[11] that of that which seems, there is no one thing in general; that there is but one thing: Zeno, that one same is not, and that

Motion of things below denied.

[1] In the *Timæus*. [2] Laertius, *in vitâ*.

[3] The following instances are taken from the 3rd and 4th Books of Herodotus, and the 6th, 7th, and 8th of Pliny. But the larger portion of these traditions are stated doubtingly by both authors. Pliny expressly says that a person who can be persuaded that men were ever metamorphosed into wolves, and afterwards into men again, will be ready to give his credit to all the fables that have been invented for so many ages past; and having then quoted some stories of such pretended metamorphoses, cries out—"It is astonishing how far the Greeks have extended their credulity. There is no lie ever so impudent that wants a witness to prove it."—*Nat Hist.* viii. 22.

[4] Plut. *On the Face of the Moon.* Pliny, *Nat Hist.* 7, 2.

[5] Cicero, *Acad.* ii. 23 and 31. *Epist. ad Quint. frat.* Sextus Empiricus, *Hypoth. Pyrrhon.* i. 13. Galen, *de Simplic. Medic.* ii. 1, &c. A German, named Voight, has also published a dissertation *Adversus alborem nivis.*

[6] Cicero, *Acad.* ii 23. Sextus Empiricus, *Hypoth. Pyrr.*

[7] Plato, in his *Gorgias*, p. 300; Diog. Laert. *Life of Pyrrho*, ix. 73; and Sextus Empiricus, *Pyr. Hypot.* iii. 24, quote these verses differently from one another, and from what they are here, but there is no real difference in the sense.

[8] Laertius, *in vitâ*. [9] Id. *in vitâ*.

[10] Seneca, *Epist.* 88.

[11] Cicero, *de Nat. Deor.* iii.; who elsewhere (*Acad.* iv. 37) attributes the saying to Xenophanes.

there is nothing; if there were one thing, it would either be in another or in itself; if it be in another, they are two; if it be in itself, they are yet two; the comprehending, and the comprehended.[1] According to these doctrines the nature of things is no other than a shadow, either false or vain.

This way of speaking in a Christian man has ever seemed to me very indiscreet and irreverent. "God cannot die; God cannot contradict himself; God cannot do this or that." I do not like to have the divine power so limited by the laws of men's mouths; and the idea which presents itself to us in those propositions ought to be more religiously and reverently expressed.

Our speaking has its failings and defects, as well as all the rest. Most of the occasions of disturbance in the world are grammatical ones: our suits only spring from disputes as to the interpretation of laws; and most wars proceed from the inability of ministers clearly to express the conventions and treaties of amity of princes. How many quarrels, and of how great importance, has the doubt of the meaning of this syllable *hoc*, created in the world?[2] Let us take the clearest conclusion that logic itself presents us withal: if you say, "It is fine weather," and that you say true, it is then fine weather. Is not this a very certain form of speaking? And yet it will deceive us; that it will do so, let us follow the example: If you say, "I lie," if you say true, you do lie.[3] The art, the reason, and force of the conclusion of this, are the same with the other, and yet we are gravelled. The Pyrrhonian philosophers, I see, cannot express their general conception in any kind of speaking; for they would require a new language on purpose: ours is all formed of affirmative propositions, which are totally antartic to them; insomuch that when they say "I doubt," they are presently taken by the throat, to make them confess that at least they know and are assured that they do doubt. By which means they have been compelled to shelter themselves under this medical comparison, without which their humour would be inexplicable: when they pronounce, "I know not," or, "I doubt," they say that this proposition carries off itself with the rest, no more nor less than rhubarb, that drives out the ill humours, and carries itself off with them.[4] This fancy will be more certainly understood by interrogation: "What do I know?" as I bear it, with the emblem of a balance.

Human language very defective.

See what use they make of this irreverent way of speaking[5] in the present disputes about our religion, if you press its adversaries too hard, they will roundly tell you, "that it is not in the power of God to make it so, that his body should be in paradise and upon earth, and in several places at once." And see, too, what advantage the old scoffer[6] made of this. "At least," says he, "it is no little consolation to man to see that God cannot do all things: for he cannot kill himself, though he would; which is the greatest privilege we have in our condition; he cannot make mortal immortal, nor revive the dead; nor make it so, that he who has lived has not; nor that he who has had honours has not had them; having no other right to the past than that of oblivion." And that the comparison of man to God may yet be made out by jocose examples: "He cannot order it so," says he, "that twice ten shall not be twenty." This is what he says, and what a Christian ought to take heed shall not escape his lips. Whereas, on the contrary, it seems as if men studied this foolish daring of language, to reduce God to their own measure:

Cras vel atra
Nube polum Pater occupato,
Vel sole puro, non tamen irritum
Quodcumque retro est, efficiet, neque
Diffinget, infectumque reddet,
Quod fugiens semel hora vexit.[7]

"To-morrow, let it shine or rain,
Yet cannot this the past make vain:
Nor uncreate and render void
That which was yesterday enjoyed."

When we say that the infinity of ages, as well past as to come, are but one instant with God; that his goodness, wisdom, and power are the same with his essence; our mouths speak it, but our understandings apprehend it not; and yet, such is our vain opinion of ourselves, that we must make the Divinity to pass through our sieve; and thence proceed all the dreams and errors with which the world abounds, whilst we reduce and weigh in our balance a thing so far above our poise.[8] *Mirum quo procedat improbitas cordis humani, parvulo aliquo invitata successu.*[9] "'Tis wonderful to what the wickedness of man's heart will proceed, if elevated with the least success." How magisterially and insolently does Epicurus reprove the Stoics, for maintaining that the truly good and happy being appertained only to God, and that the wise man had nothing but a shadow and resemblance of it? How temerariously have they bound God to destiny (a thing which, by my consent, none that bears the name of a Christian shall ever do again)! and Thales, Plato, and Pythagoras have enslaved him to necessity. This arrogance of attempting to discover God

[1] Cicero, *Acad.* ii. 37. Seneca, *Epist.* 88.

[2] Montaigne here refers to the controversies between the Catholics and Protestants about trans-substantiation.

[3] This is the sophistical dilemma called the liar. Cicero, *Acad.* ii. 29. *Aul. Gell.* xviii. 2.

[4] Laert. ix. 76.

[5] This refers to what was just said, that God cannot do this or that.

[6] *Pliny*, ii. 7; whom the author named in the first edition of the Essays; but in the edition of 1588, he scratched out "ce mocqueur de Pline," and substituted "ce mocqueur ancien."

[7] Horace, *Od.* iii. 29. 43.

[8] Montaigne in this passage somewhat contradicts the author whom he is defending. "L'homme," says Sebonde, in Montaigne's translation, c. 121, "est par sa nature, en tant qu'il est homme, la vraye et vive image de Dieu. Tout ainsi que le cachet engrave sa figure dans la cire, ainsi Dieu empreint en l'homme sa semblance," &c.

[9] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* ii. 23.

with our eyes has been the cause that an eminent person among us[1] has attributed to the Divinity a corporal form; and is the reason of what happens to us every day, of attributing to God important events, by a particular assignment. Because they weigh with us, they conclude that they also weigh with him, and that he has a more intent and vigilant regard to them than to others of less moment to us or of ordinary course: *Magna Dii curant, parva negligunt:*[2] "The gods are concerned at great matters, but slight the small." Listen to him; he will clear this to you by his reason: *Nec in regnis quidem reges omnia minima curant:*[3] "Neither indeed do kings in their administration take notice of all the least concerns." As if to that King of kings it were more or less to subvert a kingdom, or to move the leaf of a tree; or as if his providence acted after another manner in inclining the event of a battle than in the leap of a flea. The hand of his government is laid upon every thing after the same manner, with the same power and order: our interest does nothing towards it; our inclinations and measures sway nothing with him. *Deus ita artifex magnus in magnis, ut minor non sit in parvis:*[4] "God is so great an artificer in great things, that he is no less in the least." Our arrogancy sets this blasphemous comparison ever before us. Because our employments are a burden to us, Strato has courteously been pleased to exempt the gods from all offices, as their priests are; he makes nature produce and support all things; and with her weights and motions make up the several parts of the world, discharging human nature from the awe of divine judgments: *Quod beatum æternumque sit, id nec habere negotii quidquam, nec exhibere alteri:*[5] "What is blessed and eternal has neither any business itself nor gives any to another." Nature will that in like things there should be a like relation. The infinite number of mortals, therefore, concludes a like number of immortals; the infinite things that kill and destroy pre-supposes as many that preserve and profit. As the souls of the gods, without tongue, eye, or ear, do every one of them feel amongst themselves what the other feels, and judge our thoughts; so the souls of men, when at liberty and loosed from the body, either by sleep or some ecstasy, divine, foretel, and see things, which, whilst joined to the body, they could not see. "Men," says St. Paul, "professing themselves to be wise, they become fools; and change the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man."[6] Do but take notice of the juggling in the ancient deifications. After the great and stately pomp of the funeral, so soon as the fire began to mount to the top of the pyramid, and to catch hold of the couch where the body lay, they at the same time turned out an eagle, which flying upward, signified that the soul went into Paradise.[7] We have a thousand medals, and particularly of the worthy Faustina, where this eagle is represented carrying these deified souls to heaven with their heels upwards. 'Tis pity that we should fool ourselves with our own fopperies and inventions,

> Quod finxere, timent,
>
> "They fear their own inventions,"

like children who are frighted with the same face of their play-fellow, that they themselves have smeared and smutted. *Quasi quidquam infelicius sit homine, cui sua figmenta dominantur:*[8] "As if any thing could be more unhappy than man, who is insulted over by his own imagination." 'Tis far from honouring him who made us, to honour him that we have made. Augustus had more temples than Jupiter, served with as much religion and belief of miracles. The Thracians, in return of the benefits they had received from Agesilaus, came to bring him word that they had canonized him: "Has your nation," said he to them, "the power to make gods of whom they please? Pray first deify some one amongst yourselves, and when I shall see what advantage he has by it, I will thank you for your offer."[9] Man is certainly stark mad; he cannot make a worm, and yet he will be making gods by dozens. Hear Trismegistus in praise of our sufficiency: "Of all the wonderful things, it surmounts all wonder that man could find out the divine nature and make it."[10] And take here the arguments of the school of philosophy itself:

> Nosse cui divos et cœli numina soli
> Aut soli nescire, datum.[11]
>
> "To whom to know the deities of heaven,
> Or know he knows them not, alone 'tis given."

"If there is a God, he is a living creature;[12] if he be a living creature, he has sense; and if he has sense, he is subject to corruption. If he be without a body, he is without a soul, and consequently without action; and if he has a body, it is perishable." Is not here a triumph? we are incapable of having made the world; there must then be some more excellent nature that has put a hand to the work. It were a foolish and ridiculous arrogance to esteem ourselves the most perfect thing of the universe. There must then be something that is better, and that must be God. When you see a stately and stupendous edifice, though you do not know who is the owner of it, you would yet conclude

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[1] *Tertullian*, in the well-known passage,—*Quis negat Deum esse corpus, etsi Deus spiritus sit.*
[2] Cicero, *De Nat. Deor.* ii. 66.
[3] Id. *ib.* iii. 35.
[4] St. August. *De Civit. Dei*, xi. 22.
[5] Cicero, *de Nat. Deor.* i. 17.
[6] Rom. i. 22.
[7] Herodian, iv.
[8] Lucan, i. 486.
[9] Plutarch, *Apoth. of the Lacedemonians.*
[10] *Asclep. Dialog. apud* L. Apuleium, vol. ii. p. 306. Bipont.
[11] Lucan, i. 452.
[12] Cicero, *de Nat. Deor.* iii. 13, ii. 6. &c.

it was not built for rats. And this divine structure that we behold of the celestial palace, have we not reason to believe that it is the residence of some possessor, who is much greater than we? Is not the most supreme always the most worthy? but we are in the lowest form. Nothing without a soul and without reason can produce a living creature capable of reason. The world produces us; the world then has soul and reason. Every part of us is less than we. We are part of the world, the world therefore is endued with wisdom and reason, and that more abundantly than we. 'Tis a fine thing to have a great government: the government of the world then appertains to some happy nature. The stars do us no harm; they are then full of goodness. We have need of nourishment: then so have the gods also, and feed upon the vapours of the earth. Worldly goods are not goods to God; therefore they are not goods to us; offending and being offended are equally testimonies of imbecility; 'tis therefore folly to fear God. God is good by his nature; man by his industry, which is more. The divine and human wisdom have no other distinction, but that the first is eternal; but duration is no accession to wisdom, therefore we are companions. We have life, reason, and liberty; we esteem goodness, charity, and justice: these qualities are then in him. In conclusion, building and destroying, the conditions of the Divinity, are forged by man, according as they relate to himself. What a pattern, and what a model! let us stretch, let us raise and swell human qualities as much as we please: puff up thyself, poor man, yet more and more, and more;

Heaven God's palace.

The government of the world.

Non si tu ruperis, inquit.[1]

"Not if thou burst," said he.

Profecto non Deum, quem cogitare non possunt, sed semet ipsos pro illo cogitantes, non illum, sed seipsos, non illi, sed sibi comparant. "Certainly they do not imagine God, whom they cannot imagine; but they imagine themselves in his stead: they do not compare him, but themselves, not to him, but to themselves." In natural things the effects do but half relate to their causes. What's this to the purpose? His condition is above the order of nature, too elevated, too remote, and too mighty, to permit itself to be bound and fettered by our conclusions. 'Tis not through ourselves that we arrive at that place: our ways lie too low. We are no nearer heaven on the top of Mount Cenis than at the bottom of the sea; take the distance with your astrolabe. They debase God even to the carnal knowledge of women, to so many times, and so many generations. Paulina, the wife of Saturninus, a matron of great reputation at Rome, thinking she lay with the god Serapis,[2] found herself in the arms of an amoroso of hers, through the pandarism of the priests of his temple. Varro, the most subtle and most learned of all the Latin authors, in his book of theology, writes,[3] that the sexton of Hercules's temple, throwing dice with one hand for himself, and with the other for Hercules, played after that manner with him for a supper and a wench; if he won, at the expense of the offerings; if he lost, at his own. The sexton lost, and paid the supper and the wench. Her name was Laurentina, who saw by night this god in her arms, who moreover told her, that the first she met the next day, should give her a heavenly reward: which proved to be Taruncius,[4] a rich young man, who took her home to his house, and in time left her his inheritrix. She, in her turn, thinking to do a thing that would be pleasing to the god, left the people of Rome heirs to her; and therefore had divine honours attributed to her. As if it had not been sufficient that Plato was originally descended from the gods by a double line, and that he had Neptune for the common father of his race, it was certainly believed at Athens, that Aristo, having a mind to enjoy the fair Perictione, could not, and was warned by the god Apollo, in a dream, to leave her unpolluted and untouched, till she should first be brought to-bed. These were the father and mother of Plato.[5] How many ridiculous stories are there of like cuckoldings, committed by the gods against poor mortal men! And how many husbands injuriously scandaled in favour of the children! In the Mahometan religion there are Merlins enough found by the belief of the people; that is to say, children without fathers, spiritual, divinely conceived in the wombs of virgins, and carry names that signify so much in their language.

We are to observe that to every thing nothing is more dear and estimable than its being (the lion, the eagle, the dolphin, prize nothing above their own kind); and that every thing assimilates the qualities of all other things to its own proper qualities, which we may indeed extend or contract, but that's all; for beyond that relation and principle our imagination cannot go, can guess at nothing else, nor possibly go out thence, nor stretch beyond it; whence spring these ancient conclusions:—of all forms the most beautiful is that of man; therefore God must be of that form. No one can be happy without virtue, nor virtue be without reason,

Nothing that both man and beast is fonder of than its species.

[1] Horace, *Sat.* ii. 3 19.

[2] Or Anubis, according to Josephus's *Jewish Antiquities*, xviii. 4. where this story is related at length.

[3] St. Austin, *de Civit. Dei*, vi. 7.

[4] Or Tarutius, according to St. Austin: but according to Plutarch, who relates the same story in the life of Romulus, the first man who met Laventia (as he calls her) was one Tarrutius, a very old man.

[5] Laertius, *in vitâ.* Plutarch, *Table Talk.*

and reason cannot inhabit anywhere but in a human shape: God is therefore clothed in a human figure. *Ita est informatum anticipatumque mentibus nostris, ut humini, quum de Deo cogitet, forma occurrat humana.*[1] "It is so imprinted in our minds, and the fancy is so prepossessed with it, that when a man thinks of God, a human figure ever presents itself to the imagination." Therefore it was that Xenophanes pleasantly said, "That if beasts frame any gods to themselves, as 'tis likely they do, they make them certainly such as themselves are, and glorify themselves in it, as we do. For why may not a goose say thus: 'All the parts of the universe I have an interest in: the earth serves me to walk upon; the sun to light me; the stars have their influence upon me: I have such an advantage by the winds and such by the waters; there is nothing that yon heavenly roof looks upon so favourably as me; I am the darling of nature! Is it not man that keeps, lodges, and serves me? 'Tis for me that he both sows and grinds; if he eats me he does the same by his fellow-men, and so do I the worms that kill and devour him."[2] As much might be said by a crane, and with greater confidence, upon the account of the liberty of his flight, and the possession of that high and beautiful region. *Tam blanda conciliatrix, et tam sui est lena ipsa natura.*[3] "So flattering and wheedling a bawd is nature to herself."[4]

Man imagines all things were made for him.

Now by the same consequence, the destinies are then for us; for us the world; it shines, it thunders for us; creator and creatures, all are for us: 'tis the mark and point to which the universality of things aims. Look into the records that philosophy has kept for two thousand years and more, of the affairs of heaven: the gods all that while have neither acted nor spoken but for man. She does not allow them any other consultation or occupation. See them here against us in war:

> Domitosque Herculea manu
> Telluris juvenes, unde periculum
> Fulgens contremuit domus
> Saturnis veteris.[5]
>
> "The brawny sons of earth, subdu'd by hand
> Of Hercules on the Phlegræan strand,
> Where the rude shock did such an uproar make,
> As made old Saturn's sparkling palace shake."

And here you shall see them participate of our troubles, to make a return for our having so often shared in theirs:

> Neptunus muros, magnoque emota tridenti
> Fundamenta quatit, totamque à sedibus urbem
> Eruit: hic Juno Scæas sævissima portas
> Prima tenet.[6]
>
> "Amidst that smother Neptune holds his place,
> Below the walls' foundation drives his mace,
> And heaves the city from its solid base.
> See where in arms the cruel Juno stands,
> Full in the Scæan gate."

The Caunians, jealous of the authority of their own proper gods, armed themselves on the days of their devotion, and through the whole of their precincts ran cutting and slashing the air with their swords, by that means to drive away and banish all foreign gods out of their territory.[7] Their powers are limited according to our necessity: this cures horses, that men, that the plague, that the scurf, that the phthisic; one cures one sort of itch, another another: *Adio minimis etiam rebus prava religio inserit Deos.*[8] "At such a rate does false religion create gods for the most contemptible uses." This one makes grapes grow, that onions; this has the presidence over lechery, that over merchandise; for every sort of artisan a god; this has his province and reputation in the east; that his in the west:

Power of the gods limited to certain things.

> Hic illius arma, hic currus fuit.[9]
>
> "Here lay her armour, here her chariot stood."

> O sancte Apollo, qui umbilicum certum terrarum obtines,[10]
>
> "O sacred Phœbus, who with glorious ray,
> From the earth's centre, dost thy light display."

> Pallada Cecropidæ, Minoia Creta Dianam,
> Vulcanum tellus Hipsipylæa colit,
> Junonem Sparte, Pelopeiadesque Mycenæ;
> Pinigerum Fauni Mœnalis ora caput;
> Mars Latio venerandus erat.[11]
>
> "Th' Athenians Pallas, Cynthia Crete adore,
> Vulcan is worshipped on the Lemnian shore,
> Proud Juno's altars are by Spartans fed,
> Th' Arcadians worship Faunus, and 'tis said
> To Mars, by Italy, is homage paid."

This has only one town or one family in his possession; that lives alone; that in company, either voluntary or upon necessity:

> Junctaque sunt magno templa nepotis avo.[12]
>
> "And temples to the nephew joined are,
> To those were reared to the great grandfather."

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1 Cicero, *de Nat. Deor.* i. 18.
2 Id. *ib.* 27.
3 Eusebius, *Præp. Evang.* xiii. 13.
4 Here Montaigne is again in contradiction with him whose apology he is writing. Sebond, in our author's translation of his work, says: "Le ciel te dit (a l'homme)—Je te fournis de lumiere le jour, afin que tu veilles; d'ombre la nuit afin que tu dormes et repose: pour ta recreation et commodite, je renouvelle les saisons, je te donne la fleurissante douceur du printems, la chaleur de l'eté, la fertilité de l'automne, les froideurs de l'hiver . . l'air—je te communique la respiration vitale, et offre à ton beissance tout le genre de mes oiseaux; l'eau—je te fournis de quoi boire, de quoi te laver. La terre—je te soutiens; tu as de moi le pain de quoi se nourissent tes forces, le vin de quoi tu esjouis tes esprits," &c.
5 Horace, *Odar.* ii. 12. 6.
6 *Æneid*, ii. 610.
7 Herod, i. 172.
8 Livy, xxvii. 23.
9 *Æneid*, i. 16.
10 Cicero, *de Divin.* ii. 56. Delphi was considered the navel, or centre of the earth; δελφυς, *uterus*. See Livy, xxxviii. 48; Ovid, *Met.* x. 168, &c.
11 Ovid, *Fasti*, iii. 81.
12 Id. *ib.* i.

There are some so wretched and mean (for the number amounts to six and thirty thousand[1]) that they must pack five or six together, to produce one ear of corn, and thence take their several names; three to a door—that of the plank, that of the hinge, and that of the threshold. Four to a child—protectors of his swathing-clouts, his drink, meat, and sucking. Some certain, some uncertain and doubtful, and some that are not yet entered Paradise:

Quos quoniam cœli nondum dignamur honore,
Quas dedimus, certe terras habitare sinamus:[2]

"Whom, since we yet not worthy think of heaven,
We suffer to possess the earth we've given."

There are amongst them physicians, poets, and civilians. Some of a mean betwixt the divine and human nature; mediators betwixt God and us, adorned with a certain second and diminutive sort of adoration; infinite in titles and offices; some good, others ill; some old and decrepid, and some that are mortal. For Chrysippus[3] was of opinion that in the last conflagration of the world all the gods were to die but Jupiter. Man makes a thousand pretty societies betwixt God and him; is he not his countryman?

Jovis incunabula Creten.[4]

"Crete, the cradle of Jupiter."

And this is the excuse that, upon consideration of this subject, Scævola, a high priest, and Varro, a great theologian in their times, make us: "That it is necessary that the people should be ignorant of many things that are true, and believe many things that are false." *Quam veritatem qua liberetur inquirat credatur ei expedire, quod fallitur.*[5] "Seeing he enquires into the truth, by which he would be made free, 'tis fit he should be deceived." Human eyes cannot perceive things but by the forms they know: and we do not remember what a leap miserable Phaeton took for attempting to guide his father's horses with a mortal hand. The mind of man falls into as great a depth, and is after the same manner bruised and shattered by his own rashness. If you ask of philosophy of what matter the heavens and the sun are? what answer will she return, if not that it is iron, or, with Anaxagoras,[6] stone, or some other matter that she makes use of? If a man enquire of Zeno what nature is? "A fire," says he, "an artisan, proper for generation, and regularly proceeding." Archimedes, master of that science which attributes to itself the precedency before all others for truth and certainty; "the sun," says he, "is a god of red-hot iron." Was not this a fine imagination, extracted from the inevitable necessity of geometrical demonstrations? Yet not so inevitable and useful but that Socrates[7] thought it was enough to know so much of geometry only as to measure the land a man bought or sold; and that Polyænus,[8] who had been a great and famous doctor in it, despised it, as full of falsity and manifest vanity, after he had once tasted the delicate fruits of the lozelly gardens of Epicurus. Socrates in Xenophon,[9] concerning this affair, says of Anaxagoras, reputed by antiquity learned above all others in celestial and divine matters, "That he had cracked his brain, as all other men do who too immoderately search into knowledges which nothing belong to them:" when he made the sun to be a burning stone, he did not consider that a stone does not shine in the fire; and, which is worse, that it will there consume: and in making the sun and fire one, that fire does not turn the complexions black in shining upon them: that we are able to look fixedly upon fire: and that fire kills herbs and plants. 'Tis Socrates's opinion, and mine too, that the best judging of heaven is not to judge of it at all. Plato having occasion, in his *Timæus*, to speak of the demons, "This undertaking," says he, "exceeds my ability." We are therefore to believe those ancients who said they were begotten by them: 'tis against all reason to refuse a man's faith to the children of the gods, though what they say should not be proved by any necessary or probable reasons; seeing they engage to speak of domestic and familiar things.

Geometry how far useful.

Let us see if we have a little more light in the knowledge of human and natural things. Is it not a ridiculous attempt for us to forge for those to whom, by our own confession, our knowledge is not able to attain, another body, and to lend a false form of our own invention: as is manifest in this motion of the planets; to which, seeing our wits cannot possibly arrive, nor conceive their natural conduct, we lend them material, heavy, and substantial springs of our own by which to move:

The sum of our knowledge of natural things.

Temo aureus, aurea summæ
Curvatura rotæ, radiorum argenteus ordo.[10]

"Gold was the axle, and the beam was gold;
The wheels with silver spokes on golden circles roll'd."

You would say that we had had coach-makers, carpenters, and painters, that went up on high to make engines of various motions, and to range the wheelwork and interlacings of the heavenly bodies of differing colours about the axis of necessity, according to Plato:[11]

[1] Hesiod says only 30,000. Maximus Tyrius (*Dissert.* i.) says the number is infinite.
[2] Ovid, *Metam.* i. 94.
[3] Plutarch, *on the Common Conceptions, &c.*
[4] Ovid, *Metam.* viii 99.
[5] St. Augus. *De Civit. Dei*, iv. 31. Montesquieu, in his *Policy of the Romans in Religion*, cites the opinion of Scævola and Varro, nearly in the same terms as Montaigne, and adds, "St. Augustine says that Varro has here discovered the whole secret of politicians and ministers of state."
[6] Xenoph. *Memorab.* iv. 7, 7.
[7] Xenophon, *On Socrates.*
[8] Cicero, *Acad.* ii. 38.
[9] Xenophon, *On Socrates*, iv. 7, 2.
[10] Ovid, *Metam* ii. 107.
[11] Republic, x. 12.

Mundus domus est maxima rerum,
Quam quinque altitonæ fragmine zonæ
Cingunt, per quam limbus pictus bis sex signis
Stellimicantibus, altus in obliquo æthere, lunæ
Bigas acceptat.[1]

"The world's a mansion that doth all things hold,
Which thundering zones, in number five enfold,
Through which a girdle, painted with twelve signs,
And that with sparkling constellations, shines,
In heaven's arch marks the diurnal course
For the sun's chariot and his fiery horse."

These are all dreams and fanatic follies. Why will not nature please for once to lay open her bosom to us, and plainly discover to us the means and conduct of her movements, and prepare our eyes to see them? Good God, what abuse, what mistakes should we discover in our poor science! I am mistaken if that weak knowledge of ours holds any one thing as it really is, and I shall depart hence more ignorant of all other things than my own ignorance.

Philosophy is only poetry sophisticated.

Have I not read in Plato this divine saying, that "nature is nothing but an enigmatic poesy!"[2] As if a man might perhaps see a veiled and shady picture, breaking out here and there with an infinite variety of false lights to puzzle our conjectures: *Latent ista omnia crassis occultata et circumfusa tenebris; ut nulla acies humani ingenii tanta sit, quæ penetrare in cœlum, terram intrare possit.*[3] "All those things lie concealed and involved in so dark an obscurity that no point of human wit can be so sharp as to pierce heaven or penetrate the earth." And certainly philosophy is no other than sophisticated poetry. Whence do the ancient writers extract their authorities but from the poets? and the first of them were poets themselves, and writ accordingly. Plato is but a poet unripped. Timon[4] calls him, insultingly, "a monstrous forger of miracles." All super-human sciences make use of the poetic style. Just as women make use of teeth of ivory where the natural are wanting, and instead of their true complexion make one of some artificial matter; as they stuff themselves out with cotton to appear plump, and in the sight of every one do paint, patch, and trick up themselves with a false and borrowed beauty: so does science (and even our law itself has, they say, legitimate fictions, whereon it builds the truth of its justice); she gives us in pre-supposition, and for current pay, things which she herself informs us were invented; for these *epycicles, eccentrics,* and *concentrics,* which astrology makes use of to carry on the motions of the stars, she gives us for the best she could invent upon that subject; as also, in all the rest, philosophy presents us not that which really is, or what she really believes, but what she has contrived with the greatest and most plausible likelihood of truth, and the quaintest invention. Plato,[5] upon the discourse of the state of human bodies and those of beasts, says, "I should know that what I have said is truth, had I the confirmation of an oracle; but this I will affirm, that what I have said is the most likely to be true of any thing I could say."

The confused idea which man has of himself.

'Tis not to heaven only that art sends her ropes, engines, and wheels; let us consider a little what she says of us ourselves, and of our contexture. There is not more retrogradation, trepidation, accession, recession, and astonishment, in the stars and celestial bodies, than they have found out in this poor little human body. In earnest, they have good reason, upon that very account, to call it the little world, so many tools and parts have they employed to erect and build it. To assist the motions they see in man, and the various functions that we find in ourselves, in how many parts have they divided the soul, in how many places lodged it? in how many orders have they divided, and to how many stories have they raised this poor creature, man, besides those that are natural and to be perceived? And how many offices and vocations have they assigned him? They make it an imaginary public thing. 'Tis a subject that they hold and handle; and they have full power granted to them to rip, place, displace, piece, and stuff it, every one according to his own fancy, and yet they possess it not. They cannot, not in reality only, but even in dreams, so govern it that there will not be some cadence or sound that will escape their architecture, as enormous as it is, and botched with a thousand false and fantastic patches. And it is not reason to excuse them; for though we are satisfied with painters when they paint heaven, earth, seas, mountains, and remote islands, that they give us some slight mark of them, and, as of things unknown, are content with a faint and obscure description; yet when they come and draw us after life, or any other creature which is known and familiar to us, we then require of them a perfect and exact representation of lineaments and colours, and despise them if they fail in it.

I am very well pleased with the Milesian girl,[6] who observing the philosopher Thales to be always contemplating the celestial arch, and to have his eyes ever gazing upward, laid something in his way that he might stumble over, to put him in mind that it would be time to

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[1] Varro, *apud Val. Prob. not. in Virgil, Eclog.* the text has in the first verse *maxima homulli;* and in the last, *bigas solisque acceptat.*

[2] Montaigne has here mistaken Plato's sense, whose words, in the second Alcibiades, ii. are:—"Ἐξ τε φύσει ποιητικὴ ἡ ανμπᾶσα αἰνιγματώδης;"—"All poetry is in its nature enigmatical." Plato says this by reason of a verse in Homer's *Margites,* which he explains, and which indeed has something in it that is enigmatical.

[3] Cicero, *Acad.* ii. 39.

[4] Timon the sillographist. See Laertius, *Life of Plato.*

[5] In the *Timæus.*

[6] She was not a Milesian, but a Thracian, according to Plato, from whose *Theetetes* this story is taken; but he does not say that he stumbled at anything laid in his way by his servant; but that as he was walking along, with his eyes lifted up to the stars, he fell into a well.

take up his thoughts about things that are in the clouds when he had provided for those that were under his feet. Doubtless she advised him well, rather to look to himself than to gaze at heaven; for, as Democritus says, by the mouth of Cicero,—

> Quod est ante pedes, nemo spectat: Cœli scrutantur plagas.[1]
>
> "No man regards what is under his feet; they are always prying towards heaven."

But our condition will have it so, that the knowledge of what we have in hand is as remote from us, and as much above the clouds, as that of the stars. As Socrates says, in Plato,[2] "That whoever meddles with philosophy may be reproached as Thales was by the woman, that he sees nothing of that which is before him. For every philosopher is ignorant of what his neighbour does; aye, and of what he does himself, and is ignorant of what they both are, whether beasts or men."

Those people, who find Sebond's arguments too weak, that are ignorant of nothing, that govern the world, that know all,—

> Quæ mare compescant causæ, quid temperet annum; Stellæ sponte sua, jussæve, vagentur et errent; Quid premat obscurum lunæ, quid proferat orbem; Quid velit et possit rerum concordia discors;[3]
>
> "What governs ocean's tides,
> And through the various year the seasons guides;
> Whether the stars by their own proper force,
> Or foreign power, pursue their wand'ring course;
> Why shadows darken the pale queen of night;
> Whence she renews her orb and spreads her light;—
> What nature's jarring sympathy can mean;"

have they not sometimes in their writings sounded the difficulties they have met with of knowing their own being? We see very well that the finger moves, that the foot moves, that some parts assume a voluntary motion of themselves without our consent, and that others work by our direction; that one sort of apprehension occasions blushing; another paleness; such an imagination works upon the spleen only, another upon the brain; one occasions laughter, another tears; another stupifies and astonishes all our senses, and arrests the motion of all our members; at one object the stomach will rise, at another a member that lies something lower; but how a spiritual impression should make such a breach into a massy and solid subject, and the nature of the connexion and contexture of these admirable springs and movements, never yet man knew: *Omnia incerta ratione, et in naturæ majestate abdita.* "All uncertain in reason, and concealed in the majesty of nature," says Pliny.[4] And St. Austin,[5] *Modus, quo corporibus adhærent spiritus . . . omnino mirus est, nec comprehendi ab homine potest; et hoc ipse homo est.* "The manner whereby souls adhere to bodies is altogether wonderful, and cannot be conceived by man, and yet this is man." And yet it is not so much as doubted; for the opinions of men are received according to the ancient belief, by authority and upon trust, as if it were religion and law. 'Tis received as gibberish which is commonly spoken; this truth, with all its clutter of arguments and proofs, is admitted as a firm and solid body, that is no more to be shaken, no more to be judged of; on the contrary, every one, according to the best of his talent, corroborates and fortifies this received belief with the utmost power of his reason, which is a supple utensil, pliable, and to be accommodated to any figure; and thus the world comes to be filled with lies and fopperies. The reason that men doubt of divers things is that they never examine common impressions; they do not dig to the root, where the faults and defects lie; they only debate upon the branches; they do not examine whether such and such a thing be true, but if it has been so and so understood; it is not inquired into whether Galen has said anything to purpose, but whether he has said so or so. In truth it was very good reason that this curb to the liberty of our judgments, and that tyranny over our opinions, should be extended to the schools and arts. The god of scholastic knowledge is Aristotle; 'tis irreligion to question any of his decrees, as it was those of Lycurgus at Sparta; his doctrine is a magisterial law, which, peradventure, is as false as another. I do not know why I should not as willingly embrace either the ideas of Plato, or the atoms of Epicurus, or the plenum or vacuum of Leucippus and Democritus, or the water of Thales, or the infinity of nature of Anaximander, or the air of Diogenes,[6] or the numbers and symmetry of Pythagoras, or the infinity of Parmenides, or the One of Musæus, or the water and fire of Apollodorus, or the similar parts of Anaxagoras, or the discord and friendship of Empedocles, or the fire of Heraclitus, or any other opinion of that infinite confusion of opinions and determinations, which this fine human reason produces by its certitude and clear-sightedness in everything it meddles withal, as I should the opinion of Aristotle upon this subject of the principles of natural things; which principles he builds of three pieces—matter, form, and privation. And what can be more vain than to make inanity itself the cause of the production of things? Privation is a negative; of what humour could he then make the cause and original of things that are? And yet that were not to be controverted but for the exercise of logic; there is

How it happens that men scarce doubt of things.

[1] This Latin verse, extracted from a tragedy called *Iphigenia*, is not put by Cicero into the mouth of Democritus, but is directed against him. *De Divinat.* ii. 18.
[2] *Theætetus.*
[3] Horace, *Epist.* i. 12. 16.
[4] *Nat. Hist* ii. 37.
[5] *De Civit. Dei*, xxi. 10.
[6] Of Apollonia. Sextus Empiric. *Pyrrh. Hypotyh.* iii. 4.

nothing disputed therein to bring it into doubt, but to defend the author of the school from foreign objections; his authority is the non-ultra, beyond which it is not permitted to inquire.

The receiving of principles without examination liable to all kind of mistakes.

It is very easy, upon approved foundations, to build whatever we please; for, according to the law and ordering of this beginning, the other parts of the structure are easily carried on without any failure. By this way we find our reason well-grounded, and discourse at a venture; for our masters prepossess and gain before-hand as much room in our belief as is necessary towards concluding afterwards what they please, as geometricians do by their granted demands, the consent and approbation we allow them giving them wherewith to draw us to the right and left, and to whirl us about at their pleasure. Whatever springs from these pre-suppositions is our master and our God; he will take the level of his foundations so ample and so easy that by them he may mount us up to the clouds, if he so please. In this practice and negociation of science we have taken the saying of Pythagoras, "That every expert person ought to be believed in his own art" for current pay. The logician refers the signification of words to the grammarians; the rhetorician borrows the state of arguments from the logician; the poet his measure from the musician; the geometrician his proportions from the arithmetician, and the metaphysicians take physical conjectures for their foundations; for every science has its principle pre-supposed, by which human judgment is everywhere kept in check. If you come to rush against the bar where the principal error lies, they have presently this sentence in their mouths, "That there is no disputing with persons who deny principles." Now men can have no principles if not revealed to them by the divinity; of all the rest the beginning, the middle, and the end, is nothing but dream and vapour. To those that contend upon pre-supposition we must, on the contrary, pre-suppose to them the same axiom upon which the dispute is. For every human presupposition and declaration has as much authority one as another, if reason do not make the difference. Wherefore they are all to be put into the balance, and first the generals and those that tyrannize over us. The persuasion of certainty is a certain testimony of folly and extreme incertainty; and there are not a more foolish sort of men, nor that are less philosophers, than the Philodoxes[1] of Plato; we must inquire whether fire be hot? whether snow be white? if there be any such things as hard or soft within our knowledge?

Whether philosophical uncertainty is determinable by the experience of the senses.

And as to those answers of which they make old stories, as he that doubted if there were any such thing as heat, whom they bid throw himself into the fire; and he that denied the coldness of ice, whom they bid to put ice into his bosom;— they are pitiful things, unworthy of the profession of philosophy. If they had let us alone in our natural being, to receive the appearance of things without us, according as they present themselves to us by our senses, and had permitted us to follow our own natural appetites, governed by the condition of our birth, they might then have reason to talk at that rate; but 'tis from them we have learned to make ourselves judges of the world; 'tis from them that we derive this fancy, "That human reason is controller-general of all that is without and within the roof of heaven; that comprehends everything, that can do everything; by the means of which everything is known and understood." This answer would be good among the cannibals, who enjoy the happiness of a long, quiet, and peaceable life, without Aristotle's precepts, and without the knowledge of the name of physics; this answer would perhaps be of more value and greater force than all those they borrow from their reason and invention; of this all animals, and all where the power of the law of nature is yet pure and simple, would be as capable as we, but as for them they have renounced it. They need not tell us, "It is true, for you see and feel it to be so:" they must tell me whether I really feel what I think I do; and if I do feel it, they must then tell me why I feel it, and how, and what; let them tell me the name, original, the parts and junctures of heat and cold, the qualities of the agent and patient; or let them give up their profession, which is not to admit or approve of anything but by the way of reason; that is their test in all sorts of essays; but, certainly, 'tis a test full of falsity, error, weakness, and defect.

Which way can we better prove it than by itself? If we are not to believe her when speaking of herself, she can hardly be thought fit to judge of foreign things; if she know any thing, it must at least be her own being and abode; she is in the soul, and either a part or an effect of it; for true and essential reason, from which we by a false colour borrow the name, is lodged in the bosom of the Almighty; there is her habitation and recess; 'tis thence that she imparts her rays, when God is pleased to impart any beam of it to mankind, as Pallas issued from her father's head, to communicate herself to the world.

Now let us see what human reason tells us

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1 "Persons who are possessed with opinions of which they know not the grounds; whose heads are intoxicated with words; who see and affect only the appearances of things."

This definition is taken from Plato, who has characterised them very particularly at the end of the fifth book of his *Republic*.

What reason tells us of the nature of the soul.

of herself and of the soul; not of the soul in general, of which almost all philosophy makes the celestial and first bodies participants; nor of that which Thales[1] attributed to things which themselves are reputed inanimate, lead thereto by the consideration of the loadstone; but of that which appertains to us, and that we ought the best to know.

Ignoratur enim, quæ sit natura animi;
Nata sit; an, contra, nascentibus insinuetur;
Et simul intereat nobiscum morte dirempta;
An tenebras Orci visat, vastasque lacunas,
An pecudes alias divinitus insinuet se.[2]

"For none the nature of the soul doth know,
Whether that it be born with us, or no;
Or be infused into us at our birth,
And dies with us when we return to earth,
Or then descends to the black shades below,
Or into other animals does go.

Crates and Dicæarchus were of opinion that there was no soul at all, but that the body thus stirs by a natural motion; Plato,[3] that it was a substance moving of itself; Thales, a nature without repose;[4] Asclepiades, an exercising of the senses; Hesiod and Anaximander, a thing composed of earth and water; Parmenides,[5] of earth and fire; Empedocles,[6] of blood;

Sanguineam vomit ille animam:[7]

"He vomits up his bloody soul."

Posidonius,[8] Cleanthes, and Galen,[9] that it was heat, or a hot complexion;

Igneus est ollis vigor, et cœlestis origo:[10]

"Their vigour of fire and of heavenly race."

Hippocrates,[11] a spirit diffused all over the body; Varro,[12] that it was an air received at the mouth, heated in the lungs, moistened in the heart, and diffused throughout the whole body; Zeno, the quintessence of the four elements;[13] Heraclides Ponticus,[14] that it was the light; Zenocrates[15] and the Egyptians, a mobile number; the Chaldeans, a virtue without any determinate form;

Habitum quemdam vitalem corporis esse,
Harmoniam Græci quam dicunt.[16]

"A certain vital habit in man's frame
Which harmony the Grecian sages name."

Let us not forget Aristotle, who held the soul to be that which naturally causes the body to move, which he calls entelechia,[17] with as cold an invention as any of the rest; for he neither speaks of the essence, nor of the original, nor of the nature of the soul, but only takes notice of the effect. Lactantius,[18] Seneca,[19] and most of the Dogmatists, have confessed that it was a thing they did not understand; after all this enumeration of opinions,[20] *Harum sententiarum quæ vera sit, Deus aliquis viderit.* "Of these opinions, which is the true, let some god determine," says Cicero. "I know by myself," says St. Bernard,[21] "how incomprehensible God is, seeing I cannot comprehend the parts of my own being." Heraclitus,[22] who was of opinion that every being was *full of* souls and demons, did nevertheless maintain that no one could advance so far towards the knowledge of the soul as ever to arrive at it; so profound was the essence of it.

Neither is there less controversy and debate about seating of it. Hippocrates and Hierophilus[23] place it in the ventricle of the brain; Democritus and Aristotle[24] throughout the whole body;

In what part of man the soul resides.

Ut bona sæpe valetudo cum dicitur esse
Corporis, et non est tamen hæc pars ulla valentis:[25]

"As when the body's health they do it call,
When of a sound man, that's no part at all.

Epicurus in the stomach;

Hic exultat enim pavor ac metus; hæc loca circum
Lætitiæ mulcent.[26]

"For this the seat of horror is and fear,
And joys in turn do likewise triumph here."

The Stoics,[27] about and within the heart; Erasistratus,[28] adjoining the membrane of the epicra-

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1 Laertius, *in vitâ.*
2 Lucret. i. 113.
3 *Laws*, x.
4 Thales added, "and which moves of itself." Plutarch, *On the Opinions of the Philosophers*, who also gives the opinion of the physician Asclepiades, συγγενασίαν τῶν αἰσθήσεων.
5 Macrob. *in Somn. Scip.* i. 14.
6 Cicero, *Tusc. Quæs.* i. 9.
7 *Æneid*, iv. 349.
8 Laertius, *in vitâ.*
9 See Galen, *Quod animi mores sequantur corporis temperamentum*; but elsewhere this physician repeatedly declares that he cannot venture to affirm any thing as to the nature of the soul. See Nemesius, *de Natura Hominis*, c. 2. &c.
10 *Æneid*, vi. 730.
11 Macrob. *ut supra*, i. 14.
12 Lactant. *De Opif. Dei.* c. 17.
13 "I know not," says Mr. Coste, "where Montaigne had this; for Cicero expressly says that this quintessence, or fifth nature, is a thought of Aristotle, who makes the soul to be composed of it; and that Zeno thought the soul to be fire." Cicero. *Tusc. Quæs.* i. 9. After this, Cicero adds, "that Aristotle calls the mind, which he derives from that fifth nature entelechia, a new-coined word, signifying a perpetual motion." Though Montaigne has copied these last words, in what he proceeds to tell us of Aristotle, he censures him for not having spoken of the origin and nature of the soul. But had he only cast his eye upon what Cicero had said a little before, he would have been convinced that Aristotle had taken care to explain himself concerning the origin of the soul, before he remarked the effect of it. If he has not thereby fully demonstrated what the nature of it is, Zeno has not given us much better light into it, when he says, "the soul or mind seems to be fire;" and it would not be difficult to show that in this article the other philosophers have not succeeded better than Zeno and Aristotle.
14 *Stob. Eclog. Phys.* i. 40.
15 Macrob. *ut supra.*
16 Lucret. iii. 100.
17 Cicero, *Tusc. Quæs.* i. 10.
18 *De Opif. Dei.* c. 17.
19 *Nat. Quæs.* vii. 14.
20 *Tusc. Quæs.* i. 11.
21 *Lib. de Anima.* c. 1.
22 Laertius, *in vitâ.*
23 Plutarch, *On the Opinions of the Philosophers.*
24 Sextus Empiricus, *Adv. Math.*
25 Lucret. iii. 103.
26 Id. *ib.* 142.
27 28 Plutarch, *ut supra.*

nium; Empedocles,[1] in the blood; as also Moses,[2] which was the reason why he interdicted eating the blood of beasts, because the soul is there seated; Galen thought that every part of the body had its soul; Strato[3] has placed it betwixt the eyebrows: *Qua facie quidem sit animus, aut ubi habitet, ne quærendum quidem est*:[4] "What figure the soul is of, or what part it inhabits, is not to be inquired into," says Cicero. I very willingly deliver this author to you in his own words; for should I alter eloquence itself? Besides, it were but a poor prize to steal the matter of his inventions; they are neither very frequent, nor of any great weight, and sufficiently known. But the reason why Chrysippus argues it to be about the heart, as all the rest of that sect do, is not to be omitted: "It is," says he,[5] "because when we would affirm any thing, we lay our hand upon our breasts; and when we would pronounce ἐγω, which signifies I, we let the lower jaw fall towards the stomach." This place ought not to be passed over without a remark upon the vanity of so great a man; for besides that these considerations are infinitely light in themselves, the last is only a proof to the Greeks that they have their souls lodged in that part. No human judgment is so sprightly and vigilant that it does not sometimes sleep. Why do we fear to say? The Stoics,[6] the fathers of human prudence, think that the soul of a man, crushed under a ruin, long labours and strives to get out, like a mouse caught in a trap, before it can disengage itself from the burden. Some hold that the world was made to give bodies, by way of punishment, to the spirits fallen, by their own fault, from the purity wherein they had been created, the first creation having been incorporeal; and that, according as they are more or less depraved from their spirituality, so are they more or less jocundly or dully incorporated; and that thence proceeds all the variety of so much created matter. But the spirit that for his punishment was invested with the body of the sun must certainly have a very rare and particular measure of change.

The extremities of our perquisition do all fall into astonishment and blindness; as Plutarch says[7] of the testimony of histories, that, according to charts and maps, the utmost bounds of known countries are taken up with marshes, impenetrable forests, deserts, and uninhabitable places: this is the reason why the most gross and childish ravings were most found in those authors who treat of the most elevated subjects, and proceed the furthest in them, losing themselves in their own curiosity and presumption. The beginning and end of knowledge are equally foolish: observe to what a pitch Plato flies in his poetic clouds: do but take notice there of the gibberish of the gods: but what did he dream of when he defined a man to be "a two-legged animal without feathers:"[8] giving those who had a mind to deride him a pleasant occasion; for, having pulled a capon alive, they went about calling it "the man of Plato."

The vanity of philosophical inquiries.

And what did the Epicureans think of, out of what simplicity did they first imagine that their *atoms* that they said were bodies having some weight, and a natural motion downwards, had made the world: till they were put in mind, by their adversaries, that, according to this description, it was impossible they should unite and join to one another, their fall being so direct and perpendicular, and making so many parallel lines throughout? Wherefore there was a necessity that they should since add a fortuitous and sideways motion, and that they should moreover accoutre their atoms with hooked tails, by which they might unite and cling to one another. And even then do not those that attack them upon this second consideration put them hardly to it? "If the atoms have by chance formed so many sorts of figures, why did it never fall out that they made a house or a shoe? Why at the same rate should we not believe that an infinite number of Greek letters, strewed all over a certain place, might fall into the contexture of the *Iliad*?"[9]— "Whatever is capable of reason," says Zeno,[10] "is better than that which is not capable: there is nothing better than the world: the world is therefore capable of reason."[11] Cotta, by this way of argumentation, makes the world a mathematician; and 'tis also made a musician and an organist by this other argumentation of Zeno: "The whole is more than a part; we are capable of wisdom, and are part of the world: therefore the world is wise." There are infinite like examples, not only of arguments that are false in themselves, but silly ones, that do not hold in themselves, and that accuse their authors not so much of ignorance as imprudence, in the reproaches the philosophers dash one another in the teeth withal, upon their dissensions in their sects and opinions.

The atoms of the Epicureans, what?

Whoever should bundle up a lusty faggot of the fooleries of human wisdom would produce wonders. I willingly muster up these few for a pattern, by a certain meaning not less profitable to consider than the most sound and moderate instructions. Let us judge by these what opinion we are to have of man, of his sense and reason, when, in these great persons that have raised human knowledge so high, so

1 Plutarch, *ut supra*.
2 *Genesis*, ix. 4. *Levit.* vii. 26.
3 Plutarch, *ut supra*.
4 *Tusc Quæs.* i. 28.
5 Gal. *On the Opinions of Hippocrates and Plato.*
6 Seneca, *Epist.* 57.
7 *Life of Thæseus.*
8 Laertius, *in vitâ.*
9 Cicero, *de Nat. Deor.* ii. 37.
10 Id. *ib.* iii. 9.
11 Id. *ib.* iii. 9, ii. 12.

many gross mistakes and manifest errors are to be found.

For my part, I am apt to believe that they have treated of knowledge casually, and like a toy, with both hands; and have contended about reason as of a vain and frivolous instrument, setting on foot all sorts of fancies and inventions, sometimes more sinewy, and sometimes weaker. This same Plato, who defines man as if he were a cock, says elsewhere,[1] after Socrates, "That he does not, in truth, know what man is, and that he is a member of the world the hardest to understand." By this variety and instability of opinions they tacitly lead us, as it were by the hand, to this resolution of their irresolution. They profess not always to deliver their opinions barefaced and apparent to us; they have one while disguised them in the fabulous shadows of poetry, and at another in some other vizor: for our imperfection carries this also along with it, that crude meat is not always proper for our stomachs; we must dry, alter, and mix it: they do the same: they sometimes conceal their real opinions and judgments, and falsify them to accommodate themselves to the public use. They will not make an open profession of ignorance, and of the imbecility of human reason, that they may not fright children: but they sufficiently discover it to us under the appearance of a troubled and inconstant science.

Whether the ancient philosophers treated of knowledge seriously.

I advised a person in Italy, who had a great mind to speak Italian, that provided he only had a desire to make himself understood, without being ambitious in any other respect to excel, that he should only make use of the first word that came to the tongue's end, whether Latin, French, Spanish, or Gascon, and that, by adding the Italian termination, he could not fail of hitting upon some idiom of the country, either Tuscan, Roman, Venetian, Piedmontese, or Neapolitan, and so fall in with some one of those many forms. I say the same of philosophy; she has so many faces, so much variety, and has said so many things, that all our dreams and ravings are there to be found. Human fancy can conceive nothing good or bad that is not there: *Nihil tam absurde dici potest, quod non dicatur, ab aliquo philosophorum.*[2] "Nothing can be said so absurd, that has not been said before by some of the philosophers." And I am the more willing to expose my whimsies to the public; forasmuch as, though they are spun out of myself, and without any pattern, I know they will be found related to some ancient humour, and some will not stick to say, "See whence he took it!" My manners are

Philosophy full of uncertainty and extravagance.

natural, I have not called in the assistance of any discipline to erect them; but, weak as they are, when it came into my head to lay them open to the world's view, and that to expose them to the light in a little more decent garb I went to adorn them with reasons and examples, it was a wonder to myself accidentally to find them conformable to so many philosophical discourses and examples. I never knew what regimen my life was of till it was near worn out and spent: a new figure—an unpremeditated and accidental philosopher.

But to return to the soul.[3] Inasmuch as Plato has placed reason in the brain, anger in the heart, and concupiscence in the liver; 'tis likely that it was rather an interpretation of the movements of the soul, than that he intended a division and separation of it, as of a body, into several members. And the most likely of their opinions is that 'tis always a soul, that by its faculty, reasons, remembers, comprehends, judges, desires, and exercises all its other operations by divers instruments of the body; as the pilot guides his ship according to his experience, one while straining or slacking the cordage, one while hoisting the main-yard, or removing the rudder, by one and the same power carrying on several effects: and that it is lodged in the brain; which appears in that the wounds and accidents that touch that part do immediately offend the faculties of the soul; and 'tis not incongruous that it should thence diffuse itself through the other parts of the body;

The most probable hypothesis concerning the human soul.

> Medium non deserit unquam
> Cœli Phœbus iter; radiis tamen omnia lustrat.[4]
>
> "Phœbus ne'er deviates from the zodiac's way;
> Yet all things doth illustrate with his ray."

As the sun sheds from heaven its light and influence, and fills the world with them:

> Cætera pars animæ, per totum dissita corpus,
> Paret, et ad numen mentis momenque movetur.[5]
>
> "The other part o' th' soul diffus'd all o'er
> The body, does obey the reason's lore."

Some have said that there was a general soul, as it were a great body, whence all the particular souls were extracted, and thither again return, always restoring themselves to that universal matter:

> Deum namque ire per omnes
> Terrasque, tractusque maris, cœlumque profundum;
> Hinc pecudes, armenta, viros, genus omne ferarum,
> Quemque sibi tenues nascentem arcessere vitas:
> Scilicet huc reddi deinde, ac resoluta referri
> Omnia; nec morti esse locum:[6]
>
> "For God goes forth, and spreads throughout the whole,
> Heaven, earth, and sea, the universal soul;
> Each at its birth, from him all beings share,
> Both man and brute, the breath of vital air;

[1] In the first *Alcibiades*. It is Socrates who, by his arguments, reduces Alcibiades to say this.

[2] Cicero, *de Divinat.* ii. 58.

[3] The edition of 1588 adds here, "(for I have selected the soul as the most apt for instancing our weakness and vanity)." The following analysis of the doctrine of Plato is taken from the second part of the *Timæus*. See also Laertius, *Life of Plato*.

[4] Claudian, *De Sexto Consul. Honorii*. 411.

[5] Lucret. iii. 144.

[6] Virgil, *Georgic.* iv. 221.

To him return, and, loos'd from earthly chain,
Fly whence they sprung, and rest in God again,
Spurn at the grave, and, fearless of decay,
Dwell in high heaven, and star th' etherial way."

Others, that they only rejoined and re-united themselves to it; others, that they were produced from the divine substance; others, by the angels of fire and air; others, that they were from all antiquity; and some that they were created at the very point of time the bodies wanted them; others make them to descend from the orb of the moon, and return thither; the generality of the ancients believed that they were begotten from father to son, after a like manner, and produced with all other natural things; taking their argument from the likeness of children to their fathers;

Instillata patris virtus tibi;
Fortes creantur fortibus, et bonis;[1]

"Thou hast thy father's virtues with his blood;
For still the brave spring from the brave and good;"

and that we see descend from fathers to their children not only bodily marks, but moreover a resemblance of humours, complexions, and inclinations of the soul:

Denique cur acris violentia triste leonum
Seminium sequitur? dolus vulpibus, et fuga cervis
A patribus datur, et patrius pavor incitat artus?
* * * *
Si non certa suo quia semine, seminioque
Vis animi pariter crescit cum corpore toto.[2]

"For why should rage from the fierce lion's seed,
Or from the subtle fox's craft, proceed;
Or why the tim'rous and flying hart
His fear and trembling to his race impart;
But that a certain force of mind does grow,
And still increases as the bodies do?"

That thereupon the divine justice is grounded, punishing in the children the faults of their fathers; forasmuch as the contagion of paternal vices is in some sort imprinted in the soul of children, and that the ill government of their will extends to them:[3] moreover, that if souls had any other derivation than a natural consequence, and that they had been some other thing out of the body, they would retain some memory of their first being, the natural faculties that are proper to them of discoursing, reasoning, and remembering, being considered:

The opinion of the pre-existence of the souls before their union to our bodies confuted.

Si in corpus nascentibus insinuatur,
Cur super anteactam ætatem meminisse nequimus,
Nec vestigia gestarum rerum ulla tenemus?[4]

"For at our birth if it infused be,
Why do we then retain no memory
Of our foregoing life, and why no more
Remember anything we did before?"

for, to make the condition of our souls such as we would have it to be, we must suppose them all-knowing, even in their natural simplicity and purity: by these means they had been such, being free from the prison of the body, as well before they entered into it, as we hope they shall be after they are gone out of it: and from this knowledge it should follow that they should remember, being got in the body, as Plato said,[5] "That what we learn is no other than a remembrance of what we knew before;" a thing which every one by experience may maintain to be false. Forasmuch, in the first place, as that we do not justly remember anything but what we have been taught, and that if the memory did purely perform its office it would at least suggest to us something more than what we have learned. Secondly, that which she knew being in her purity, was a true knowledge, knowing things as they are by her divine intelligence: whereas here we make her receive falsehood and vice when we instruct her; wherein she cannot employ her reminiscence, that image and conception having never been planted in her. To say that the corporal prison does in such sort suffocate her natural faculties, that they are there utterly extinct, is first contrary to this other belief of acknowledging her power to be so great, and the operations of it that men sensibly perceive in this life so admirable, as to have thereby concluded that divinity and eternity past, and the immortality to come:

Nam si tantopere est animi mutata potestas,
Omnis ut actarum exciderit retinentia rerum,
Non, ut opinor, ea ab letho jam longior errat.[6]

"For if the mind be changed to that degree
As of past things to lose all memory,
So great a change as that, I must confess,
Appears to me than death but little less."

Furthermore, 'tis here with us, and not elsewhere, that the force and effects of the soul ought to be considered; all the rest of her perfections are vain and useless to her; 'tis by her present condition that all her immortality is to be rewarded and paid, and of the life of man only that she is to render an account. It had been injustice to have stripped her of her means and powers; to have disarmed her in order, in the time of her captivity and imprisonment in the flesh, of her weakness and infirmity in the time wherein she was forced and compelled, to pass an infinite and perpetual sentence and condemnation, and to insist upon the consideration of so short a time, peradventure but an hour or two, or at the most but a century, which has no more proportion with infinity than an instant; in this momentary interval to ordain and definitively to determine of her whole being; it were an unreasonable disproportion, too, to assign an eternal recompense in consequence of so short a life. Plato,[7] to defend himself from this inconvenience, will have future payments limited to the term of a hundred years, relatively to human duration; and of us ourselves there are enough who have given them temporal limits. By this they

[1] Horace, *Od.* iv. 4, 29.
[2] Lucret. iii. 741.
[3] Plutarch, *Why Divine Justice, &c.*
[4] Lucret. iii. 671.
[5] In the *Phædo.*
[6] Lucret. iii. 674.
[7] *Republic.*

That the soul is born, and grows strong and weak with the body.

judged that the generation of the soul followed the common condition of human things, as also her life, according to the opinion of Epicurus and Democritus, which has been the most received; in consequence of these fine appearances that they saw it born, and that, according as the body grew more capable, they saw it increase in vigour as the other did; that its feebleness in infancy was very manifest, and in time its better strength and maturity, and after that its declension and old age, and at last its decrepitude:

Gigni pariter cum corpore, et una
Crescere sentimus, pariterque senescere mentem.[1]

"Souls with the bodies to be born we may
Discern, with them t' increase, with them decay."

They perceived it to be capable of divers passions, and agitated with divers painful motions, whence it fell into lassitude and uneasiness; capable of alteration and change, of cheerfulness, of stupidity and languor, and subject to diseases and injuries, as the stomach or the foot;

Mentem sanari, corpus ut ægrum,
Cernimus, et fieri medicina posse videmus;[2]

"Sick minds, as well as bodies, we do see
By Med'cine's virtue oft restored to be;"

dazzled and intoxicated with the fumes of wine, justled from her seat by the vapours of a burning fever, laid asleep by the application of some medicaments, and roused by others,—

Corpoream naturam animi esse necesse est,
Corporis quoniam telis ictuque laborat;[3]

"There must be of necessity, we find,
A nature that's corporeal of the mind,
Because we evidently see it smarts
And wounded is with shafts the body darts;"

they saw it astonished and overthrown in all its faculties through the mere bite of a mad dog, and in that condition to have no stability of reason, no sufficiency, no virtue, no philosophical resolution, no resistance that could exempt it from the subjection of such accidents; the slaver of a contemptible cur shed upon the hand of Socrates, to shake all his wisdom and all his great and regulated imaginations, and so to annihilate them, as that there remained no trace of his former knowledge,—

Vis.... animali
Conturbatur ut.... divisa eorsum
Dissectatur, eodem illo distracta veneno;[4]

"The power of the soul's disturbed; and when
That once is but sequestred from her, then
By the same poison 'tis dispersed abroad;"

and this poison to find no more resistance in that great soul than in an infant of four years old: a poison sufficient to make all philosophy, if it were incarnate, become furious and mad; insomuch that Cato, who ever disdained death and fortune, could not endure the sight of a looking-glass, or of water, overwhelmed with horror and affright at the thought of falling, by the contagion of a mad dog, into the disease called by physicians hydrophobia:

Vis morbi distracta per artus
Turbat agens animam, spumantes æquore salso
Ventorum ut validis fervescunt viribus undæ.[5]

"Throughout the limbs diffused, the fierce disease
Disturbs the soul, as in the briny seas,
The foaming waves to swell and boil we see,
Stirred by the wind's impetuosity."

Now, as to this particular, philosophy has sufficiently armed man to encounter all other accidents either with patience, or, if the search of that costs too dear, by an infallible defeat, in totally depriving himself of all sentiment: but these are expedients that are only of use to a soul being itself, and in its full power, capable of reason and deliberation; but not at all proper for this inconvenience, where, in a philosopher, the soul becomes the soul of a madman, troubled, overturned, and lost: which many occasions may produce, as a too vehement agitation that any violent passion of the soul may beget in itself; or a wound in a certain part of the person, or vapours from the stomach, any of which may stupify the understanding and turn the brain.

Morbis in corporis avius errat
Sæpe animus; dementit enim, deliraque fatur;
Interdumque gravi lethargo fertur in altum
Æternumque soporem, oculis nutuque cadenti:[6]

"For when the body's sick, and ill at ease,
The mind doth often share in the disease;
Wonders, grows wild, and raves, and sometimes by
A heavy and a stupid lethargy,
Is overcome and cast into a deep,
A most profound and everlasting sleep."

The philosophers, methinks, have not much touched this string, no more than another of equal importance: they have this dilemma continually in their mouths, to console our mortal condition: "The soul is either mortal or immortal; if mortal, it will suffer no pain; if immortal, it will change for the better."—They never touch the other branch, "What if she change for the worse?" and leave to the poets the menaces of future torments. But thereby they make themselves a good game. These are two omissions that I often meet with in their discourses. I return to the first.

This soul loses the use of the sovereign stoical good, so constant and so firm. Our fine human *wisdom must here yield*, and give up her arms. As to the rest, they also considered, by the vanity of human reason, that the mixture and association of two so contrary things as the mortal and the immortal, was unimaginable:

[1] Lucret. iii. 446.
[2] Id. *ib.* 446.
[3] Id. *ib.* 509.
[4] Lucret. iii. 176.
[5] Id. *ib.* 498.
[6] Id. *ib.* 491.

Quippe etenim mortale æterno jungere, et una
Consentire putare, et fungi mutua posse,
Desipere est. Quid enim diversius esse putandum est,
Aut magis inter se disjunctum discrepitansque,
Quam, mortale quod est, immortali atque perenni
Junctum, in concilio, sævas tolerare procellas ?[1]

"The mortal and th' eternal, then, to blend,
And think they can pursue one common end,
Is madness: for what things more diff'rent are,
Distinct in nature, and disposed to jar?
How can it then be thought that these should bear,
When thus conjoined, of harms an equal share?

Moreover, they perceived the soul tending towards death, as well as the body:

Simul ævo fessa fatiscit:[2]

"Fatigued together with the weight of years:"

which, according to Zeno, the image of sleep does sufficiently demonstrate to us; for he looks upon it "as a fainting and fall of the soul, as well as of the body:" *Contrahi animum, et quasi labi putet atque decidere:*[3] and, what they perceived in some, that the soul maintained its force and vigour to the last gasp of life, they attributed to the variety of diseases, as it is observable in men at the last extremity, that some retain one sense, and some another; one the hearing, and another the smell, without any manner of defect or alteration; and that there is not so universal a deprivation that some parts do not remain vigorous and entire:

Non alio pacto, quam si, pes cum dolet ægri,
In nullo caput interea sit forte dolore.[4]

"So, often of the gout a man complains,
Whose head is, at the same time, free from pains."

The sight of our judgment is, to truth, the same that the owl's eyes are to the splendour of the sun, says Aristotle.[5] By what can we better convince him, than by so gross blindness in so apparent a light? For the contrary opinion of the immortality of the soul, which, Cicero says, was first introduced, according to the testimony of books at least, by Pherecides Syrius,[6] in the time of King Tullus (though some attribute it to Thales, and others to others), 'tis the part of human science that is treated of with the greatest doubt and reservation. The most positive dogmatists are fain, in this point principally, to fly to the refuge of the Academy. No one doubts what Aristotle has established upon this subject, no more than all the ancients in general, who handle it with a wavering belief: *Rem gratissimam promittentium magis quam probantium:*[7] "A thing more acceptable in the promisers than the provers." He conceals himself in clouds of words of difficult, unintelligible sense, and has left to those of his sect as great a dispute about his judgment as about the matter itself.

Two things rendered this opinion plausible to them; one, that, without the immortality of souls, there would be nothing whereon to ground the vain hopes of glory, which is a consideration of wonderful repute in the world; the other, that it is a very profitable impression, as Plato says,[8] that vices, when they escape the discovery and cognizance of human justice, are still within the reach of the divine, which will pursue them even after the death of the guilty. Man is excessively solicitous to prolong his being, and has to the utmost of his power provided for it: there are monuments for the conservation of the body, and glory to preserve the name. He has employed all his wit and opinion to the rebuilding of himself, impatient of his fortune, and to prop himself by his inventions. The soul, by reason of its anxiety and impotence, being unable to stand by itself, wanders up and down to seek out consolations, hopes, and foundations, and alien circumstances, to which she adheres and fixes; and how light or fantastic soever invention delivers them to her, relies more willingly, and with greater assurance, upon them than upon herself. But 'tis wonderful to observe how the most constant and obstinate maintainers of this just and clear persuasion of the immortality of the soul fall short, and how weak their arguments are, when they go about to prove it by human reason: *Somnia sunt non docentis, sed optantis:* "They are dreams not of the teacher, but wisher," says one of the ancients.[9] By which testimony man may know that he owes the truth he himself finds out to fortune and accident; since that even then, when it is fallen into his hand, he has not wherewith to hold and maintain it, and that his reason has not force to make use of it. All things produced by our own meditation and understanding, whether true or false, are subject to incertitude and controversy. 'Twas for the chastisement of our pride, and for the instruction of our miserable condition and incapacity, that God wrought the perplexity and confusion of the tower of Babel. Whatever we undertake without his assistance, whatever we see without the lamp of his grace, is but vanity and folly. We corrupt the very essence of truth, which is uniform and constant, by our weakness, when fortune puts it into our possession. What course soever man takes of himself, God still permits it to come to the same confusion, the image whereof he so lively represents to us in the just chastisement wherewith he crushed Nimrod's presumption, and frustrated the vain attempt of his proud structure; *Perdam sapientiam sapientium, et prudentiam prudentium reprobabo.*[10] "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understand-

The foundation of the opinion of the soul's immortality.

[1] Lucret. iii. 801.
[2] Id. *ib.* 459.
[3] Cicero, *de Divinat.* ii. 58.
[4] Lucret. iii. 111.
[5] *Metaphys.* ii. 1.
[6] *Of Syros.* Cicero, *Tusc Quæs.* i. 16. from whose text it would appear that we should rather read *King Tullius.*
[7] Seneca, *Epist.* 102.
[8] *Laws*, x. 13.
[9] Cicero, *Acad.* ii. 29.
[10] St. Paul, 1 *Corinthians*, i. 19.

ing of the prudent." The diversity of idioms and tongues, with which he disturbed this work, what are they other than this infinite and perpetual alteration and discordance of opinions and reasons, which accompany and confound the vain building of human wisdom, and to very good effect too: for what would hold us, if we had but the least grain of knowledge? This saint has very much obliged me: *Ipsa veritatis occultatio aut humilitatis exercitatio est, aut elationis attritio.*[1] "The very concealment of the truth is either an exercise of humility or a quelling of presumption." To what a pitch of presumption and insolence do we raise our blindness and folly!

It is by revelation we are assured of the soul's immortality.

But to return to my subject. It was truly very good reason that we should be beholden to God only, and to the favour of his grace, for the truth of so noble a belief, since from his sole bounty we receive the fruit of immortality, which consists in the enjoyment of eternal beatitude. Let us ingenuously confess that God alone has dictated it to us, and faith; for 'tis no lesson of nature and our own reason. And whoever will enquire into his own being and power, both within and without, without this divine privilege; whoever shall consider man impartially, and without flattery, will see in him no efficacy or faculty that relishes of any thing but death and earth. The more we give and confess to owe and render to God, we do it with the greater Christianity. That which this Stoic philosopher says he holds from the fortuitous consent of the popular voice; had it not been better that he had held it from God? *Cum de animorum æternitate disserimus, non leve momentum apud nos habet consensus hominum aut timentium inferos, aut colentium. Utor hac publica persuasione.*[2] "When we discourse of the immortality of souls, the consent of men that either fear or adore the infernal powers, is of no small advantage. I make use of this public persuasion."

What constitutes the soul's immortality, according to several philosophers.

Now the weakness of human arguments upon this subject is particularly manifested by the fabulous circumstances they have superadded as consequences of this opinion, to find out of what condition this immortality of ours was. Let us omit the Stoics, (*ustram nobis largiuntur tanquam cornicibus; diu mansuros aiunt animos; semper, negant.*[3] "They give us a long life, as also they do to crows; they say our soul shall continue long, but that it shall continue always they deny,") who give to souls a life after this, but finite. The most universal and received fancy, and that continues down to our times in various places,[4] is that of which they make Pythagoras the author; not that he was the original inventor, but because it received a great deal of weight and repute by the authority of his approbation: "That souls, at their departure out of us, did nothing but shift from one body to another, from a lion to a horse, from a horse to a king, continually travelling at this rate from habitation to habitation;" and he himself said that he remembered he had been Æthalides,[5] since that Euphorbus, afterwards Hermotimus, and, finally, from Pyrrhus was passed into Pythagoras; having a memory of himself of two hundred and six years. And some have added that these very souls sometimes mount up to heaven, and come down again:

> O pater, anne aliquas ad cœlum hinc ire putandum est
> Sublimes animas, iterumque ad tarda reverti
> Corpora? Quæ lucis miseris tam dira cupido?[6]
>
> "O, father, is it then to be conceiv'd
> That any of these spirits, so sublime,
> Should hence to the celestial regions climb,
> And thence return to earth to re-assume
> Their sluggish bodies rotting in a tomb?
> For wretched life whence does such fondness come?"

Origen makes them eternally to go and come from a better to a worse estate. The opinion that Varro[7] mentions is that, after four hundred and forty years' revolution, they should be reunited to their first bodies; Chrysippus[8] held that this would happen after a certain space of time unknown and unlimited. Plato,[9] who professes to have embraced this belief from Pindar and the ancient poets, that we are to undergo infinite vicissitudes of mutation, for which the soul is prepared, having neither punishment nor reward in the other world but what is temporal, as its life here is but temporal, concludes that it has a singular knowledge of the affairs of heaven, of hell, of the world, through all which it has passed, re-passed, and made stay in several voyages; *fit* matters for her memory. Observe her progress elsewhere:[10] "The soul that has lived well is re-united to the stars to which it is assigned; that which has lived ill removes into a woman, and, if it do not there reform, is again removed into a beast of condition suitable to its vicious manners, and shall see no end of its punishments till it be returned to its natural constitution, and that it has, by the force of reason, purged itself from those gross, stupid, and elementary qualities it was polluted with." But I will not omit the objection the Epicureans make against this transmigration from one body to another; 'tis a pleasant one; they ask what expedient would be found out if the number of the dying should chance to be greater than that of those who are coming into the world. For

[1] St. August. *de Civit. Dei*, xi. 22.
[2] Seneca, *Epist.* 117.
[3] Cicero, *Tusc. Quæs.* i. 31.
[4] In Persia, Hindostan, and elsewhere.
[5] Laertius, *in vitâ.*
[6] *Æneid*, vi. 719.
[7] As that of some "casters of nativities," *genethliaci quidam.* The passage is in St. August. *de Civit. Dei*, xxii. 28.
[8] Lactantius, *Div. Inst.* vii. 23.
[9] In the *Menon.*
[10] In the *Timæus.*

the souls, turned out of their old habitation, would scuffle and crowd which should first get possession of their new lodging; and they further demand how they shall pass away their time, whilst waiting till new quarters are made ready for them? Or, on the contrary, if more animals should be born than die, the body, they say, would be but in an ill condition whilst waiting for a soul to be infused into it; and it would fall out that some bodies would die before they had been alive.

> Denique connubia ad veneris, partusque ferarum
> Esse animas præsto, deridiculum esse videtur;
> Et spectare immortales mortalia membra
> Innumero numero, certareque præproperanter
> Inter se, quæ prima potissimaque insinueter.[1]
>
> "Absurd to think that whilst wild beasts beget,
> Or bear their young, a thousand souls do wait,
> Expect the falling body, fight and strive
> Which first shall enter in and make it live."

Others have arrested the soul in the body of the deceased, with it to animate serpents, worms, and other beasts, which are said to be bred out of the corruption of our members, and even out of our ashes; others divide them into two parts, the one mortal, the other immortal; others make it corporeal, and nevertheless immortal. Some make it immortal, without sense or knowledge. There are others, even among ourselves, who have believed that devils were made of the souls of the damned; as Plutarch thinks that gods were made of those that were saved; for there are few things which that author is so positive in as he is in this; maintaining elsewhere a doubtful and ambiguous way of expression. "We are told," says he, "and stedfastly should believe, that the souls of virtuous men, both according to nature and the divine justice, become saints, and from saints demi-gods, and from demi-gods, after they are perfectly, as in sacrifices of purgation, cleansed and purified, being delivered from all passibility and all mortality, they become, not by any civil decree, but in real truth, and according to all probability of reason, entire and perfect gods, in receiving a most happy and glorious end." But who desires to see him—him, who is yet the most sober and moderate of the whole gang of philosophers, lay about him with greater boldness, and relate his miracles upon this subject, I refer him to his treatise *of the Moon*, and *of the Dæmon of Socrates*, where he may, as evidently as in any other place whatever, satisfy himself[2] that the mysteries of philosophy have many strange things in common with those of poetry; human understanding losing itself in attempting to sound and search all things to the bottom; even as we, tired and worn out with a long course of life, return to infancy and dotage. See here the fine and certain instructions which we extract from human knowledge concerning the soul.

Neither is there less temerity in what they teach us touching our corporal parts. Let us choose out one or two examples; for otherwise we should lose ourselves in this vast and troubled ocean of medical errors. Let us first know whether, at least, they agree about the matter whereof men produce one another; for as to their first production it is no wonder if, in a thing so high and so long since past, human understanding finds itself puzzled and perplexed. Archelaus, the physician, whose disciple and favourite Socrates was, according to Aristoxenus, said[3] that both men and beasts were made of a lacteous slime, expressed by the heat of the earth; Pythagoras says[4] that our seed is the foam or cream of our better blood; Plato, that it is the distillation of the marrow of the back-bone; raising his argument from this, that that part is first sensible of being weary of the work; Alcmeon, that it is part of the substance of the brain, and that it is so, says he, is proved by the weakness of the eyes in those who are immoderate in that exercise; Democritus, that it is a substance extracted from the whole mass of the body; Epicurus, an extract from soul and body; Aristotle, an excrement drawn from the aliment of the blood, the last which is diffused over our members; others, that it is a blood concocted and digested by the heat of the genitals, which they judge, by reason that in excessive endeavours a man voids pure blood; wherein there seems to be more likelihood, could a man extract any appearance from so infinite a confusion. Now, to bring this seed to do its work, how many contrary opinions do they set on foot? Aristotle[5] and Democritus are of opinion that women have no sperm, and that 'tis nothing but a sweat that they distil in the heat of pleasure and motion, and that contributes nothing at all to generation. Galen, on the contrary, and his followers, believe that without the concurrence of seeds there can be no generation. Here are the physicians, the philosophers, the lawyers, and divines, by the ears with our wives about the dispute, "For what term women carry their fruit?" and I, for my part, by the example of myself, stick with those that maintain a woman goes eleven months with child. The world is built upon this experience; there is no so common-place a woman that cannot give her judgment in all these controversies; and yet we cannot agree.

Opinions as to the matter that produces the human body.

Time of women's pregnancy undetermined.

Here is enough to verify that man is no better instructed in the knowledge of himself, in his corporal than in his spiritual part. We have proposed himself to himself, and his reason to his reason, to see what she could say. I think I have sufficiently demonstrated how little she understands herself in herself; and

[1] Lucret. iii. 777.

[2] *Life of Romulus*, c. 14.

[3] Laertius, *in vitâ*.

[4] Plutarch, *On the Op. of the Philos.*, whence the following examples are also taken.

[5] Plutarch, *ut supra*, adds Zeno to Aristotle, and says expressly that Democritus, on the contrary, held that females shed their seed.

who understands not himself in himself, in what can he? *Quasi vero mensuram ullius rei possit agere, qui sui nesciat.*[1] "As if he could understand the measure of any other thing, that knows not his own." In earnest, Protagoras[2] told us a pretty flam in making man the measure of all things, that never knew so much as his own; and if it be not he, his dignity will not permit that any other creature should have this advantage; now he being so contrary in himself, and one judgment so incessantly subverting another, this favourable proposition was but a mockery, which induced us necessarily to conclude the nullity of the compass and the compasser. When Thales[3] reputes the knowledge of man very difficult for man to comprehend, he at the same time gives him to understand that all other knowledge is impossible.

You,[4] for whom I have taken the pains, contrary to my custom, to write so long a discourse, will not refuse to support your Sebond by the ordinary forms of arguing, wherewith you are every day instructed, and in this will exercise both your wit and learning; for this last fencing trick is never to be made use of but as an extreme remedy; 'tis a desperate thrust, wherein you are to quit your own arms to make your adversary abandon his; and a secret sleight, which must be very rarely, and then very reservedly, put in practice. 'Tis great temerity to lose yourself that you may destroy another; you must not die to be revenged, as Gobrias did; for, being closely grappled in combat with a lord of Persia, Darius coming in sword in hand, and fearing to strike least he should kill Gobrias, he called out to him boldly to fall on, though he should run them both through at once.[5] I have known desperate weapons, and conditions of single combat, and wherein he that offered them put himself and his adversary upon terms of inevitable death to them both, censured for unjust. The Portuguese, in the Indian Sea, took certain Turks prisoners, who, impatient of their captivity, resolved, and it succeeded, by striking the nails of the ship one against another, and making a spark to fall into the barrels of powder that were set in the place where they were guarded, to blow up and reduce themselves, their masters, and the vessel to ashes. We here touch the out-plate and utmost limits of sciences, wherein the extremity is vicious, as in virtue. Keep yourselves in the common road; it is not good to be so subtle and cunning. Remember the Tuscan proverb:

Chi troppo s'assottiglia, si scavezza.[6]

"Who makes himself too wise, becomes a fool."

I advise you that, in all your opinions and discourses, as well as in your manners and all other things, you keep yourself moderate and temperate, and avoid novelty; I am an enemy to all extravagant ways. You, who by the authority of your grandeur, and yet more by the advantages which those qualities give you that are more your own, may with the twinkle of an eye command whom you please, ought to have given this charge to some one who made profession of letters, who might after a better manner have proved and illustrated these things to you. But here is as much as you will stand in need of.

The necessity of laws to keep men in order.

Epicurus said of the laws,[7] "That the worst were so necessary for us that without them men would devour one another." And Plato[8] affirms, "That without laws we should live like beasts." Our wit is a wandering, dangerous, and temerarious utensil; it is hard to couple any order or measure to it; in those of our own time, who are endued with any rare excellence above others, or any extraordinary vivacity of understanding, we see them almost all lash out into licentiousness of opinions and manners; and 'tis almost a miracle to find one temperate and sociable. 'Tis all the reason in the world to limit human wit within the strictest limits imaginable; in study, as in all the rest, we ought to have its steps and advances numbered and fixed, and that the limits of its inquisition be bounded by art. It is curbed and fettered by religions, laws, customs, sciences, precepts, mortal and immortal penalties. And yet we see that it escapes from all these bonds by its volubility and dissolution; 'tis a vain body which has nothing to lay hold on or to seize; a various and difform body, incapable of being either bound or held. In earnest, there are few souls so regular, firm, and well descended, as are to be trusted with their own conduct, and that can with moderation, and without temerity, sail in the liberty of their own judgments, beyond the common and received opinions; 'tis more expedient to put them under pupilage. Wit is a dangerous weapon, even to the possessor, if he knows not how to use it discreetly; and there is not a beast to whom a head-board is more justly to be given, to keep his looks down and before his feet, and to hinder him from wandering here and there out of the tracks which custom and the laws have laid before him. And therefore it will be better for you to keep yourself in the beaten path, let it be what it will, than to fly out at a venture with this unbridled liberty. But if any of these new doctors will pretend to be ingenious in your presence, at the expense both of your soul and his own, to avoid this dangerous plague, which is every day laid in

[1] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* ii. 1.
[2] Sextus Empiric. *Adv. Math.*
[3] Laertius, *in vitâ.*
[4] The author, as we have already mentioned, is addressing Margaret de Valois, Queen of Navarre.
[5] Herod. iii. 78.
[6] Petrarch, canz. xi. v. 48.
[7] Plutarch, *Against Colotes.*
[8] *Laws*, ix.

your way to infect you, this preservative, in the extremest necessity, will prevent the danger and hinder the contagion of this poison from offending either you or your company.

The liberty, then, and frolic forwardness of these ancient wits produced in philosophy and human sciences several sects of different opinions, every one undertaking to judge and make choice of what he would stick to and maintain. But now that men go all one way, *Qui certis quibusdam destinatisque sententiis addicti et consecrati sunt, ut etiam, quæ non probant, cogantur defendere*,[1] "Who are so tied and obliged to certain opinions that they are bound to defend even those they do not approve," and that we receive the arts by civil authority and decree, so that the schools have but one pattern, and a like circumscribed institution and discipline, we no more take notice what the coin weighs, and is really worth, but every one receives it according to the estimate that common approbation and use puts upon it; the alloy is not questioned, but how much it is current for. In like manner all things pass; we take physic as we do geometry; and tricks of hocus-pocus, enchantments, and love-spells, the correspondence of the souls of the dead, prognostications, domifications,[2] and even this ridiculous pursuit of the philosophers' stone, all things pass for current pay, without any manner of scruple or contradiction. We need to know no more but that Mars' house is in the middle of the triangle of the hand, that of Venus in the thumb, and that of Mercury in the little finger; that when the table-line cuts the tubercle of the fore-finger 'tis a sign of cruelty, that when it falls short of the middle finger, and that the natural median-line makes an angle with the vital in the same side, 'tis a sign of a miserable death; that if in a woman the natural line be open, and does not close the angle with the vital, this denotes that she shall not be very chaste. I leave you to judge whether a man qualified with such knowledge may not pass with reputation and esteem in all companies.

Theophrastus said that human knowledge, guided by the senses, might judge of the causes of things to a certain degree; but that being arrived to first and extreme causes, it must stop short and retire, by reason either of its own infirmity or the difficulty of things. 'Tis a moderate and gentle opinion, that our own understandings may conduct us to the knowledge of some things, and that it has certain measures of power, beyond which 'tis temerity to employ it: this opinion is plausible, and introduced by men of well composed minds, but 'tis hard to limit our wit, which is curious and greedy, and will no more stop at a thousand than at fifty paces; having experimentally found that, wherein one has failed, the other has hit, and that what was unknown to one age, the age following has explained; and that arts and sciences are not cast in a mould, but are formed and perfected by degrees, by often handling and polishing, as bears leisurely lick their cubs into form; what my force cannot discover, I do not yet desist to sound and to try; and by handling and kneading this new matter over and over again, by turning and heating it, I lay open to him that shall succeed me, a kind of facility to enjoy it more at his ease, and make it more maniable and supple for him,

The extent of human knowledge.

> Ut hymettia sole
> Cera remollescit, tractataque pollice multas
> Vertitur in facies, ipsoque fit utilis usu;[3]
>
> "As wax doth soften in the sun become,
> And, tempered 'twixt the finger and the thumb
> Will various forms, and several shapes admit,
> Till for the present use 'tis rendered fit;"

as much will the second do for the third: which is the cause that the difficulty ought not to make me despair, and my own incapacity as little; for 'tis nothing but my own.

Man is as capable of all things as of some; and if he confesses, as Theophrastus says, the ignorance of first causes, let him at once surrender all the rest of his knowledge; if he is defective in foundation, his reason is aground: disputation and inquiry have no other aim nor stop but principles; if this aim do not stop his career, he runs into an infinite irresolution. *Non potest aliud alio magis minusve comprehendi quo niam omnium rerum una est definitio comprehendendi*:[4] "One thing can no more or less be comprehended than another, because the definition of comprehending all things is the same." Now 'tis very likely that, if the soul knew any thing, it would in the first place know itself; and if it knew any thing out of itself, it would be its own body and case, before any thing else. If we see the gods of physic to this very day debating about our anatomy,

The human understanding incapable of attaining to the evident knowledge of things.

> Mulciber in Trojam, pro Troja stabat Apollo;[5]
>
> "Vulcan against, for Troy Apollo stood;"

when are we to expect that they will be agreed? We are nearer neighbours to ourselves than whiteness to snow, or weight to stones. If man do not know himself, how should he know his force and functions? It is not, perhaps, that we have not some real knowledge in us; but 'tis by chance; forasmuch as errors are received into our soul by the same way, after the same manner, and by the same conduct, it has not wherewithal to distinguish them, nor wherewithal to choose the truth from falsehood.

[1] Cicero, *Tusc. Quæs.* ii 2.

[2] A term of astrology, signifying the arrangement of the heavens into twelve *houses*, for the purpose of casting nativities.

[3] Ovid, *Met.* x. 284.

[4] Cicero, *Acad.* ii. 41.

[5] Ovid, *Trist.* i. 2. 5.

The Academics admitted a certain partiality of judgment, and thought it too crude to say that it was not more likely to say that snow was white than black; and that we were no more assured of the motion of a stone, thrown by the hand, than of that of the eighth sphere. And to avoid this difficulty and strangeness, that can in truth hardly lodge in our imagination, though they concluded that we were in no sort capable of knowledge, and that truth is engulfed in so profound an abyss as is not to be penetrated by human sight; yet they acknowledged some things to be more likely than others, and received into their judgment this faculty, that they had a power to incline to one appearance more than another, they allowed him this propension, interdicting all resolution. The Pyrrhonian opinion is more bold, and also somewhat more likely; for this academic inclination, and this propension to one proposition rather than another, what is it other than a recognition of some more apparent truth in this than in that? If our understanding be capable of the form, lineaments, port, and face of truth, it might as well see it entire as by halves, springing and imperfect. This appearance of likelihood, which makes them rather take the left hand than the right, augments it: multiply this ounce of verisimilitude that turns the scales to a hundred, to a thousand, ounces; it will happen in the end that the balance will itself end the controversy, and determine one choice, one entire truth. But why do they suffer themselves to incline to and be swayed by verisimilitude, if they know not the truth? How should they know the similitude of that whereof they do not know the essence? Either we can absolutely judge, or absolutely we cannot. If our intellectual and sensible faculties are without foot or foundation, if they only pull and drive, 'tis to no purpose that we suffer our judgments to be carried away with any part of their operation, what appearance soever they may seem to present us; and the surest and most happy seat of our understanding would be that where it kept itself temperate, upright, and inflexible, without tottering, or without agitation: *Inter visa vera, aut falsa, ad animi assensum, nihil interest*:[1] "Amongst things that seem, whether true or false, it signifies nothing to the assent of the mind." That things do not lodge in us in their form and essence, and do not there make their entry by their own force and authority, we sufficiently see: because, if it were so, we should receive them after the same manner; wine would have the same relish with the sick as with the healthful; he who has his finger chapt or benumbed would find the same hardness in wood or iron that he handles that another does; foreign subjects then surrender themselves to our mercy, and are seated in us as we please. Now if on our part we received any thing without alteration, if human grasp were capable and strong enough to seize on truth by our own means, these means being common to all men, this truth would be conveyed from hand to hand, from one to another; and at least there would be some one thing to be found in the world, amongst so many as there are, that would be believed by men with an universal consent: but this, that there is no one proposition that is not debated and controverted amongst us, or that may not be, makes it very manifest that our natural judgment does not very clearly discern what it embraces; for my judgment cannot make my companions approve of what it approves: which is a sign that I seized it by some other means than by a natural power that is in me and in all other men.

The opinion of the Academics not so easy to be defended as that of the Pyrrhonists.

Let us lay aside this infinite confusion of opinions, which we see even amongst the philosophers themselves, and this perpetual and universal dispute about the knowledge of things: for this is truly pre-supposed, that men, I mean the most knowing, the best born, and of the best parts, are not agreed about any one thing, not that heaven is over our heads; for they that doubt of every thing do also doubt of that; and they who deny that we are able to comprehend any thing say that we have not comprehended that the heaven is over our heads, and these two opinions are, without comparison, the stronger in number.

Besides this infinite diversity and division, through the trouble that our judgment gives ourselves, and the incertainty that every one is sensible of in himself, 'tis easy to perceive that its seat is very unstable and insecure. How variously do we judge of things?—How often do we alter our opinions? What I hold and believe to-day I held and believe with my whole belief; all my instruments and engines seize and take hold of this opinion, and become responsible to me for it, at least as much as in them lies; I could not embrace nor conserve any truth with greater confidence and assurance than I do this; I am wholly and entirely possessed with it: but has it not befallen me, not only once, but a hundred, a thousand times, every day, to have embraced some other thing with all the same instruments, and in the same condition, which I have since judged to be false? A man must at least become wise at his own expense: if I have often found myself betrayed under this colour; if my touch proves commonly false, and my balance unequal and unjust, what assurance can I now have more than at other times? Is it not stupidity and madness to suffer myself to be so often deceived by my guide? Nevertheless let fortune remove and shift us five hundred times from place to place, let her do nothing but incessantly empty and fill into our belief, as into a vessel, other and other opinions;

The uncertainty which every one may perceive in his own judgment.

[1] Cicero, *Acad.* ii. 28.

yet still the present and the last is the certain and infallible one: for this we must abandon goods, honour, life, health, and all.

> Posterior . . . res illa reperta
> Perdit et immutat sensus ad pristina quæque.[1]
>
> "The last things we find out are always best,
> And make us to disrelish all the rest."

Whatever is preached to us, and whatever we learn, we should still remember that it is man that gives and man that receives; 'tis a mortal hand that presents it to us, 'tis a mortal hand that accepts it. The things that come to us from heaven have the sole right and authority of persuasion, the sole mark of truth: which also we do not see with our own eyes, nor receive by our own means; that great and sacred image could not abide in so wretched a habitation if God for this end did not prepare it, if God did not by his particular and supernatural grace and favour fortify and reform it. At least our frail and defective condition ought to make us behave ourselves with more reservedness and moderation in our innovations and changes: we ought to remember that, whatever we receive into the understanding, we often receive things that are false, and that it is by the same instruments that so often give themselves the lie and are so often deceived.

Now it is no wonder they should so often contradict themselves, being so easy to be turned and swayed by very light occurrences. It is certain that our apprehensions, our judgment, and the faculties of the soul in general, suffer according to the movements and alterations of the body, which alterations are continual. Are not our minds more sprightly, our memories more prompt and quick, and our thoughts more lively in health than in sickness? Do not joy and gaiety make us receive subjects that present themselves to our souls quite otherwise than care and melancholy? Do you believe that Catullus's verses, or those of Sappho, please an old doting miser as they do a vigorous, amorous young man? Cleomenes, the son of Anaxandridas, being sick, his friends reproached him that he had humours and whimsies that were new and unaccustomed; "I believe it," said he;[2] "neither am I the same man now as when I am in health: being now another person, my opinions and fancies are also other than they were before." In our courts of justice this word is much in use, which is spoken of criminals when they find the judges in a good humour, gentle and mild, *Gaudeat de bona fortuna;* "Let him rejoice in his good fortune;" for it is most certain that men's judgments are sometimes more prone to condemnation, more sharp and severe, and at others more facile, easy, and inclined to excuse: he that carries with him from his house the pain of the gout, jealousy, or theft by his man, having his whole soul possessed with anger, it is not to be doubted but that his judgment will lean this way. That venerable senate of the Areopagites used to hear and determine by night, for fear lest the sight of the parties might corrupt their justice. The very air itself, and the serenity of heaven, will cause some mutation in us, according to these verses in Cicero:

> Tales sunt hominum mentes, quales pater ipse
> Jupiter auctifera lustravit lampade terras.[3]
>
> "Men's minds are influenc'd by th' external air,
> Dark or serene, as days are foul or fair."

'Tis not only fevers, debauches, and great accidents, that overthrow our judgments,—the least things in the world will do it; and we are not to doubt, though we may not be sensible of it, that if a continued fever can overwhelm the soul, a tertian will in some proportionate measure alter it; if an apoplexy can stupify and totally extinguish the sight of our understanding, we are not to doubt but that a great cold will dazzle it: and consequently there is hardly one single hour in a man's whole life wherein our judgment is in its due place and right condition, our bodies being subject to so many continual mutations, and stuffed with so many several sorts of springs, that I believe the physicians, that it is hard but that there must be always some one or other out of order.

The judgment depends very much on the alterations of the body.

As to what remains, this malady does not very easily discover itself, unless it be extreme and past remedy; forasmuch as reason goes always lame, halting, and that too as well with falsehood as with truth; and therefore 'tis hard to discover her deviations and mistakes. I always call that appearance of meditation which every one forges in himself reason: this reason, of the condition of which there may be a hundred contrary ones about one and the same subject, is an instrument of lead and of wax, ductile, pliable, and accommodate to all sorts of biasses and to all measures; so that nothing remains but the art and skill how to turn and mould it. How uprightly soever a judge may mean, if he does not look well to himself, which few care to do, his inclination to friendship, to relationship, to beauty or revenge, and not only things of that weight, but even the fortuitous instinct that makes us favour one thing more than another, and that, without reason's permission, puts the choice upon us in two equal subjects, or some shadow of like vanity, may insensibly insinuate into his judgment the recommendation or disfavour of a cause, and make the balance dip.

The weakness of our judgment not easy to be discovered.

I that watch myself as narrowly as I can, and that have my eyes continually bent upon myself, like one that has no great business to do elsewhere,

[1] Lucret. v. 1413.
[2] Plutarch *Apoth. of the Lacedæmonians.*
[3] Verses translated by Cicero from the *Odyssey*, xviii. 135, and preserved by St. Augustin, *de Civit. Dei*, v. 8.

Quis sub Arcto
Rex gelidæ metuatur oræ,
Quid Tiridatem terreat, unice
Securus,[1]

"I care not whom the northern clime reveres,
Or what's the king that Tyridates fears,"

dare hardly tell the vanity and weakness I find in myself. My foot is so unstable and unsteady, I find myself so apt to totter and reel, and my sight so disordered that, fasting, I am quite another man than when full; if health and a fair day smile upon me, I am a very affable, good-natured man; if a corn trouble my toe, I am sullen, out of humour, and not to be seen. The same pace of a horse seems to me one while hard, and another easy; and the same way one while shorter, and another longer; and the same form one while more, another less agreeable: I am one while for doing every thing, and another for doing nothing at all; and what pleases me now would be a trouble to me at another time. I have a thousand senseless and casual actions within myself; either I am possessed by melancholy or swayed by choler; now by its own private authority sadness predominates in me, and by and bye I am as merry as a cricket. When I take a book in hand I have then discovered admirable graces in such and such passages, and such as have struck my soul; let me light upon them at another time, I may turn and toss, tumble and rattle the leaves to no purpose; 'tis then to me an inform and undiscovered mass. Even in my own writings I do not always find the air of my first fancy: I know not what I would have said, and am often put to it to correct and pump for a new sense, because I have lost the first that was better. I do nothing but go and come: my judgment does not always advance—it floats and roams:

Velut minuta magno
Deprensa navis in mari vesaniente vento.[2]

"Like a small bark that's tost upon the main,
When winds tempestuous heave the liquid plain."

Very often, as I am apt to do, having for exercise taken to maintain an opinion contrary to my own, my mind, bending and applying itself that way, does so engage me that way that I no more discern the reason of my former belief, and forsake it. I am, as it were, misled by the side to which I incline, be it what it will, and carried away by my own weight. Every one almost would say the same of himself, if he considered himself as I do. Preachers very well know that the emotions which steal upon them in speaking animate them towards belief; and that in passion we are more warm in the defence of our proposition, take ourselves a deeper impression of it, and embrace it with greater vehemence and approbation than we do in our colder and more temperate state. You only give your counsel a simple brief of your cause: he returns you a dubious and uncertain answer, by which you find him indifferent which side he takes. Have you feed him well that he may relish it the better, does he begin to be really concerned, and do you find him interested and zealous in your quarrel? his reason and learning will by degrees grow hot in your cause; behold an apparent and undoubted truth presents itself to his understanding; he discovers a new light in your business, and does in good earnest believe and persuade himself that it is so. Nay, I do not know whether the ardour that springs from spite and obstinacy, against the power and violence of the magistrate and danger, or the interest of reputation, may not have made some men, even at the stake, maintain the opinion for which, at liberty, and amongst friends, they would not have burned a finger. The shocks and justles that the soul receives from the body's passions can do much in it, but its own can do a great deal more: to which it is so subjected that perhaps it may be made good that it has no other pace and motion but from the breath of those winds, without the agitation of which it would be becalmed and without action, like a ship in the middle of the sea, to which the winds have denied their assistance. And whoever should maintain this, siding with the Peripatetics, would do us no great wrong, seeing it is very well known that the greatest and most noble actions of the soul proceed from, and stand in need of, this impulse of the passions. Valour, they say, cannot be perfect without the assistance of anger: *Semper Ajax fortis, fortissimus tamen in furore*;[3] "Ajax was always brave, but most when in a fury:" neither do we encounter the wicked and the enemy vigorously enough if we be not angry; nay, the advocate, it is said, is to inspire the judges with indignation, to obtain justice.

Irregular passions animate and accompany the most shining virtues.

Irregular desires moved Themistocles, and Demosthenes, and have pushed on the philosophers to watching, fasting, and pilgrimages; and lead us to honour, learning, and health, which are all very useful ends. And this meanness of soul, in suffering anxiety and trouble, serves to breed remorse and repentance in the conscience, and to make us sensible of the scourge of God, and politic correction for the chastisement of our offences; compassion is a spur to clemency; and the prudence of preserving and governing ourselves is roused by our fear; and how many brave actions by ambition! How many by presumption! In short, there is no brave and spiritual virtue without some irregular agitation. May not this be one of the reasons that moved the Epicureans to discharge God from all care and solicitude of our affairs; because even the effects

[1] Horace, *Od.* i. 26. 3.
[2] Catul. *Epig.* xxv. 12.
[3] Cicero, *Tusc. Quæs.* iv. 23.

of his goodness could not be exercised in our behalf without disturbing its repose, by the means of passions which are so many spurs and instruments pricking on the soul to virtuous actions; or have they thought otherwise, and taken them for tempests, that shamefully hurry the soul from her tranquillity? *Ut maris tranquillitas intelligitur, nulla, ne minima quidem, aura fluctus commovente: Sic animi quietus et placatus status cernitur; quum perturbatio nulla est, qua moveri queat.*[1] "As it is understood to be a calm sea when there is not the least breath of air stirring: so the state of the soul is discerned to be quiet and appeased when there is no perturbation to move it."

What varieties of sense and reason, what contrariety of imaginations does the diversity of our passions inspire us with! What assurance then can we take of a thing so mobile and unstable, subject by its condition to the dominion of trouble, and never going other than a forced and borrowed pace? If our judgment be in the power even of sickness and perturbation; if it be from folly and rashness that it is to receive the impression of things; what security can we expect from it?

Is it not a great boldness in philosophy to believe that men perform the greatest actions, and nearest approaching the Divinity, when they are furious, mad, and beside themselves?[2] We better ourselves by the privation of our reason, and by drilling it. The two natural ways to enter into the cabinet of the gods, and there to foresee the course of destiny, are fury and sleep.[3] This is pleasant to consider; by the dislocation that passions cause in our reason, we become virtuous; by its extirpation, occasioned by madness or the image of death, we become diviners and prophets. I was never so willing to believe philosophy in any thing as this. 'Tis a pure enthusiasm wherewith sacred truth has inspired the spirit of philosophy, which makes it confess, contrary to its own proposition, that the most calm, composed, and healthful estate of the soul that philosophy can seat it in is not its best condition: our waking is more a sleep than sleep itself; our wisdom less wise than folly; our dreams are worth more than our meditation; and the worst place we can take is in ourselves. But does not philosophy think that we are wise enough to consider that the voice that the spirit utters, when dismissed from man, so clear-sighted, so great, and so perfect, and whilst it is in man so terrestrial, ignorant, and dark, is a voice proceeding from the spirit of dark, terrestrial, and ignorant man, and for this reason a voice not to be trusted and believed?

The natural ways of entrance into the cabinet of the gods.

I, being of a soft and heavy complexion, have no great experience of these vehement agitations, the most of which surprise the soul on a sudden, without giving it leisure to recollect itself. But the passion that is said to be produced by idleness in the hearts of young men, though it proceed leisurely, and with a measured progress, does evidently manifest, to those who have tried to oppose its power, the violence our judgment suffers in this alteration and conversion. I have formerly attempted to withstand and repel it; for I am so far from being one of those that invite vices, that I do not so much as follow them, if they do not haul me along: I perceived it to spring, grow, and increase, in spite of my resistance; and at last, living and seeing as I was, wholly to seize and possess me. So that, as if rousing from drunkenness, the images of things began to appear to me quite other than they used to be: I evidently saw the advantages of the object I desired, grow, and increase, and expand, by the influence of my imagination, and the difficulties of my attempt to grow more easy and smooth; and both my reason and conscience to be laid aside: but this fire being evaporated in an instant, as from a flash of lighting, I was aware that my soul resumed another kind of sight, another state, and another judgment; the difficulties of retreat appeared great and invincible, and the same things had quite another taste and aspect than the heat of desire had presented them to me; which of the two most truly? Pyrrho knows nothing about it. We are never without sickness. Agues have their hot and cold fits; from the effects of an ardent passion we fall again to shivering: as much as I had advanced, so much I retired:

What an ascendant the passion of love has over the human mind.

> Qualis ubi alterno procurrens gurgite pontus,
> Nunc ruit ad terras, scopulosque superjacit undam
> Spumeus, extremamque sinu perfundit arenam;
> Nunc rapidus retro, atque æstu revoluta resorbens
> Saxa, fugit, littusque vado labente reliquit.[4]
>
> "So swelling surges, with a thundering roar,
> Driv'n on each others' backs, insult the shore,
> Bound o'er the rocks, encroach upon the land,
> And far upon the beach heave up the sand;
> Then backward rapidly they take their way,
> Repulsed from upper ground, and seek the sea."

Now, from the knowledge of this volubility of mine, I have accidentally begot in myself a certain constancy of opinions, and have not much altered those that were first and natural in me: for what appearance soever there may be in novelty, I do not easily change, for fear of losing by the bargain; and, as I am not capable of choosing, I take other men's choice, and keep myself in the station wherein God has placed me: I could not otherwise keep myself from perpetual rolling. Thus have I, by the grace of God, preserved myself entire, without anxiety or trouble of conscience, in the ancient faith of our religion,

Why Montaigne did not easily embrace novel opinions.

[1] Cicero, *Tusc. Quæs* v. 6.
[2] Plato, *Phædrus*.
[3] Cicero. *de Divinat.* i. 57.
[4] *Æneid*, xi. 624.

amidst so many sects and divisions as our age has produced. The writings of the ancients, the best authors I mean, being full and solid, tempt and carry me which way almost they will: he that I am reading seems always to have the most force; and I find that every one in his turn is in the right, though they contradict one another. The facility that good wits have of rendering every thing likely they would recommend, and that nothing is so strange to which they do not undertake to give colour enough to deceive such simplicity as mine, this evidently shews the weakness of their testimony. The heaven and the stars have been three thousand years in motion; all the world were of that belief till Cleanthes the Samian,[1] or, according to Theophrastus, Nicetas[2] of Syracuse, took it into his head to maintain that it was the earth that moved, turning about its axis by the oblique circle of the zodiac. And Copernicus has in our times so grounded this doctrine that it very regularly serves to all astrological consequences: what use can we make of this, if not that we ought not much to care which is the true opinion? And who knows but that a third, a thousand years hence, may overthrow the two former.

> Sic volvenda ætas commutat tempora rerum:
> Quod fuit in pretio, fit nullo denique honore;
> Porro aliud succedit, et è contemptibus exit,
> Inque dies magis appetitur, floretque repertum
> Laudibus, et miro est mortales inter honore.[3]
>
> "Thus ev'ry thing is changed in course of time,
> What now is valued passes soon its prime;
> To which some other thing, despised before,
> Succeeds, and grows in vogue still more and more;
> And once received, too faint all praises seem,
> So highly it is rais'd in men's esteem."

Why new opinions are to be distrusted.

So that, when any new doctrine presents itself to us, we have great reason to mistrust, and to consider that, before that was set on foot, the contrary had been generally received; and that, as that has been overthrown by this, a third invention, in time to come, may start up which may damn the second. Before the principles that Aristotle introduced were in reputation, other principles contented human reason, as these satisfy us now. What patent have these people, what particular privilege, that the career of our invention must be stopped by them, and that the possession of our whole future belief should belong to them? They are no more exempt from being thrust out of doors than their predecessors were. When any one presses me with a new argument, I ought to believe that what I cannot answer another can; for to believe all likelihoods that a man cannot confute is great simplicity: it would by that means come to pass that all the vulgar (and we are all of the vulgar,) would have their belief as turnable as a weathercock: for their souls, being so easy to be imposed upon, and without any resistance, must of force incessantly receive other and other impressions, the last still effacing all footsteps of that which went before. He that finds himself weak ought to answer, according to practice, that he will speak with his counsel, or refer himself to the wiser, from whom he received his instruction. How long is it that physic has been practised in the world? 'Tis said that a new comer, called Paracelsus,[4] changes and overthrows the whole order of ancient rules, and maintains that, till now, it has been of no other use but to kill men. I believe he will easily make this good, but I do not think it were wisdom to venture my life in making trial of his own experience. We are not to believe every one, says the precept, because every one can say all things. A man of this profession of novelties and physical reformations not long since told me that all the ancients were notoriously mistaken in the nature and motions of the winds, which he would evidently demonstrate to me if I would give him the hearing. After I had with some patience heard his arguments, which were all full of likelihood of truth: "What, then," said I, "did those that sailed according to Theophrastus make way westward, when they had the prow towards the east? did they go sideward or backward?" "That's fortune," answered he, "but so it is that they were mistaken." I replied that I had rather follow effects than reason. Now these are things that often interfere with one another, and I have been told that in geometry (which pretends to have gained the highest point of certainty of all science,) there are inevitable demonstrations found which subvert the truth of all experience; as Jaques Pelletier told me, at my own house, that he had found out two lines stretching themselves one towards the other to meet, which nevertheless he affirmed, though extended to infinity, could never arrive to touch one another.[5] And the Pyrrhonians make no other use of their arguments and their reason

[1] Plutarch, in his Treatise *Of the Face that appears in the Moon's Orb*, where he says that Aristarchus was of opinion that the Grecians ought to have brought Cleanthes, of Samos, to justice, and to have condemned him for blasphemy against the gods, for giving out that the heavens remained immoveable, and that it was the earth which moved through the oblique circle of the zodiac turning round its own axis. But, as it appears elsewhere that Aristarchus of Samos believed the earth's motion, there must be some mistake in this place, as is the opinion of Menage, who, by a little variation only of Plutarch's text, makes him say, not that Aristarchus meant to accuse Cleanthes of impiety for having maintained the earth's motion; but that, on the contrary, Cleanthes would have imputed it to Aristarchus as a crime. —Menage, *Commentary upon Diogenes*, viii. 85.

[2] The best commentators on Cicero (*Acad.* ii. 39,) read *Hicetas*, instead of *Nicetas*.

[3] Luc. v. 1275.

[4] A noted alchemist, born in the canton of Schwitz in 1423. Being called to a chair in the University of Bâle, he began by publicly burning the works of Avicenna and Galen, saying that the points of his hose knew as much of physic as they. He was consulted by Erasmus, and despised by almost every body. He announced the discovery of the Philosopher's Stone, and died in the hospital at Saltzbourg, in 1541. The voluminous collection of his works is a mass of gibberish that people have long ceased to read.

[5] The hyperbole, and the right lines, which not being able to reach it, have been for that reason termed *asymptotes*.—See the Conic Sections of Apollonius, book ii. prob. 1 and 14.

than to ruin the appearance of experience; and 'tis a wonder how far the suppleness of our reason has followed them in this design of controverting the evidence of effects; for they affirm that we do not move, that we do not speak, and that there is neither weight nor heat, with the same force of argument that we affirm the most likely things. Ptolemy, who was a great man, had established the bounds of this world of ours; all the ancient philosophers thought they had the measure of it, excepting some remote isles that might escape their knowledge; it had been Pyrrhonism, a thousand years ago, to doubt the science of cosmography, and the opinions that every one had received from it; it was heresy to admit the antipodes; and behold, in this age of ours, there is an infinite extent of terra firma discovered, not an island or single country, but a division of the world, nearly equal in greatness to that we knew before. The geographers of our time stick not to assure us that now all is found; all is seen:

> Nam quod adest præsto, placet, et pollere videtur;[1]
>
> "What's present pleases, and appears the best;"

but it remains to be seen whether, as Ptolemy was therein formerly deceived upon the foundation of his reason, it were not very foolish to trust now in what these people say? And whether it is not more likely that this great body, which we call the world, is not quite another thing than what we imagine.

Plato says[2] that it changes countenance in all respects: that the heavens, the stars, and the sun, have all of them sometimes motions retrograde to what we see, changing east into west. The Egyptian priests told Herodotus[3] that from the time of their first king, which was eleven thousand and odd years since (and they shewed him the effigies of all their kings in statues taken from the life), the sun had four times altered his course; that the sea and the earth did alternately change into one another; that the beginning of the world is undetermined; Aristotle and Cicero both say the same; and some amongst us are of opinion that it has been from all eternity, is mortal, and renewed again by several vicissitudes; calling Solomon and Isaiah to witness; to evade those oppositions, that God has once been a creator without a creature; that he has had nothing to do, that he got rid of that idleness by putting his hand to this work; and that consequently he is subject to change. In the most famous of the Greek schools[4] the world is taken for a god, made by another god greater than he, and composed of a body, and a soul fixed in his centre, and dilating himself by musical numbers to his circumference; divine, infinitely happy, and infinitely great, infinitely wise and eternal; in him are other gods, the sea, the earth, the stars, who entertain one another with an harmonious and perpetual agitation and divine dance, sometimes meeting, sometimes retiring from one another; concealing and discovering themselves; changing their order, one while before, and another behind. Heraclitus[5] was positive that the world was composed of fire; and, by the order of destiny, was one day to be enflamed and consumed in fire, and then to be again renewed. And Apuleius[6] says of men: *Sigillatim mortales, cunctim perpetui.* "That they are mortal in particular, and immortal in general." Alexander[7] writ to his mother the narration of an Egyptian priest, drawn from their monuments, testifying the antiquity of that nation to be infinite, and comprising the birth and progress of other countries. Cicero and Diodorus[8] say that in their time the Chaldees kept a register of four hundred thousand and odd years. Aristotle, Pliny,[9] and others, that Zoroaster flourished six thousand years before Plato's time. Plato says[10] that they of the city of Sais have records in writing of eight thousand years; and that the city of Athens was built a thousand years before the said city of Sais; Epicurus, that at the same time things are here in the posture we see, they are alike and in the same manner in several other worlds; which he would have delivered with greater assurance, had he seen the similitude and concordance of the new discovered world of the West Indies with ours, present and past, in so many strange examples.

Several opinions concerning the world.

In earnest, considering what is come to our knowledge from the course of this terrestrial polity, I have often wondered to see in so vast a distance of places and times such a concurrence of so great a number of popular and wild opinions, and of savage manners and beliefs, which by no means seem to proceed from our natural meditation. The human mind is a great worker of miracles! But this relation has, moreover, I know not what of extraordinary in it: 'tis found to be in names, also, and a thousand other things: for they found nations there (that, for aught we know, never heard of us) where circumcision was in use;[11] where there were states and great civil governments maintained by women only, without men; where our fasts and Lent were represented, to which

[1] Lucret. v. 1411.
[2] In *the Politician.*
[3] Herod. ii. 142.
[4] That of Plato.
[5] Laertius, *in vitâ.*
[6] *De Deo Socratis.*
[7] As to this letter, which is now lost, the reader may consult St. Augustin, *de Civit. Dei*, viii. 5, xii. 10; St. Cyprian, *de Vanit. Idol.* c. 21.; Fabricius, *Bibl. Græca*, ii. 10, 17.—The name of the Egyptian priest mentioned in the letter was Leo. The learned Jablonsky, *Prolegom. ad Panth. Ægypt.*, 15, 16, considers the letter to be a forgery by one of the early Christian writers.
[8] Cicero, *de Divinat.* i. 19. Diod. ii. 31.
[9] *Nat. Hist.* xxx. 1.
[10] In the *Timæus*
[11] The various stories which follow may be found in much the same terms in De Solis, *History of the Conquest of Mexico.*

was added abstinence from women; where our crosses were several ways in repute; here they were made use of to honour and adorn their sepultures, there they were erected, and particularly that of St. Andrew, to protect themselves *from* nocturnal visions, and to lay upon the cradles of infants against enchantments; elsewhere there was found one of wood, of very great height, which was adored for the god of rain, and this a great way in the interior: there was seen an express image of our penance priests, the use of mitres, the celibacy of priests, the art of divination by the entrails of sacrificed beasts, abstinence from all sorts of flesh and fish in their diet, the manner of priests officiating in a particular and not a vulgar language; and this fancy, that the first god was driven away by a second, his younger brother; that they were created with all sorts of necessaries and conveniences, which have since been in a degree taken from them for their sins, their territory changed, and their natural condition made worse; that they were of old overwhelmed by the inundation of water from heaven; that but few families escaped, who retired into caves on high mountains, the mouths of which they stopped so that the waters could not get in, having shut up, together with themselves, several sorts of animals; that when they perceived the rain to cease they sent out dogs, which returning clean and wet, they judged that the water was not much abated; afterwards sending out others, and seeing them return dirty, they issued out to re-people the world, which they found only full of serpents. In one place we met with the belief of a day of judgment; insomuch that they were marvellously displeased at the Spaniards for discomposing the bones of the dead, in rifling the sepultures for riches, saying that those bones so disordered could not easily rejoin; the traffic by exchange, and no other way; fairs and markets for that end; dwarfs and deformed people for the ornament of the tables of princes; the use of falconry, according to the nature of their hawks; tyrannical subsidies; nicety in gardens; dancing, tumbling tricks, music of instruments, coats of arms, tennis-courts, dice and lotteries, wherein they are sometimes so eager and hot as to stake themselves and their liberty; physic, no otherwise than by charms; the way of writing in cypher; the belief of only one first man, the father of all nations; the adoration of one God, who formerly lived a man in perfect virginity, fasting, and penitence, preaching the laws of nature, and the ceremonies of religion, and that vanished from the world without a natural death; the theory of giants; the custom of making themselves drunk with their beverages, and drinking to the utmost; religious ornaments painted with bones and dead men's skulls; surplices, holy water sprinkled; wives and servants, who present themselves with *emulation, burnt and interred* with the dead husband *or master*; a law by which the eldest succeeds to all *the estate*, no part being left for the younger but obedience; the custom that, upon promotion to a certain office of great authority, the promoted *is to* take upon him a new name, and to leave that which he had before; another to strew lime upon the knee of the new-born child, with these words: "From dust thou camest, and to dust thou must return;" as also the art of augury. The vain shadows of our religion, which are observable in some of these examples, are testimonies of its dignity and divinity. It is not only in some sort insinuated into all the infidel nations on this side of the world, by a *certain* imitation, but in these barbarians also, as by a common and supernatural inspiration; for we find there the belief of purgatory, but of a new form; that which we give to the fire they give to the cold, and imagine that souls are purged and punished by the rigour of an excessive coldness. And this example puts me in mind of another pleasant diversity; for as there were there some people who delighted to unmuffle the ends of their instruments, and clipped off the prepuce after the Mahometan and Jewish manner; there were others who made so great conscience of laying it bare, that they carefully pursed it up with little strings to keep that end from peeping into the air; and of this other diversity, that whereas we, to honour kings and festivals, put on the best clothes we have; in some regions, to express their disparity and submission to their king, his subjects present themselves before him in their vilest habits, and entering his palace, throw some old tattered garment over their better apparel, to the end that all the lustre and ornament may solely be in him. But to proceed,

A new sort of purgatory.

If nature enclose within the bounds of her ordinary progress the beliefs, judgments, and opinions of men, as well as all other things; if they have their revolution, their season, their birth and death, like cabbage plants; if the heavens agitate and rule them at their pleasure, what magisterial and permanent authority do we attribute to them? If we experimentally see that the form of our beings depends upon the air, upon the climate, and upon the soil where we are born, and not only the colour, the stature, the complexion, and the countenances, but moreover the very faculties of the soul itself: *Et plaga cœli non solum ad robur corporum, sed etiam animorum facit:*[1] "The climate is of great efficacy, not only to the strength of bodies, but to that of souls also," says Vegetius; and that the goddess who founded the city of Athens chose to situate it in a temperature of air fit to make men prudent, as the Egyptian priests told Solon:[2] *Athenis tenue cœlum; ex quo etiam acutiores putantur*

[1] Veget. i. 2.

[2] Plato, *Timæus*.

Attici; Crassum Thebis; itaque pingues Thebani, et valentes:[1] "The air of Athens is subtle and thin; whence also the Athenians are reputed to be more acute; and at Thebes more gross and thick; wherefore the Thebans are looked upon as more heavy-witted and more strong." In such sort that, as fruits and animals grow different, men are also more or less warlike, just, temperate, and docile; here given to wine, elsewhere to theft or uncleanness; here inclined to superstition, elsewhere to unbelief; in one place to liberty, in another to servitude; capable of one science or of one art, dull or ingenious, obedient or mutinous, good or bad, according as the place where they are seated inclines them; and assume a new complexion, if removed, like trees, which was the reason why Cyrus would not grant the Persians leave to quit their rough and craggy country to remove to another more pleasant and even, saying, that fertile and tender soils made men effeminate and soft.[2] If we see one while one art and one belief flourish, and another while another, through some celestial influence; such an age to produce such natures, and to incline mankind to such and such a propension, the spirits of men one while gay and another grum, like our fields, what becomes of all those fine prerogatives we so sooth ourselves withal? Seeing that a wise man may be mistaken, and a hundred men and a hundred nations, nay, that even human nature itself, as we believe, is many ages wide in one thing or another, what assurances have we that she should cease to be mistaken, or that in this very age of ours she is not so?

The inconstancy of man's desires a good proof of his weakness.

Methinks that amongst other testimonies of our imbecility, this ought not to be forgotten, that man cannot, by his own wish and desire, find out what he wants; that not in fruition only, but in imagination and wish, we cannot agree about what we would have to satisfy and content us. Let us leave it to our own thought to cut out and make up at pleasure: it cannot so much as covet what is proper for it, and satisfy itself:

> Quid enim ratione timemus,
> Aut cupimus? Quid tam dextro pede concipis, ut te,
> Conatus non pœniteat, votique peracti?[3]
>
> "For what, with reason, do we speak or shun,
> What plan, how happily soe'er begun,
> That, when achieved, we do not wish undone?"

Socrates' prayer.

And therefore it was that Socrates only begged of the gods that they would give him what they knew to be best for him; and the private and public prayer of the Lacedæmonians[4] was simply for good and useful things, referring the choice and election of them to the discretion of the Supreme Power:

> Conjugium petimus, partumque uxoris; at illis
> Notum, qui pueri, qualisque futura sit uxor:[5]
>
> "We ask for wives and children; they above
> Know only, when we have them, what they'll prove:"

and Christians pray to God, "Thy will be done," that they may not fall into the inconvenience the poet feigns of King Midas. He prayed to the gods that all he touched might be turned into gold: his prayer was heard; his wine was gold, his bread was gold, the feathers of his bed, his shirt, his clothes, were all gold; so that he found himself overwhelmed with the fruition of his desire, and endowed with an intolerable benefit, and was fain to unpray his prayers.

> Attonitus novitate mali, divesque, miserque,
> Effugere optat opes, et, quæ modo voverat, odit.[6]
>
> "Astonished at the strangeness of the ill,
> To be so rich, yet miserable still;
> He wishes now he could his wealth evade,
> And hates the thing for which before he prayed."

To instance in myself: being young, I desired of fortune, above all things, the order of St. Michael, which was then the utmost distinction of honour amongst the French nobles, and very rare. She pleasantly gratified my longing: instead of raising me, and lifting me up from my own place to attain to it, she was much kinder to me; for she brought it so low, and made it so cheap, that it stooped down to my shoulders, and lower. Cleobis and Bito,[7] Trophonius and Agamedes,[8] having requested, the first of their goddess, the last of their god, a recompense worthy of their piety, had death for a reward; so differing from ours are heavenly opinions concerning what is fit for us. God might grant us riches, honours, life, and even health, to our own hurt; for every thing that is pleasing to us is not always good for us. If he sends us death, or an increase of sickness, instead of a cure, *Virga tua, et baculus tuus ipsa me consolata sunt*,[9] "Thy rod and thy staff have comforted me," he does it by the rule of his providence, which better and more certainly discerns what is proper for us than we can do; and we ought to take it in good part, as coming from a wise and most friendly hand;

> Si consilium vis:
> Permittes ipsis expendere numinibus, quid
> Conveniat nobis, rebusque sit utile nostris - - -
> Carior est illis homo quam sibi;[10]
>
> "If thou'lt be rul'd, to th' gods thy fortunes trust,
> Their thoughts are wise, their dispensations just.
> What best may profit or delight they know,
> And real good, for fancied bliss, bestow;
> With eyes of pity, they our frailties scan,
> More dear to them, than to himself, is man;"

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1 Cicero, *de Fato*, c. 4.
2 Herod. ix. 121.
3 Juvenal, x. 4.
4 Plato, *Second Alcibiades*.
5 Juvenal, x. 352.
6 Ovid, *Metam.* xi. 128.
7 Herod. i. 31.
8 Plutarch, *Consol. to Apollonius*.
9 Psalm xxii. 4.
10 Juvenal, x. 346.

for to require of him honours and commands, is to require that he may throw you into a battle, set you upon a cast at dice, or something of the like nature, whereof the issue is to you unknown, and the fruit doubtful.

There is no dispute so sharp and violent amongst the philosophers, as about the question of the sovereign good of man; whence, by the calculation of Varro,[1] rose two hundred and eighty-eight sects. *Qui autem de summo bono dissentit, de tota philosophiæ ratione disputat.* "For whoever enters into controversy concerning the supreme good, disputes upon the whole matter of philosophy."[2]

> Tres mihi convivæ prope dissentire videntur,
> Poscentes vario multum diversa palato:
> Quid dem? Quid non dem? Renuis tu quod jubet alter;
> Quod petis, id sane est invisum acidumque duobus:[3]
>
> "I have three guests invited to a feast,
> And all appear to have a different taste;
> What shall I give them? What shall I refuse?
> What one dislikes the other two shall choose;
> And e'en the very dish you like the best
> Is acid or insipid to the rest:"

nature should say the same to their contests and debates. Some say that our well-being lies in virtue, others in pleasure, others in submitting to nature; one in knowledge, another in being exempt from pain, another in not suffering ourselves to be carried away by appearances; and this fancy seems to have some relation to that of the ancient Pythagoras,

> Nil admirari, prope res est una, Numici,
> Solaque, quæ possit facere et servare beatum;[4]
>
> "Not to admire's the only art I know
> Can make us happy, and can keep us so;"

which is the drift of the Pyrrhonian sect: Aristotle[5] attributes the admiring nothing to magnanimity: and Arcesilaus said,[6] that constancy and a right inflexible state of judgment were the true good, and consent and application the sin and evil; and there, it is true, in being thus positive, and establishing a certain axiom, he quitted Pyrrhonism: for the Pyrrhonians, when they say that ataraxy,[7] which is the immobility of judgment, is the sovereign good, do not design to speak it affirmatively; but that the same motion of soul which makes them avoid precipices, and take shelter from the cold, presents them such a fancy, and makes them refuse another.

How much do I wish that, whilst I live, either some other or Justus Lipsius, the most learned man now living, of a most polite and judicious understanding, truly resembling my Turnebus, had both the will and health, and leisure sufficient, carefully and conscientiously to collect into a register, according to their divisions and classes, as many as are to be found, of the opinions of the ancient philosophers, about the subject of our being and manners, their controversies, the succession and reputation of sects; with the application of the lives of the authors and their disciples to their own precepts, in memorable accidents, and upon exemplary occasions. What a beautiful and useful work that would be![8]

Plan of a treatise of the different sects of philosophers.

As to what remains, if it be from ourselves that we are to extract the rules of our manners, upon what a confusion do we throw ourselves? For that which our reason advises us to, as the most likely, is generally for every one to obey the laws of his country, as was the advice of Socrates, inspired, as he says, by a divine counsel; and by that, what would it say, but that our duty has no other rule but what is accidental? Truth ought to have a like and universal visage: if man could know equity and justice that had a body and a true being, he would not fetter it to the conditions of this country or that; it would not be from the whimsies of the Persians or Indians that virtue would receive its form. There is nothing more subject to perpetual agitation than the laws: since I was born, I have known those of the English, our neighbours, three or four times changed, not only in matters of civil regimen, which is the only thing wherein constancy may be dispensed with, but in the most important subject that can be, namely, religion, at which I am the more troubled and ashamed, because it is a nation with whom those of my province have formerly had so great familiarity and acquaintance, that there yet remains in my house some footsteps of our ancient kindred; and here with us, at home, I have known a thing that was capital to become lawful; and we that hold of others are likewise, according to the chance of war, in a possibility of being one day found guilty of high-treason, both divine and human, should the justice of our arms fall into the power of injustice, and, after a few years' possession, take a quite contrary being. How could that ancient god[9] more clearly accuse the ignorance of human knowledge concerning the divine Being, and give men to understand that their religion was but a thing of their own contrivance, useful as a bond to their society, than declaring as he did to those who came to his tripod for instruction, that every one's true worship was that which he found in use in the place where he chanced to be? O God, what infinite obligation have we to the bounty of our

Laws subject to continual changes.

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1 St. Augustin, *de Civit. Dei*, xix. 2.
2 Cicero, *de Finib.* v. 5.
3 Horace, *Epist.* ii. 3. 61.
4 Id. *ib.* i. 6. 1.
5 *Ethics*, iv. 3.
6 Sextus Empiricus, *Pyrrh. Hypotyp.* i. 33.
7 *Perfect repose.*

8 Justus Lipsius, a learned Belgian, who corresponded with Montaigne, executed a part of this design in his large work on Stoicism, *Manuductio ad Stoicam Philosophiam*, published 1604, twelve years after Montaigne's death; who, however, in all probability, would not have been altogether satisfied with the work.
9 *Apollo.* See Xenophon, *Mem. on Socrates*, i. 3. 1.

sovereign Creator, for having disabused our belief from these wandering and arbitrary devotions, and for having seated it upon the eternal foundation of his holy word? But what then will philosophers say to us in this necessity? "That we follow the laws of our country:" that is to say, this floating sea of the opinions of a republic, or a prince, that will paint out justice for me in as many colours, and form it as many ways as there are changes of passions in themselves: I cannot suffer my judgment to be so flexible. What kind of virtue is that which I see one day in repute, and that to-morrow shall be in none, and which the crossing of a river makes a crime? What sort of truth can that be, which these mountains[1] limit to us, and make a lie to all the world beyond them?

Natural laws; whether unchangeable.

But they are pleasant, when, to give some certainty to the laws, they say that there are some firm, perpetual, and immovable, which they call natural, that are imprinted in human kind by the condition of their own proper being; and of these some reckon three, some four, some more, some less: a sign that it is a mark as doubtful as the rest. Now they are so unfortunate (for what can I call it else but misfortune that, of so infinite a number of laws, there should not be found one at least that fortune and the temerity of chance has suffered to be universally received by the consent of all nations?), they are, I say, so miserable, that of these three or four select laws, there is not so much as one that is not contradicted and disowned, not only by one nation, but by many. Now, the only likely sign, by which they can argue or infer some natural laws, is the universality of approbation; for we should, without doubt, follow with a common consent that which nature had truly ordained us; and not only every nation, but every private man, would resent the force and violence that any one should do him who would tempt him to any thing contrary to this law. But let them produce me one of this condition. Protagoras and Aristo gave no other essence to the justice of laws than the authority and opinion of the legislator; and that, these laid aside, the honest and the good lost their qualities, and remained empty names of indifferent things: Thrasymachus, in Plato,[2] is of opinion that there is no other right but the convenience of the superior. There is not any thing wherein the world is so various as in laws and customs; such a thing is abominable here which is elsewhere in esteem, as in Lacedæmon dexterity in stealing; marriages between near relations are capitally interdicted amongst us; they are elsewhere in honour:

The foundation of the justice of laws.

> Gentes esse feruntur,
> In quibus et nato genitrix, et nata parenti
> Jungitur, et pietas geminato crescit amore;[3]
>
> "There are some nations in the world, 'tis said,
> Where fathers daughters, sons their mothers wed;
> And their affections thereby higher rise,
> More firm and constant by these double ties;"

the murder of infants, the murder of fathers, the community of wives, traffic of robberies, license in all sorts of voluptuousness; in short, there is nothing so extreme that is not allowed by the custom of some nation or other.

It is credible that there are natural laws for us, as we see them in other creatures; but they are lost in us, this fine human reason every where so insinuating itself to govern and command, as to shuffle and confound the face of things, according to its own vanity and inconstancy: *Nihil itaque amplius nostrum est; quod nostrum dico, artis est:* "Therefore nothing is any more truly ours: what we call ours belongs to art." Subjects have divers lustres and divers considerations, and thence the diversity of opinions principally proceeds: one nation considers a subject in one aspect, and stops there; another takes it in a different point of view.

The bodies of their deceased fathers eaten by some people, and why.

There is nothing of greater horror to be imagined than for a man to eat his father; and yet the people, whose ancient custom it was so to do, looked upon it as a testimony of piety and affection, seeking thereby to give their progenitors the most worthy and honourable sepulture; storing up in themselves, and as it were in their own marrow, the bodies and relics of their fathers; and in some sort regenerating them by transmutation into their living flesh, by means of nourishment and digestion.[4] It is easy to consider what a cruelty and abomination it must have appeared to men possessed and imbued with this superstition to throw their fathers' remains to the corruption of the earth, and the nourishment of beasts and worms.

Theft allowed by Lycurgus, and why.

Lycurgus considered in theft the vivacity, diligence, boldness, and dexterity of purloining anything from our neighbours, and the benefit that redounded to the public that every one should look more narrowly to the conservation of what was his own; and believed that, from this double institution of assaulting and defending, advantage was to be made for military discipline (which was the principal science and virtue to which he would inure that nation), of greater consideration than the disorder and injustice of taking another man's goods.

Dionysius, the tyrant, offered Plato a robe of the Persian fashion, long, damasked, and perfumed; Plato refused it, saying, "That

[1] "Plaisante justice qu'une riviére on une montaigne borne! Verité au decà des Pyrenees, erreur au delà."—*Pensées de Pascal.*

[2] *Republic*, i.

[3] Ovid, *Metam.* x. 331.

[4] Sextus Empiric. *Pyrrh. Hypotyp.* iii. 14.

being born a man, he would not willingly dress himself in women's clothes; but Aristippus accepted it with this answer, "That no accoutrement could corrupt a chaste courage."[1] His friends reproaching him with meanness of spirit, for laying it no more to heart that Dionysius had spit in his face, "Fishermen," said he, "suffer themselves to be drenched with the waves of the sea from head to foot to catch a gudgeon."[2] Diogenes was washing cabbages, and seeing him pass by, "If thou couldst live on cabbage," said he, "thou wouldst not fawn upon a tyrant;" to whom Aristippus replied, "And if thou knewest how to live amongst men, thou wouldst not be washing cabbages."[3] Thus reason finds appearances for divers effects: 'tis a pot with two ears that a man may take by the right or left:

> Bellum, o terra hospita, portas:
> Bello armantur equi; bellum hæc armenta minantur.
> Sed tamen idem olim curru succedere sueti
> Quadrupedes, et frena juga concordia ferre.
> Spes est pacis.
>
> "War, war is threatened from this foreign ground
> (My father cried), where warlike steeds are found.
> Yet, since reclaimed, to chariots they submit,
> And bend to stubborn yokes, and champ the bit,
> Peace may succeed to war."

Solon, being lectured by his friends not to shed powerless and unprofitable tears for the death of his son, "It is for that reason that I the more justly shed them," said he, "because they are powerless and unprofitable."[4] Socrates's wife exasperated her grief by this circumstance: "Oh, how unjustly do these wicked judges put him to death!" "Why," replied he, "hadst thou rather they should execute me justly?"[5] We have our ears bored: the Greeks looked upon that as a mark of slavery.[6] We retire in private to enjoy our wives: the Indians do it in public.[7] The Scythians immolated strangers in their temples; elsewhere temples were a refuge:[8]

> Inde furor vulgi, quod numina vicinorum
> Odit quisque locus, cum solos credat habendos
> Esse deos, quos ipse colit.[9]
>
> "Thus 'tis the popular fury that creates
> That all their neighbours' gods each nation hates;
> Each thinks its own the genuine; in a word,
> The only deities to be adored."

I have heard of a judge who, coming upon a sharp conflict betwixt Bartolus and Baldus,[10] and some point controverted with many contrarieties, writ in the margin of his book, "a question for a friend;" that is to say, that truth was there so controverted and disputed that in a like cause he might favour which of the parties he thought fit. 'Twas only for want of wit that he did not write "a question for a friend" throughout. The advocates and judges of our times find bias enough in all causes to accommodate them to what they themselves think fit. In so infinite a science, depending upon the authority of so many opinions, and so arbitrary a subject, it cannot be but that of necessity an extreme confusion of judgments must arise: there is hardly any suit so clear wherein opinions do not very much differ; what one court has determined one way another determines quite contrary, and itself contrary to that at another time. Of which we see very frequent examples, owing to that practice admitted among us, and which is a marvellous blemish to the ceremonious authority and lustre of our justice, of not abiding by one sentence, but running from judge to judge, and court to court, to decide one and the same cause.

As to the liberty of philosophical opinions concerning vice and virtue, 'tis not necessary to be insisted upon; therein are found many opinions that are better concealed than published to weak minds. Arcesilaus said,[11] "That in venery it was no matter where, or with whom, it was committed:" *Et obscœnas voluptates, si natura requirit, non genere, aut loco, aut ordine, sed forma, ætate, figura, metiendas Epicurus putat*[12] . . . . . *ne amores quidem sanctos à sapiente alienos esse arbitrantur.*[13] . . . . . *Quæramus, ad quam usque ætatem juvenes amandi sint.*[14] "And obscene pleasures, if nature requires them," Epicurus thinks, "are not to be measured either by race, kind, place, or rank, but by age, shape, and beauty. . . . . Neither are sacred loves thought to be foreign to wise men; . . . we are to enquire till what age young men are to be loved." These two last stoical quotations, and the reproach that Dicæarchus threw into the teeth of Plato himself,[15] upon this account shew how much the soundest philosophy indulges licenses and excesses very remote from common custom.

Laws derive their authority from possession and custom. 'Tis dangerous to trace them back to their beginning; they grow great, and ennoble themselves, like our rivers, by running on: but follow them upward to their source, 'tis but a little spring, scarce discernible, that swells thus, and thus fortifies

Laws authorised by customs.

1 Martius, *in vitâ*.
2 Id. *ib.*
3 Id. *ib.*
4 Id. *ib.*
5 Id. *ib.*
6 Sextus Empiric. *Pyrrh. Hypotyp.* iii. 24. Plutarch, *Life of Cicero*. c. 26.
7 Sext. Empiric. *ib.* i. 11, iii. 24.
8 Id. *ib.*
9 Juv. xv. 37.

10 Two celebrated jurisconsults of the fourteenth century, who, as Pasquier expresses it, "se deborderent en torrent, en l'explication du droit." Bartolus was born at Sasso-Ferrato, in Umbria; his disciple Aldus at Perusia.
11 Plutarch, *Rules and Precepts of Health*. But Arcesilaus said this in reprobation of all debauchery whatsoever. He lays it down that, no matter where vice is committed, 'tis equally to be condemned.
12 Cicero, *Tusc. Quæs.* v. 33.
13 Id. *de Finib.* iii. 20.
14 Seneca, *Epist.* 123.
15 Cicero, *Tusc. Quæs.* iv. 34.

itself, by growing old. Do but consult the ancient considerations that gave the first motion to this famous torrent, so full of dignity, awe, and reverence, you will find them so light and weak that it is no wonder if these people, who weigh and reduce every thing to reason, and who admit nothing by authority, or upon trust, have their judgments often very remote, and differing from those of the public. It is no wonder if people who take their pattern from the first image of nature should in most of their opinions swerve from the common path: as, for example, few amongst them would have approved of the strict conditions of our marriages, and most of them have been for having wives in common, and without obligation: they would refuse our ceremonies. Chrysippus said,[1] "That a philosopher would make a dozen somersaults, aye, and without his breeches, for a dozen of olives." That philosopher would hardly have advised Clisthenes to have refused Hippoclides[2] the fair Agarista his daughter, for having seen him stand on his head upon a table. Metrocles somewhat indiscreetly broke wind backwards while in disputation, in the presence of a great auditory in his school, and kept himself hid in his own house for shame, till Crates coming to visit him, and adding to his consolations and reasons the example of his own liberty, by falling to try with him who should sound most, cured him of that scruple, and withal drew him to his own stoical sect, more free than that more reserved one of the Peripatetics, of which he had been till then.[3] That which we call decency, not to dare to do that in public which is decent enough to do in private, the Stoics call foppery; and to mince it, and to be so modest as to conceal and disown what nature, custom, and our desires publish and proclaim of our actions, they reputed a vice.[4] The other thought it was to undervalue the mysteries of Venus to draw them out of the private oratory, to expose them to the view of the people: and that to bring them out from behind the curtain was to debase them. Modesty is a thing of weight; secresy, reservation, and circumspection, are parts of esteem. Pleasure did very ingeniously when, under the mask of virtue, she sued not to be prostituted in the open streets, trodden under foot, and exposed to the public view, wanting the dignity and convenience of her private cabinets. Hence some say that to put down public stews is not only to disperse fornication into all places, that was confined to one, but moreover, by the difficulty, to incite wild and idle people to this vice:

> Mœchus es Aufidiæ, qui vir, Scævine, fuisti:
> Rivalis fuerat qui tuus, ille vir est.
> Cur aliena placet tibi, quæ tua non placet uxor?
> Numquid securus *non* potes arrigere?[4]

This experience diversifies itself in a thousand examples:

> Nullus in urbe fuit tota, qui tangere vellet
> Uxorem gratis, Cæciliane, tuam,
> Dura licuit: sed nunc, positis custodibus, ingens
> Turba fututorum est. Ingeniosus homo es.[5]

A philosopher being taken in the very act, and asked what he was doing, coldly replied, "I am planting man;"[6] no more blushing to be so caught than if they had found him planting garlic.

It is, I suppose, out of tenderness and respect to the natural modesty of mankind that a great and religious author[7] is of opinion that this act is so necessarily obliged to privacy and shame that he cannot persuade himself there could be any absolute performance in those impudent embraces of the Cynics, but that they contented themselves to represent lascivious gestures only, to maintain the impudence of their school's profession; and that, to eject what shame had withheld and restrained, it was afterward necessary for them to withdraw into the shade. But he had not thoroughly examined their debauches; for Diogenes, playing the beast with himself in public, wished, in the presence of all that saw him, that he could fill his belly by that exercise.[8] To those who asked him why he did not find out a more commodious place to eat in than in the open street, he made answer, "Because I am hungry in the open street." The women philosophers who mixed with their sect, mixed also with their persons, in all places, without reservation; and Hipparchia was not received into Crates's society but upon condition that she should, in all things, follow the practice and customs of his rule.[9] These philosophers set a great price upon virtue, and renounce all other discipline but the moral; and yet, in all their actions, they attributed the sovereign authority to the election of their sage, and above the laws; and gave no other curb to voluptuousness but moderation only, and the conservation of the liberty of others.

The impudence of the Cynics.

Heraclitus and Protagoras,[10] forasmuch as wine seemed bitter to the sick, and pleasant to the sound, the rudder crooked in the water, and straight when out, and such like contrary appearances as are found in subjects, argued thence that all subjects had, in themselves, the causes of these appearances; and there was some bitterness in the wine which had some sympathy with the sick man's taste, and the rudder some bending quality sympathising with him that looks upon it in the water; and so of all the rest; which is to say, that all is in all things, and, consequently, nothing in any one: for, where all is, there is nothing.

This opinion put me in mind of the experi-

[1] Plutarch, *on the Contradictions of the Stoic Philosophers.*
[2] Herod. *vi.* 129.
[3] Laertius, *in vitâ.*
[4] Martial, iii. 70.
[5] Martial, i. 74.
[6] This anecdote has been generally told of Diogenes the Cynic; but Bayle, in his Dictionary, article *Hipparchia*, says there is no ground for charging him with it
[7] St. August. *de Civit. Dei*, xiv. 20.
[8] Laertius, *in vitâ.*
[9] Id. *ibid.*
[10] Sextus Empiric. *Pyrrh. Hypot.* i. 29.

ence we have that there is no sense or aspect of any thing, whether bitter or sweet, straight or crooked, that the human mind does not find out in the writings it undertakes to tumble over. Into the cleanest, purest, and most perfect words that can possibly be, how many lies and falsities have we suggested! What heresy has not there found ground and testimony sufficient to make itself embraced and defended! 'Tis for this that the authors of such errors will never depart from proof of the testimony of the interpretation of words. A person of dignity, who would approve to me, by authority, the search of the philosopher's stone, wherein he was head over ears engaged, lately alleged to me at least five or six passages of the Bible upon which, he said, he first founded his attempt, for the discharge of his conscience (for he is a divine); and, in truth, the idea was not only pleasant, but, moreover, very well accommonated to the defence of this fine science.

By this way the reputation of divining fables is acquired. There is no fortune-teller, if we have this authority, but, if a man will take the pains to tumble and toss, and narrowly to peep into all the folds and glosses of his words, he may make him, like the Sibyls, say what he will. There are so many ways of interpretation that it will be hard but that, either obliquely or in a direct line, an ingenious wit will find out, in every subject, some air that will serve for his purpose: therefore we find a cloudy and ambiguous style in so frequent and ancient use. Let the author but make himself master of that, to busy posterity about his predictions, which not only his own parts, but the accidental favour of the matter itself, may do for him; and, as to the rest, express himself, whether after a foolish or a subtle manner, somewhat obscurely or contradictorily, 'tis no matter;—a number of wits, shaking and sifting him, will bring out a great many several forms, either according to his meaning, or collateral, or contrary, to it, which will all redound to his honour; he will see himself enriched by the means of his disciples, like the regents of colleges by their pupils' yearly presents. This it is which has given reputation to many things of no worth at all; that has brought several writings in vogue, and given them the fame of containing all sorts of matter can be desired; one and the same thing receiving a thousand and a thousand images and various considerations; nay, as many as we please.

Homer the general leader of all sorts of people.

Is it possible that Homer could design to say all that we make him say, and that he designed so many and so various figures, as that the divines, lawgivers, captains, philosophers, and all sorts of men who treat of sciences, how variously and opposite soever, should indifferently quote him, and support their arguments by his authority, as the sovereign lord and master of all offices, works, and artizans, and counsellor-general of all enterprizes? Whoever has had occasion for oracles and predictions has there found sufficient to serve his turn. 'Tis a wonder how many and how admirable concurrences an intelligent person, and a particular friend of mine, has there found out in favour of our religion; and cannot easily be put out of the conceit that it was Homer's design; and yet he is as well acquainted with this author as any man whatever of his time. And what he has found in favour of our religion there, very many anciently have found in favour of theirs. Do but observe how Plato is tumbled and tossed about; every one ennobling his own opinions by applying him to himself, and making him take what side they please. They draw him in, and engage him in all the new opinions the world receives; and make him, according to the different course of things, differ from himself: every one makes him disavow, according to his own sense, the manners and customs lawful in his age, because they are unlawful in ours: and all this with vivacity and power, according to the force and sprightliness of the wit of the interpreter. From the same foundation that Heraclitus and this sentence of his had, "that all things had in them those forms that we discern,"[1] Democritus drew quite a contrary conclusion,—"that objects have in them nothing that we discern in them;" and because honey is sweet to one and bitter to another, he thence argued that it was neither sweet nor bitter.[2] The Pyrrhonians would say that they knew not whether it is sweet or bitter, or whether the one or the other, or both; for these always gained the highest point of dubitation. The Cyrenaics[3] held that nothing was perceptible from without, and that that only was perceptible that inwardly touched us, as pain and pleasure; acknowledging neither sound nor colour, but certain affections only that we receive from them; and that man's judgment had no other seat. Protagoras believed that "what seems true to every one, is true to every one."[4] The Epicureans lodged all judgment in the senses, and in the knowledge of things, and in pleasure. Plato[5] would have the judgment of truth, and truth itself, derived from opinions and the senses, to belong to the wit and cogitation.

Our knowledge commences and terminates in the senses.

This discourse has put me upon the consideration of the senses, in which lies the greatest foundation and proof of our ignorance. Whatsoever is known, is doubtless known by the faculty of the knower; for, seeing the judgment proceeds from the operation of him

[1] Sextus Empiric. *Pyrrh. Hypotyp.* i. 29.
[2] Id. *Advers. Math.* c. 168.
[3] Cicero, *Acad.* ii. 7.
[4] Id. *ib.* 6.
[5] In the *Phædo* and *Theetetes*.

that judges, 'tis reason that this operation be performed by his means and will, not by the constraint of another; as it would happen if we knew things by the power, and according to the law of their essence. Now all knowledge is conveyed to us by the senses; they are our masters:

Via qua munita fidei
Proxima fert humanum in pectus, templaque mentis;[1]

"It is the surest path that faith can find
By which to enter human heart and mind."

Science begins by them, and is resolved into them. After all, we should know no more than a stone if we did not know there is sound, odour, light, taste, measure, weight, softness, hardness, sharpness, colour, smoothness, breadth, and depth: these are the platforms and principles of the structure of all our knowledge; and, according to some, science is nothing else but sense. He that could make me contradict the senses, would have me by the throat; he could not make me go further back. The senses are the beginning and the end of human knowledge:

Invenies primis ab sensibus.esse creatam
Notitiam veri; neque sensus posse refelli....
Quid majore fide porro, quam sensus, haberi
Debet?[2]

"Of truth, whate'er discoveries are made,
Are by the senses to us first conveyed;
Nor will one sense be baffled; for on what
Can we rely more safely than on that?"

Let us attribute to them the least we can, we must, however, of necessity grant them this, that it is by their means and mediation that all our instruction is directed. Cicero says,[3] that Chrysippus having attempted to extenuate the force and virtue of the senses, presented to himself arguments and so vehement oppositions to the contrary that he could not satisfy himself therein: whereupon Carneades, who maintained the contrary side, boasted that he would make use of the very words and arguments of Chrysippus to controvert and confute him, and therefore thus cried out against him: "O miserable! thy force has destroyed thee." There can be nothing absurd to a greater degree than to maintain that fire does not warm, that light does not shine, and that there is no weight nor solidity in iron, which are things conveyed to us by the senses; neither is there belief nor knowledge in man that can be compared to that for certainty.

A doubt whether man has all the senses.

The first consideration I have upon the subject of the senses is that I make a doubt whether or no man be furnished with all natural senses. I see several animals who live an entire and perfect life, some without sight, others without hearing: who knows whether to us also one, two, three, or many other senses may not be wanting? For if any one be wanting, our examination cannot discover the defect. 'Tis the privilege of the senses to be the utmost limit of our discovery; there is nothing beyond them that can assist us in exploration, not so much as one sense in the discovery of another:

An poterunt oculos aures reprehendere? an aures
Tactus? an hunc porro tactum sapor arguet oris?
An confutabunt nares, oculive revincent?[4]

"Can ears the eyes, the touch the ears, correct?
Or is that touch by tasting to be check'd?
Or th' other senses, shall the nose or eyes
Confute in their peculiar faculties?"

They all make the extremest limits of our ability:

Seorsum cuique potestas
Divisa est, sua vis cuique est.[5]

"Each has its power distinctly and alone,
And every sense's power is its own."

It is impossible to make a man naturally blind conceive that he does not see; impossible to make him desire sight, or to regret his defect: for which reason we ought not to derive any assurance from the soul's being contented and satisfied with those we have; considering that it cannot be sensible herein of its infirmity and imperfection, if there be any such thing. It is impossible to say anything to this blind man, either by reasoning, argument, or similitude, that can possess his imagination with any apprehension of light, colour, or sight; there's nothing remains behind that can push on the senses to evidence. Those that are born blind, whom we hear wish they could see, it is not that they understand what they desire: they have learned from us that they want something; that there is something to be desired that we have, which they can name indeed and speak of its effect and consequences; but yet they know not what it is, nor apprehend it at all.

I have seen a gentleman of a good family who was born blind, or at least blind from such an age that he knows not what sight is; who is so little sensible of his defect that he makes use as we do of words proper for seeing, and applies them after a manner wholly particular and his own. They brought him a child to which he was god-father, which having taken into his arms, "Good God," said he, "what a fine child! How beautiful to look upon! what a pretty face it has!" He will say, like one of us, "This room has a very fine prospect;—it is clear weather;—the sun shines bright." And moreover, being that hunting, tennis, and butts are our exercises, and he has heard so, he has taken a liking to them, will ride a-hunting, and believes he has as good share of the sport as we have; and will express himself as angry or pleased as the best of us all, and yet knows nothing of it but by the

[1] Lucret. v. 103.
[2] Id. iv. 479, 483.
[3] *Acad.* ii. 27.
[4] Lucret. iv. 487.
[5] Id. *ib.* 490.

ear. One cries out to him, "Here's a hare!" when he is upon some even plain where he may safely ride; and afterwards, when they tell him, "The hare is killed," he will be as overjoyed and proud of it as he hears others say they are. He will take a tennis-ball in his left hand and strike it away with the racket: he will shoot with a harquebuss at random, and is contented with what his people tell him, that he is over, or wide.

Who knows whether all human kind commit not the like absurdity, for want of some sense, and that through this default the greatest part of the face of things is concealed from us? What do we know but that the difficulties which we find in several works of nature proceed hence; and that several effects of animals, which exceed our capacity, are not produced by faculty of some sense that we are defective in? and whether some of them have not by this means a life more full and entire than ours? We seize an apple with all our senses:[1] we there find redness, smoothness, odour, and sweetness; but it may have other virtues besides these, as to heat or binding, which no sense of ours can have any reference unto. Is it not likely that there are sensitive faculties in nature that are fit to judge of and to discern those which we call the occult properties in several things, as for the loadstone to attract iron; and that the want of such faculties is the cause that we are ignorant of the true essence of such things? 'Tis perhaps some particular sense that gives cocks to understand what hour it is at midnight, and when it grows to be towards day, and that makes them crow accordingly; that teaches chickens, before they have any experience of the matter, to fear a sparrow-hawk, and not a goose or a peacock, though birds of a much larger size; that cautions them against the hostile quality the cat has against them, and makes them not to fear a dog; to arm themselves against the mewing, a kind of flattering voice, of the one, and not against the barking, a shrill and threatening voice, of the other; that teaches wasps, ants, and rats, to fall upon the best pear and the best cheese before they have tasted them, and inspires the stag, elephant, and serpent, with the knowledge of a certain herb proper for their cure. There is no sense that has not a mighty dominion, and that does not by its power introduce an infinite number of knowledges. If we were defective in the intelligence of sounds, of harmony, and of the voice, it would cause an unimaginable confusion in all the rest of our science: for, besides what belongs to the proper effect of every sense, how many arguments, consequences, and conclusions, do we draw to other things, by comparing one sense with another? Let an understanding man imagine human nature originally produced without the sense of seeing, and consider what ignorance and trouble such a defect would bring upon him, what a darkness and blindness in the soul; he will then see by that of how great importance to the knowledge of truth the privation of such another sense, or of two or three, should we be so deprived, would be. We have formed a truth by the consultation and concurrence of our five senses; but perhaps we should have the consent and contribution of eight or ten to make a certain discovery of it in its essence.

Human knowledge controverted by the weakness and uncertainty of our senses.

The sects that controvert the knowledge of man do it principally by the uncertainty and weakness of our senses: for since all knowledge is by their means and mediation conveyed unto us, if they fail in their report, if they corrupt or alter what they bring us from without, if the light which by them creeps into the soul be obscured in the passage, we have nothing else to hold by. From this extreme difficulty all these fancies proceed: "That every subject has in itself all we there find. That it has nothing in it of what we think we there find;" and that of the Epicureans, "That the sun is no bigger than 'tis judged by our sight to be:"

> Quidquid id est, nihilo fertur majore figura,
> Quam nostris oculis quam cernimus esse videtur;[2]
>
> "But be it what it will in our esteems,
> It is no bigger than to us it seems:"

"that the appearances which represent a body great to him that is near, and less to him that is more remote, are both true:

> Nec tamen hic oculos falli concedimus hilum . . .
> Proinde animi vitium hoc oculis adfingere noli;[3]
>
> "Yet that the eye's deluded we deny;
> Charge not the mind's faults, therefore, on the eye:"

"and, resolutely, that there is no deceit in the senses; that we are to lie at their mercy, and seek elsewhere reasons to excuse the difference and contradictions we there find, even to the inventing of lies and other flams, if it come to that, rather than accuse the senses." Timagoras vowed[4] that, by pressing or turning his eye, he could never perceive the light of the candle to double, and that the seeming so proceeded from the vice of opinion, and not from the instrument. The most absurd of all absurdities, with the Epicurean's, is to deny the force and effect of the senses:

> Proinde, quod in quoque est his visum tempore, verum est
> Et, si non poterit ratio dissolvere causam,
> Cur ea, quæ fuerint juxtim quadrata, procul sint
> Visa rotunda; tamen præstat rationis egenteu
> Reddere mendosæ causas utriusque figuræ,
> Quam manibus manifesta suis emittere quæquam,
> Et violare fidem primam, et convellere tota
> Fundamenta, quibus nixatur vita, salusque:

[1] Sext. Empiric. *Pyrrh. Hypotyp.* i. 14.

[2] Lucret. v. 577. What Lucretius says here of the moon, Montaigne applies to the sun, of which, according to Epicurus's principles, the same thing may be affirmed.

[3] Lucret. iv. 380, 387.

[4] Cicero, *Acad.* ii. 25.

Non modo enim ratio ruat omnis, vita quoque ipsa
Concidat extemplo, nisi credere sensibus ausis,
Præcipitesque locos vitare, et cætera, quæ sint
In genere hoc fugienda.[1]

"That what we see exists I will maintain,
And if our feeble reason can't explain
Why things seem square when they are very near,
And at a greater distance round appear;
'Tis better yet, for him that's at a pause,
T' assign to either figure a false cause,
Than shock his faith, and the foundations rend
On which our safety and our life depend:
For reason not alone, but life and all,
Together will with sudden ruin fall;
Unless we trust our senses, nor despise
To shun the various dangers that arise."

This so desperate and unphilosophical advice expresses only this,—that human knowledge cannot support itself but by reason unreasonable, foolish, and mad; but that it is yet better that man, to set a greater value upon himself, make use of any other remedy, how fantastic soever, than to confess his necessary ignorance—a truth so disadvantageous to him. He cannot avoid owning that the senses are the sovereign lords of his knowledge; but they are uncertain, and falsifiable in all circumstances: 'tis there that he is to fight it out to the last; and if his just forces fail him, as they do, to supply that defect with obstinacy, temerity, and impudence. In case what the Epicureans say be true, viz., "that we have no knowledge if the senses' appearances be false;" and if that also be true which the Stoics say, "that the appearances of the senses are so false that they can furnish us with no manner of knowledge," we shall conclude, to the disadvantage of these two great dogmatical sects, that there is no science at all.

The error and uncertainty of the operation of the senses.

As to the error and uncertainty of the operation of the senses, every one may furnish himself with as many examples as he pleases: so ordinary are the faults and tricks they put upon us. In the echo of a valley the sound of a trumpet seems to meet us, which comes from a place behind:

Exstantesque procul medio de gurgite montes,
Classibus inter quos liber patet exitus, idem
Apparent, et longe divolsi licet, ingens
Insula conjunctis tamen ex his una videtur . . .
Et fugere ad puppim colles campique videntur,
Quos agimus præter navim, velisque volamus . . .
Ubi in medio nobis equus acer obhæsit
Flumine, equi corpus transversum ferre videtur
Vis, et in adversum flumen contrudere raptim.[2]

"And rocks i' th' seas that proudly raise their head,
Though far disjoined, though royal navies spread,
Their sails between; yet if from distance shown,
They seem an island all combin'd in one.
Thus ships, though driven by a prosperous gale,
Seem fix'd to sailors; those seem under sail
That ride at anchor safe; and all admire,
As they row by, to see the rocks retire.
Thus, when in rapid streams my horse hath stood,
And I look'd downward on the rolling flood;
Though he stood still, I thought he did divide
The headlong streams, and strive against the tide,
And all things seem'd to move on every side."

Take a musket ball under the fore-finger, the middle finger being lapped over it, it feels so like two that a man will have much ado to persuade himself there is but one; the end of the two fingers feeling each of them one at the same time: for that the senses are very often masters of our reason, and constrain it to receive impressions which it judges and knows to be false, is frequently seen. I set aside the sense of feeling, that has its functions nearer, more lively, and substantial, that so often, by the effects of the pains it helps the body to, subverts and overthrows all those fine Stoical resolutions, and compels him to cry out of his belly who has resolutely established this doctrine in his soul—"that the colic, and all other pains and diseases, are indifferent things, not having the power to abate anything of the sovereign felicity wherein the wise man is seated by his virtue." There is no heart so effeminate that the rattle and sound of our drums and trumpets will not inflame with courage; nor so sullen that the harmony of our music will not rouse and cheer; nor so stubborn a soul that will not feel itself struck with some reverence in considering the gloomy vastness of our churches, the variety of ornaments, and order of our ceremonies; and in hearing the solemn music of our organs, and the grace and devout harmony of our voices. Even those that come in with contempt feel a certain shivering in their hearts, and something of dread that makes them begin to doubt their opinions. For my part I do not think myself strong enough to hear an ode of Horace or Catullus sung by a beautiful young mouth without emotion: and Zeno had reason to say "that the voice was the flower of beauty." One would once make me believe that a certain person, whom all we Frenchmen know, had imposed upon me in repeating some verses that he had made; that they were not the same upon paper that they were in the air; and that my eyes would make a contrary judgment to my ears: so great a power has pronunciation to give fashion and value to works that are left to the efficacy and modulation of the voice.[3] And therefore Philoxenus was not so much to blame, hearing one giving an ill accent to some composition of his, in spurning and breaking certain earthen vessels of his, saying, "I break what is thine, because thou corruptest what is mine."[4] To what end did those men who have, with a firm resolution, destroyed themselves, turn away their faces that they might not see the blow that was by themselves appointed? And that those who, for their health, desire and command incisions to be made, and cauteries to be applied to them, cannot endure the sight of the preparations, instruments, and operations of the surgeon, being that the sight is not in any way to par-

That the senses sometimes impose upon our reason.

The voice the flower of beauty.

[1] Lucret. iv. 500.
[2] Lucret. iv. 390, 398, 421.
[3] Laertius, *in vitâ*.
[4] Id. *ib.*

ticipate in the pain? Are not these proper examples to verify the authority the senses have over the imagination? 'Tis to much purpose that we know these tresses were borrowed from a page or a lacquey; that this rouge came from Spain, and this pearl-powder from the Ocean Sea. Our sight will, nevertheless, compel us to confess their subject more agreeable and more lovely against all reason; for in this there is nothing of its own:

> Auferimur cultu; gemmis, auroque teguntur
> Crimina; pars minima est ipsa puella sui.
> Sæpe, ubi sit quod ames, inter tam multa requiras:
> Decipit hac oculos segide dives amor.[1]
>
> "By dress we're won; gold, gems, and rich brocades
> Make up the pageant that your heart invades;
> In all that glittering figure which you see,
> The far least part of her own self is she;
> In vain for her you love amidst such cost
> You search, the mistress in such dress is lost."

What a strange power do the poets attribute to the senses, that make Narcissus so desperately in love with his own shadow,

> Cunctaque miratur, quibus est mirabilis ipse;
> Se cupit imprudens, et, qui probat, ipse probatur;
> Dumque petit, petitur pariterque accendit, et ardet:[2]
>
> "Admireth all; for which to be admired;
> And inconsiderately himself desir'd.
> The praises which he gives his beauty claim'd,
> Who seeks is sought, th' enflamer is enflam'd:"

and Pygmalion's judgment so troubled by the impression of the sight of his ivory statue that he loves and adores it as if it were a living woman!

> Oscula dat, reddique putat: sequiturque, tenetque,
> Et credit tactis digitos insidere membris;
> Et metuit, pressos veniat ne livor in artus.[3]
>
> "He kisses, and believes he's kissed again;
> Seizes, and 'twixt his arms his love doth strain,
> And thinks the polish'd ivory thus held
> Doth to his fingers amorous pressure yield,
> And has a timorous fear, lest black and blue
> Should in the parts with ardour press'd ensue."

How we are deceived by the eye, the ear, &c.

Put a philosopher into a cage of small thin set bars of iron, and hang him on the top of the high tower of Nôtre Dame at Paris: he will see, by manifest reason, that he cannot possibly fall, and yet he will find (unless he has been used to the plumber's trade) that he cannot help but the sight of the excessive height will fright and astound him: for we have enough to do to assure ourselves in the galleries of our steeples, if they are made with open work, although they are of stone; and some there are that cannot endure so much as to think of it. Let there be a beam thrown over betwixt these two towers, of breadth sufficient to walk upon, there is no philosophical wisdom so firm that can give us the courage to walk over it as we should do upon the ground. I have often tried this upon our mountains in these parts; and though I am one who am not the most subject to be afraid, I was not able to endure to look into that infinite depth without horror and trembling, though I stood above my length from the edge of the precipice, and could not have fallen unless I would. Where I also observed that, what height soever the precipice was, provided there were some tree, or some jutting out of a rock, a little to support and divide the sight, it a little eases our fears, and gives greater assurance; as if they were things by which in falling we might have some relief; but that direct precipices we are not to look upon without being giddy; *Ut despici sine vertigine simul oculorum animique non possit*:[4] "To that one cannot look without dizziness:" which is a manifest imposture of the sight. And therefore it was that that fine philosopher[5] put out his own eyes, to free the soul from being diverted by them, and that he might philosophise at greater liberty; but, by the same rule, he should have dammed up his ears, that Theophrastus says[6] are the most dangerous instruments about us for receiving violent impressions to alter and disturb us; and, finally, should have deprived himself of all his other senses, that is to say, of his life and being; for they have all the power to command our soul and reason: *Fit etiam sæpe specie quadam. sæpe vocum gravitate et cantibus, ut pellantur animi vehementius; sæpe etiam cura et timore.*[7] "For it often falls out that the minds are more vehemently struck by some sight, by the quality and sound of the voice, or by singing; and oft-times also by grief and fear." Physicians hold that there are certain complexions that are agitated by the same sounds and instruments even to fury. I have seen some who could not hear a bone gnawed under the table without impatience; and there is scarce any man who is not disturbed at the sharp and shrill noise that the file makes in grating upon the iron; as also to hear chewing near them, or to hear any one speak who has an impediment in the throat or nose, will move some people even to anger and hatred. Of what use was that piping prompter of Gracchus, who softened, raised, and moved his master's voice whilst he declaimed at Rome, if the movements and quality of the sound had not the power to move and alter the judgments of the auditory? In earnest, there is wonderful reason to keep such a clutter about the firmness of this fine piece, that suffers itself to be turned and twined by the motion and accidents of so light a wind.

The senses altered and corrupted by the passions of the soul.

The same cheat that the senses put upon our understanding they have in turn put upon them; the soul also sometimes has its revenge: they lie and contend which should most deceive one another. What

[1] Ovid, *de Remed. Amor*, i. 343.
[2] Id. *ib.* iii. 421.
[3] Id. *ib.* x. 256. The text has *loquiturque, tenetque.*
[4] Livy, xliv. 6.
[5] *Democritus.* Cic. *de Finib.* v. 29. But Cicero only spoke of it as a thing uncertain; and Plutarch says positively that it is a falsehood. See his discourse, *of Curiosity.*
[6] Plutarch, *on Hearing.*
[7] Cicero, *de Divinat.* i. 37.

we see and hear when we are transported with passion we neither see nor hear as it is:

Et solem geminum, et duplices se ostendere Thebas.[1]

"Thebes seems two cities, and the sun two suns."

The object that we love appears to us more beautiful than it really is;

Multimodis igitur pravas turpesque videmus,
Esse in deliciis, summoque in honore vigere;[2]

"Hence 'tis that ugly things in fancied dress
Seem gay, look fair to lovers' eyes, and please;"

and that we hate more ugly: to a discontented and afflicted man the light of the day seems dark and overcast. Our senses are not only depraved, but very often stupified by the passions of the soul: how many things do we see that we do not take notice of, if the mind be occupied with other thoughts?

In rebus quoque apertis noscere possis,
Si non advortas animum, proinde esse quasi omni
Tempore semotæ fuerint, longeque remotæ:[3]

"Nay, even in plainest things, unless the mind
Take heed, unless she sets herself to find,
The thing no more is seen, no more belov'd,
Than if the most obscure and most remov'd:"

it would appear that the soul retires within, and amuses the powers of the senses. And so both the inside and the outside of man is full of infirmity and falsehood.

The life of man compared to a dream.

They who have compared our lives to a dream were, perhaps, more in the right than they were aware of. When we dream, the soul lives, works, and exercises all its faculties, neither more nor less than when awake; but more largely and obscurely, yet not so much, neither, that the difference should be as great as betwixt night and the meridian brightness of the sun, but as betwixt night and shade; there she sleeps, here she slumbers: but, whether more or less, 'tis still dark, and Cimmerian darkness. We wake sleeping, and sleep waking. I do not see so clearly in my sleep; but as to my being awake, I never found it clear enough and free from clouds: moreover, sleep, when it is profound, sometimes rocks even dreams themselves asleep; but our waking is never so sprightly that it rightly purges and dissipates those whimsies, which are waking dreams, and worse than dreams. Our reason and soul receiving those fancies and opinions that come in dreams, and authorizing the actions of our dreams with the like approbation that they do those of the day, wherefore do we not doubt whether our thought, our action, is not another sort of dreaming, and our waking a certain kind of sleep?

If the senses be our first judges, it is not ours that we are alone to consult; for, in this faculty, beasts have as great, or greater, than we: it is certain that some of them have the sense of hearing more quick than man; others that of seeing, others that of feeling, others that of touch and taste. Democritus said,[4] that the gods and brutes had the sensitive faculties more perfect than man. But betwixt the effects of their senses and ours the difference is extreme. Our spittle cleanses and dries up our wounds: it kills the serpent:

The very great difference betwixt the effects of our senses and those of animals.

Tantaque in his rebus distantia, differitasque est,
Ut quod aliis cibus est, aliis fuat acre venenum.
Sæpe etenim serpens, hominis contacta saliva,
Disperit, ac sese mandendo conficit ipsa:[5]

"And in those things the difference is so great
That what's one's poison is another's meat;
For serpents often have been seen, 'tis said,
When touch'd with human spittle, to go mad,
And bite themselves to death:"

what quality shall we attribute to our spittle? as it affects ourselves, or as it it affects the serpent? By which of the two senses shall we prove the true essence that we seek for? Pliny says[6] there are certain sea-hares in the Indies that are poison to us, and we to them; insomuch that, with the least touch, we kill them. Which shall be truly poison, the man or the fish? Which shall we believe, the fish of the man, or the man of the fish? One quality of the air infects a man, that does the ox no harm; some other infects the ox, but hurts not the man. Which of the two shall, in truth and nature, be the pestilent quality? To them who have the jaundice, all things seem yellow and paler than to us:

Lurida præterea fiunt, quæcunque tuentur
Arquati.[7]

"Besides, whatever jaundic'd eyes do view
Looks pale as well as those, and yellow too."

They who are troubled with the disease that the physicians call hyposphagma — which is a suffusion of blood under the skin—see all things red and bloody.[8] What do we know but that these humours, which thus alter the operations of sight, predominate in beasts, and are usual with them? for we see some whose eyes are yellow, like us who have the jaundice; and others of a bloody colour: 'tis likely that the colours of objects seem other to them than to us. Which of the two shall make a right judgment? for it is not said that the essence of things has a relation to man only; hardness, whiteness, depth, and sharpness, have reference to the service and knowledge of animals as well as to us, and nature has equally designed them for their use. When we press down the eye, the body that we look upon we perceive to be longer and more extended;—many beasts have

[1] *Æneid*, iv. 470.
[2] Lucret. iv. 1152.
[3] Id. *ib.* 812.
[4] Plutarch, *on the Opin. of the Philos.*
[5] Lucret. iv. 638.
[6] *Nat. Hist.* xxxii. 1.
[7] Lucret. iv. 333.
[8] Sextus Empiric. *Pyrrh Hypotyp.* i. 14.

their eyes so pressed down: this length, therefore, is perhaps the true form of that body, and not that which our eyes give it in the usual state. If we close the lower part of the eye things appear double to us:

> Bina lucernarum flagrantia lumina flammis . . .
> Et duplices hominum facies, et corpora bina."[1]
>
> "One lamp seems double, and the men appear
> Each on two bodies double heads to bear."

If our ears be hindered, or the passage stopped with any thing, we receive the sound quite otherwise than we usually do: animals, likewise, who have either the ears hairy, or but a very little hole instead of an ear, do not, consequently, hear as we do, but receive another kind of sound.[2] We see at festivals and theatres that, opposing a painted glass of a certain colour to the light of the flambeaux, all things in the place appear to us green, yellow, or violet:

> Et vulgo faciunt id lutea russaque vela,
> Et ferrugina, cum, magnis intenta theatris,
> Per malos vulgata trabesque, trementia pendent:
> Namque ibi consessum caveai subter, et omnem
> Scenai speciem, patrum, matrumque, deorumque
> Inficiunt, coguntque suo fluitare colore:[3]
>
> "Thus when pale curtains, or the deeper red,
> O'er all the spacious theatre are spread,
> Which mighty masts and sturdy pillars bear,
> And the loose curtains wanton in the air;
> Whole streams of colours from the summit flow,
> The rays divide them in their passage through,
> And stain the scenes, and men, and gods below:"

'tis likely that the eyes of animals, which we see to be of divers colours, produce the appearance of bodies the same with their eyes.

We should, therefore, to make a right judgment of the oppositions of the senses, be first agreed with beasts, and secondly amongst ourselves; which we by no means are, but enter into dispute every time that one hears, sees, or tastes something otherwise than another does, and contests, as much as upon any other thing, about the diversity of the images that the senses represent to us. A child, by the ordinary rule of nature, hears, sees, and talks otherwise than a man of thirty years old; and he than one of threescore. The senses are, in some, more obscure and dusky, and more open and quick in others. We receive things variously, according as we are, and according as they appear to us. Those rings which are cut out in the form of feathers, which are called *endless feathers*, no eye can discern their size, or can keep itself from the deception that on one side they enlarge, and on the other contract, and come to a point, even when the ring is being turned round the finger; yet, when you feel them, they seem all of an equal size. Now, our perception being so uncertain and so controverted, it is no more a wonder if we are told that we may declare that snow appears white to us; but that to affirm that it is in its own essence really so is more than we are able to justify: and, this foundation being shaken, all the knowledge in the world must of necessity fall to ruin. What! do our senses themselves hinder one another? A picture seems raised and embossed to the sight; in the handling it seems flat to the touch.[4] Shall we say that musk, which delights the smell, and is offensive to the taste, is agreeable or no? There are herbs and unguents proper for one part of the body, that are hurtful to another: honey is pleasant to the taste, but offensive to the sight.[5] They who, to assist their lust, used in ancient times to make use of magnifying-glasses to represent the members they were to employ bigger, by that ocular tumidity to please themselves the more:[6] to which of their senses did they give the prize,—whether to the sight, that represented the members as large and great as they would desire, or to the feeling, which represented them little and contemptible? Are they our senses that supply the subject with these different conditions, and have the subjects themselves, nevertheless, but one? As we see in the bread we eat, it is nothing but bread, but, by being eaten, it becomes bones, blood, flesh, hair, and nails:

> Ut cibus in membra atque artus eum diditur omnes,
> Disperit, atque aliam naturam sufficit ex se;[7]
>
> "As meats, diffus'd through all the members, lose
> Their former state, and different things compose;"

the humidity sucked up by the root of a tree becomes trunk, leaf, and fruit;[8] and the air, being but one, is modulated, in a trumpet, to a thousand sorts of sounds: are they our senses, I would fain know, that, in like manner, form these subjects into so many divers qualities, or have they them really such in themselves? And upon this doubt what can we determine of their true essence? Moreover, since the accidents of disease, of raving, or sleep, make things appear otherwise to us than they do to the healthful, the wise, and those that are awake, is it not likely that our right posture of health and understanding, and our natural humours, have, also, wherewith to give a being to things that have a relation to their own condition, and accommodate them to themselves, as well as when they are disordered;—that health is as capable of giving them an aspect as sickness? Why has not the temperate a certain form of objects relative to it, as well as the intemperate?[9] and why may it not as well stamp it with its own character as the other? He whose mouth is out of taste, says the wine is flat; the healthful man commends its flavour, and the thirsty its briskness. Now, our condition always accommodating things to itself, and transforming them according to its own posture, we cannot

[1] Lucret. iv. 451.
[2] Sextus Empiric. *Pyrrh. Hypotyp.* i. 14.
[3] Lucret. iv. 73.
[4] Sextus Empiric. *ut supra.*
[5] Sextus Empiric. *ut supra.*
[6] Seneca, *Nat. Quæs.* i. 16.
[7] Lucret. iii. 703.
[8] Sextus Empiric, *ut supra.*
[9] Id. *ib*

know what things truly are in themselves, seeing that nothing comes to us but what is falsified and altered by the senses. Where the compass, the square, and the rule, are crooked, all propositions drawn thence, and all buildings erected by those guides, must, of necessity, be also defective; the uncertainty of our senses renders everything uncertain that they produce:

> Denique ut in fabrica, si prava est regula prima,
> Normaque si fallax rectis regionibus exit,
> Et libella aliqua si ex parte claudicat hilum;
> Omnia mendose fieri, atque obstipa necessum est,
> Prava, cubantia, prona, supina, atque absona tecta;
> Jam ruere ut quædam videantur velle, ruantque
> Prodita judiciis fallacibus omnia primis:
> Sic igitur ratio tibi rerum prava necesse est,
> Falsaque sit, falsis quæcunque ab sensibus orta est.[1]

> "But lastly, as in building, if the line
> Be not exact and straight, the rule decline,
> Or level false, how vain is the design!
> Uneven, an ill-shap'd and tottering wall
> Must rise; this part must sink, that part must fall,
> Because the rules were false that fashion'd all:
> Thus reason's rules are false if all commence
> And rise from failing and from erring sense."

As to what remains, who can be fit to judge of and to determine those differences? As we say in controversies of religion that we must have a judge neither inclining to the one side nor the other, free from all choice and affection, which cannot be amongst Christians, just so it falls out in this; for if he be old he cannot judge of the sense of old age, being himself a party in the case; if young, there is the same exception; if healthful, sick, asleep, or awake, he is still the same incompetent judge. We must have some one exempt from all these propositions, as of things indifferent to him; and by this rule we must have a judge that never was.

It is impossible to judge definitively of a subject by the appearances we receive of it from the senses.

To judge of the appearances that we receive of subjects, we ought to have a deciding instrument; to verify this instrument we must have demonstration; to verify this demonstration an instrument; and here we are round again upon the wheel, and no further advanced. Seeing the senses cannot determine our dispute, being full of uncertainty themselves, it must then be reason that must do it; but no reason can be erected upon any other foundation than that of another reason; and so we run back to all infinity. Our fancy does not apply itself to things that are strange, but is conceived by the mediation of the senses; and the senses do not comprehend a foreign subject, but only their own passions: by which means fancy and appearance are no part of the subject, but only of the passion and sufferance of sense; which passion and subject are different things; wherefore whoever judges by appearances judges by another thing than the subject. And to say that the passions of the senses convey to the soul the quality of foreign subjects by resemblance, how can the soul and understanding be assured of this resemblance, having of itself no commerce with foreign subjects? As they who never knew Socrates cannot, when they see his picture, say it is like him. Now, whoever would, notwithstanding, judge by appearances, if it be by all, it is impossible, because they hinder one another by their contrarieties and discrepancies, as we by experience see: shall some select appearances govern the rest? you must verify this select by another select, the second by a third, and thus there will never be any end to it. Finally, there is no constant existence, neither of the objects' being nor our own; both we, and our judgments, and all mortal things, are evermore incessantly running and rolling; and consequently nothing certain can be established from the one to the other, both the judging and the judged being in a continual motion and mutation.

We have no communication with being, by reason that all human nature is always in the middle, betwixt being born and dying, giving but an obscure appearance and shadow, a weak and uncertain opinion of itself: and if, perhaps, you fix your thought to apprehend your being, it would be but like grasping water; for the more you clutch your hand to squeeze and hold what is in its own nature flowing, so much more you lose of what you would grasp and hold. So, seeing that all things are subject to pass from one change to another, reason, that there looks for a real substance, finds itself deceived, not being able to apprehend any thing that is subsistent and permanent, because that every thing is either entering into being, and is not yet arrived at it, or begins to die before it is born. Plato said,[2] that bodies had never any existence, but only birth; conceiving that Homer had made the ocean and Thetis father and mother of the gods, to shew us that all things are in a perpetual fluctuation, motion, and variation; the opinion of all the philosophers, as he says, before his time, Parmenides only excepted, who would not allow things to have motion, on the power whereof he sets a mighty value. Pythagoras was of opinion that all matter was flowing and unstable; the Stoics, that there is no time present, and that what we call so is nothing but the juncture and meeting of the future and the past: Heraclitus,[3] that never any man entered twice into the same river; Epicharmus, that he who borrowed money but an hour ago does not owe it now; and that he who was invited over-night to come the next day to dinner comes nevertheless uninvited, considering that they are no more the same men, but are become others;[4] "and

[1] Lucret. iv. 514.
[2] In the *Theætetus*.
[3] Seneca, *Ep.* 58; and Plutarch, *on the Signification of the Word Ei.*
[4] The following passage within inverted commas is a quotation from the last-mentioned tract of Plutarch, except the verses of Lucretius (v. 826).

that there could not a mortal substance be found twice in the same condition: for, by the suddenness and quickness of the change, it one while disperses, and another re-unites; it comes and goes after such a manner that what begins to be born never arrives to the perfection of being; forasmuch as that birth is never finished and never stays, as being at an end, but from the seed is evermore changing and shifting one to another; as human seed is first in the mother's womb made a formless embryo, after delivered thence a sucking infant, afterwards it becomes a boy, then a youth, then a man, and at last a decrepid old man; so that age and subsequent generation is always destroying and spoiling that which went before:

> Mutat enim mundi naturam totius ætas,
> Ex alioque alius status excipere omnia debet;
> Nec manet ulla sui similis res; omnia migrant,
> Omnia commutat natura, et vertere cogit.
>
> "For time the nature of the world translates,
> And from preceding gives all things new states:
> Nought like itself remains, but all do range,
> And nature forces everything to change."

"And yet we foolishly fear one kind of death, whereas we have already passed, and do daily pass, so many others: for not only, as Heraclitus said, the death of fire is generation of air, and the death of air generation of water; but, moreover, we may more manifestly discern it in ourselves; manhood dies, and passes away when age comes on; and youth is terminated in the flower of age of a full grown man, infancy in youth, and the first age dies in infancy: yesterday died in to-day, and to-day will die in to-morrow; and there is nothing that remains in the same state, or that is always the same thing. And that it is so let this be the proof: if we are always one and the same, how comes it to pass that we are now pleased with one thing, and by and by with another? How comes it to pass that we love or hate contrary things, that we praise or condemn them? How comes it to pass that we have different affections, and no more retain the same sentiment in the same thought? For it is not likely that without mutation we should assume other passions; and that which suffers mutation does not remain the same, and if it be not the same it is not at all: but the same that the being is does, like it, unknowingly change and alter, becoming evermore another from another thing: and consequently the natural senses abuse and deceive themselves, taking that which seems for that which is, for want of well knowing what that which is, is. But what is it then that truly is? That which is eternal: that is to say, that never had beginning, nor never shall have ending, and to which time can bring no mutation. For time is a mobile thing, and that appears as in a shadow, with a matter evermore flowing and running, without ever remaining stable and permanent: and to which belong those words, *before* and *after*, *has been*, or *shall be*: which, at the first sight, evidently show that it is not a thing that is; for it were a great folly, and a manifest falsity, to say that that is which is not yet being, or that has already ceased to be. And as to these words, *present*, *instant*, and *now*, by which it seems that we principally support and found the intelligence of time, reason, discovering, does presently destroy it; for it immediately divides and splits it into the *future* and *past*, being of necessity to consider it divided in two. The same happens to nature, that is measured, as to time that measures it; for she has nothing more subsisting and permanent than the other, but all things are either born, bearing, or dying. So that it were sinful to say of God, who is he only who *is*, that *he was*, or that *he shall be*;[1] for those are terms of declension, transmutation, and vicissitude, of what cannot continue or remain in being: wherefore we are to conclude that God alone *is*, not according to any measure of time, but according to an immutable and an immovable eternity, not measured by time, nor subject to any declension; before whom nothing was, and after whom nothing shall be, either more new or more recent, but a real being, that with one sole *now* fills the *for ever*, and that there is nothing that truly is but he alone; without our being able to say, *he has been*, or *shall be*; without beginning, and without end." To this so religious conclusion of a pagan I shall only add this testimony of one of the same condition, for the close of this long and tedious discourse, which would furnish me with endless matter: "What a vile and abject thing," says he,[2] "is man, if he do not raise himself above humanity!" 'Tis a good word and a profitable desire, but withal absurd; for to make the handle bigger than the hand, the cubit longer than the arm, and to hope to stride further than our legs can reach, is both impossible and monstrous; or that man should rise above himself and humanity: for he cannot see but with his eyes, nor seize but with his hold. He shall be exalted, if God will lend him an extraordinary hand; he shall exalt himself, by abandoning and renouncing his own proper means, and by suffering himself to be raised and elevated by means purely celestial. It belongs to our Christian faith, and not to the stoical virtue, to pretend to that divine and miraculous metamorphosis.

Time a moving thing, without permanency.

[1] See Plato, *Timæus*.

CHAPTER XIII.

OF JUDGING OF THE DEATH OF ANOTHER.

WHEN we judge of another's constancy and courage in dying, which, without doubt, is the most remarkable action of human life, we are

[2] Seneca, *Nat. Quæs.* i. *Præf.*

to take notice of one thing: which is that men very hardly believe themselves to be arrived to that period. Few men die in an opinion that it is their last hour; there is nothing wherein the flattery of hope does more delude us: it never ceases to whisper in our ears, "Others have been much sicker without dying; my condition is not so desperate as 'tis thought; and, at the worst, God has done other miracles." Which happens by reason that we set too much value upon ourselves. It seems as if the universality of things were in some measure to suffer by our dissolution, and that it did commiserate our condition: forasmuch as our depraved sight represents things to itself after a fallacious manner, and that we are of opinion they stand in as much need of us as we do of them: like people at sea, to whose notion mountains, fields, cities, heaven and earth, are tossed at the same rate they are:

Provehimur portu, terræque urbesque recedunt.[1]

"Out of the port with a brisk gale we speed,
And making way, cities and lands recede."

Whoever saw old age that did not applaud the past, and condemn the present time, laying the fault of his misery and discontent upon the world, and the manners of men?

Jamque caput quassans, grandis suspirat arator . . .
Et cum tempora temporibus præsentia confert
Præteritis, laudat fortunas sæpe parentis,
Et crepat antiquum genus ut pietate repletum.[2]

"Now the old ploughman sighs and shakes his head,
And present times comparing with those fled,
His predecessors' happiness doth praise,
And the great piety of that old race."

The important consequences men are apt to ascribe to their death.

We make all things go along with us, whence it follows that we consider our death as a very mighty event, and that does not so easily pass, nor without the solemn consultation of the stars: *Tot circa unum caput tumultuantes deos*.[3] "So many gods in an excited condition about one man;" and so much the more think it as we more value ourselves: "What! shall so much knowledge be lost, with so much damage to the world, without a particular concern of the destinies? Does so rare and exemplary a soul cost no more the killing than one that is mean and of no use to the public? This life that protects so many others, upon which so many other lives depend, that employs so vast a number of men in his service, and that fills so many places, shall it drop off like one that hangs but by its own single thread?" None of us lays it enough to heart that we are but one: thence proceeded these words of Cæsar to his pilot, more timid than the sea that threatened him:

Italiam si, cœlo authore, recusas,
Me, pete: Sola tibi causa hæc est justa timoris,
Vectorem non nosse tuum; perrumpe procellas,
Tutela secure mei:[4]

"If thou to sail to Italy decline
Under the gods' protection, trust to mine;
The only reason that thou hast to fear
Is that thou dost not know thy passenger;
But I, being now aboard, though Neptune raves,
Fear not to cut through the tempestuous waves:"

and these,—

Credit jam digna pericula Cæsar
Fatis esse suis: tantusque evertere, dixit,
Me superis labor est, parva quem puppe sedentem
Tam magno petiere mari?[5]

"These dangers, worthy of his destiny,
Cæsar did now believe, and then did cry,
What! is it for the gods a task so great
To overthrow me, that, to do the feat,
In a poor little bark they must be fain
Here to surprise me on the swelling main?"

and that idle fancy of the public, that the sun carried in his face mourning for his death a whole year:

Ille etiam extincto miseratus Cæsare Romam,
Cum caput obscura nitidum ferrugine texit:[6]

"And pitying Rome, great Cæsar being dead,
In mourning clouds the sun e'en veil'd his head:"

and a thousand of the like, wherewith the world suffers itself to be so easily imposed upon, believing that our interests affect heaven, and that its infinity occupies itself with our most ordinary actions. *Non tanta cœlo societas nobiscum est, ut nostro fato mortalis sit ille quoque siderum fulgor.*[7] "There is no such alliance betwixt us and heaven that the brightness of the stars should be made mortal by our death."

What we ought to judge of the fortitude of many who have put themselves to death.

Now to judge of the constancy and resolution of a man that does not yet believe himself to be certainly in danger, though he really is, is not reason; and 'tis not enough that he dies in this posture, unless he purposely put himself into it for this effect. It falls out in most men that they set a good face upon the matter, and speak with great indifference, to acquire reputation, which they hope afterwards to live to enjoy. Of all that I have seen die, fortune has disposed their countenances, and no design of theirs; and even of those who in ancient times have made away with themselves, there is much to be considered whether it was a sudden or a lingering death. That cruel Roman emperor[8] said of his prisoners that he would make them feel death; and if any one killed himself in prison, "That fellow has escaped me."[9] He wanted to spin out death, and make it felt by torments.

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[1] *Æneid.* iii. 72.
[2] Lucret. ii. 1165.
[3] M. Seneca, *Suasor.* i. 4.
[4] Lucan, v. 579.
[5] Id. *ib.* 653.
[6] Virg. *Georgic.* i. 466
[7] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* ii. 8.
[8] *Caligula*; see his Life, by Suetonius, c. 30.
[9] 'Twas Tiberius who said this of one Carvilius. Suetonius, *Life of Tiberius*, c. 61.

Vidimus et toto quamvis in corpore cæso
Nil animæ lethale datum, moremque nefandæ
Duram sævitiæ, pereuntis parcere morti.[1]

"And in tormented bodies we have seen
Amongst those wounds none that have mortal been,
Inhuman method of dire cruelty,
That means to kill, yet will not let men die."

In truth, it is no such great matter for a man in health and sound mind to resolve to kill himself; it is very easy to bravado before one comes to the push; insomuch that Heliogabalus, the most effeminate man in the world, amongst his most sensual pleasures, could forecast to make himself die delicately when he should be forced thereto; and, that his death might not give the lie to the rest of his life, had purposely built a sumptuous tower, the base whereof was covered and laid with planks enriched with gold and precious stones, thence to precipitate himself; and also caused cords, twisted with gold and crimson silk, to be made, wherewith to strangle himself; and a sword, with the blade of gold, to be hammered out to fall upon; and kept poison in vessels of emerald and topaz, wherewith to poison himself, according as he should like to choose one of these ways of dying:

Impiger.... et fortis virtute coacta.[2]

"By a forced valour resolute and brave."

Yet, as to this fellow, the effeminacy of his preparations makes it more likely that his heart would have failed him had he been put to the test. But in those who, of greater resolution, have determined to dispatch themselves, we must examine whether it was at a blow, which took away the leisure of feeling the effect; for it is to be questioned whether, perceiving life by little and little to steal away, the sentiment of the body mixing itself with that of the soul, and the means of repenting being offered, whether, I say, constancy and obstinacy in so dangerous a resolve is to be found.

The cowardice of Domitius, and others, who seemed resolved to put themselves to death.

In the civil wars of Cæsar, Lucius Domitius be ingtaken in the Abruzzi,[3] and thereupon poisoning himself, afterwards repented. It has happened, in our time, that a certain person, being resolved to die, and not having gone deep enough at the first thrust, the sensibility of the flesh opposing his arm, gave himself three or four wounds more, but could never prevail upon himself to thrust home. Whilst Plautius Silvanus was upon his trial, Urgulania, his grandmother, sent him a poinard, with which, not being able to kill himself, he made his servants cut his veins.[4] Albucilla, in Tiberius's time, having to kill himself, striking with too much tenderness, gave his adversaries opportunity to imprison and put him to death their own way:[5] and that great leader, Demosthenes, after his rout in Sicily, did the same;[6] and C. Fimbria, having struck himself too weakly, entreated his servant to dispatch him outright.[7] On the contrary, Ostorius, who could not make use of his own arm, disdained to employ that of his servant to any other use but only to hold the poinard straight and firm; and, running his breast full drive against it, thrust himself through.[8] 'Tis, in truth, a morsel that is to be swallowed without chewing, unless a man be thoroughly resolved; and yet Adrian, the emperor, made his physician mark and encircle in his pap the mortal place wherein he was to stab, to whom he had given order to kill him.[9] For this reason it was that Cæsar, being asked what death he thought to be the most desired, made answer, "The least premeditated, and the shortest."[10] If Cæsar dared to say it, it is no cowardice in me to believe it. "A short death," says Pliny,[11] "is the sovereign good hap of human life." They do not much care to discover it. No one can say that he is resolved for death who fears to trifle with it, and that cannot undergo it with his eyes open. They that we see in exemplary punishments run to their death, hasten and press their execution, do it not out of resolution, but wish to give themselves no leisure to consider it; it does not trouble them to be dead, but to die;

Emori nolo, sed me esse mortuum nihili æstimo:[12]

"I would not die, but care not to be dead.'

'Tis a degree of constancy, which I have experimented that I could arrive at, like those who plunge themselves into dangers, as into the sea with their eyes shut.

The constant and resolute death of Socrates,

There is nothing, in my opinion, more illustrious in the life of Socrates, than that he had thirty whole days wherein to ruminate upon the sentence of his death; to have digested it all that time with a most assured hope, without care, and without alteration, and with words and actions rather careless and indifferent, than any way stirred or discomposed by the weight of such a thought.[13]

and of Pomponius Atticus.

That *Pomponius Atticus*, to whom Cicero writes so oft, being sick, caused Agrippa, his son-in-law, and two or three more of his friends, to be called to him, and told them, that having found all means practised upon him for his recovery to be in vain, and that all he did to prolong his

1 Lucan, iv. 178.
2 Lamp. *Life of Heliog.* c. 33.
3 At *Corfinium*, in the Abruzzi. Most of the former editions, French as well as English, read "In Prussia," a misconception arising from Montaigne's using *La Brusse*, as a translation of the Latin name for the Abruzzi, *Abruttium*. The anecdote is taken from Plutarch, *Life of Cæsar*, c. 16.
4 Tacitus, *Annals*, iv. 22.
5 Id. *ib.* vi. 48.
6 Plutarch, *Life of Nicias.*
7 Appian, *De Bell. Mithrid.* 21.
8 Tacitus, *Annal*, xvi. 15.
9 *Xiphilin, in vitâ.*
10 Suetonius, *in vitâ*
11 *Nat. Hist.* vii. 53.
12 Epicharmus, *apud* Cicero, *Tusc. Quæs.* i. 8.
13 Nepos, *in vitâ.*

life did also prolong and augment his pain, he was resolved to put an end both to the one and the other, desiring them to approve of his deliberation, or at least not to lose their labour in endeavouring to dissuade him. Now, having chosen to destroy himself by abstinence, his disease was thereby accidentally cured, and the remedy he made use of wherewith to kill himself restored him to his perfect health. His physicians and friends, rejoicing at so happy an event, and coming to congratulate him, found themselves very much deceived, it being impossible for them to make him alter his purpose; he telling them that he must one day die, and that being now so far on his way, he would save himself the labour of beginning again another time. This man having discovered death at leisure, was not only not discouraged at the approach of it, but provoked it; for being satisfied that he had engaged in the combat, he considered it as a piece of bravery, and that he was obliged in honour to see the end. 'Tis far beyond not fearing death to taste and relish it.

The story of the philosopher Cleanthes is very like this: he had his gums swollen and rotten; his physicians advised him to great abstinence; having fasted two days, he was so much better that they pronounced him cured, and permitted him to his ordinary course of diet; he, on the contrary, already tasting some sweetness in this faintness of his, would not be persuaded to go back, but resolved to proceed, and to finish what he had so far advanced in.[1]

Tullius Marcellinus, a young man of Rome, having a mind to anticipate the hour of his destiny, to be rid of a disease that was more trouble to him than he was willing to endure, though his physician assured him of a certain, though not sudden, cure, called a council of his friends to consult about it; "of whom some," says Seneca, "gave him the counsel which, out of unmanliness, they would have taken themselves; others, out of flattery, such as they thought he would best like: but a Stoic said thus to him: 'Do not concern thyself, Marcellinus, as if thou didst deliberate of a thing of importance; 'tis no great matter to live; thy servants and beasts live; but it is a great thing to die handsomely, wisely, and firmly. Do but think how long thou hast done the same thing, eat, drink, and sleep, drink, sleep, and eat; we incessantly wheel in the same circle. Not only ill and insupportable accidents, but even the satiety of living inclines a man to desire to die.'" Marcellinus did not stand in need of a man to advise, but of a man to assist him; his servants were afraid to meddle in the business; but this philosopher gave them to understand that domestics are suspected only when it is in doubt whether the death of the master was voluntary or no; besides that it would be of as ill example to hinder him as to kill him; forasmuch as

> Invitum qui servat, idem facit occidenti:[2]
>
> "Who makes a man to live against his will
> As cruel is as though he did him kill."

Afterwards he told Marcellinus that it would not be indecent, as the remains of feasts, when we have done, is given to the servants, so life, being ended, to distribute something to those who have been our assistants. Now Marcellinus was of a free and liberal spirit, he therefore divided a certain sum of money amongst his attendants and comforted them. As to the rest, he had no need of steel nor of blood. He was resolved to go out of this life, and not to run out of it; not to escape from death, but to essay it. And to give himself leisure to trifle with it, having forsaken all kind of nourishment, the third day following, after having caused himself to be sprinkled with warm water, he went off faintingly and by degrees, and not without some kind of pleasure, as he himself declared.[3] In earnest, such as have been acquainted with these faintings, proceeding from weakness, say that they are therein sensible of no manner of pain, but rather feel a kind of delight, as in a passage to sleep and rest. These are studied and digested deaths.

But to the end that Cato only may furnish out the whole example of virtue, it seems as if his good destiny had weakened the hand with which he gave himself the blow, seeing he had the leisure to confront and grapple with death, reinforcing his courage in the greatest danger, instead of letting it go less. And if I had been to represent him in his supreme station, I should have done it in the posture of tearing out his bloody bowels, rather than with his sword in his hand, as did the statuaries of his time; for this second murder was much more furious than the first.

CHAPTER XIV.

THAT THE MIND HINDERS ITSELF.

'Tis a pleasant imagination to fancy a mind exactly balanced betwixt two equal desires; for doubtless it can never pitch upon either, forasmuch as the choice and application would manifest an inequality of esteem; and were we set between the bottle and the ham with an equal appetite to drink and eat, there would doubtless be no remedy, but we must die for thirst and hunger.[4] To provide against this inconvenience, the Stoics,[5] when they are asked whence the election in our soul between two indifferent things proceeds, and what makes us,

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1 Laertius, *in vitâ.*
2 Horat. *de Art. Poet.*
3 Seneca, *Epist.* 97.

4 See Bayle's Dictionary, article *Buridan.*

5 Plutarch, *Contradictions of the Stoic Philosophers.*

out of a great number of crowns, rather take one than another, there being no reason to incline us to such a preference, make answer that this movement of the soul is extraordinary and irregular; that it enters into us by a strange, accidental, and fortuitous impulse. It might rather, methinks, be said that nothing presents itself to us wherein there is not some difference, how little soever; and that, either by the sight or touch, there is always some choice, that, though it be imperceptibly, tempts and attracts us in like manner. Whoever shall suppose a packthread equally strong throughout, it is utterly impossible it should break; for where will you have the breaking to begin? And that it should break altogether is not in nature. Whoever also should hereunto join the geometrical propositions, that by the certainty of their demonstrations conclude the contained to be greater than the containing, the centre as great as its circumference, and that find out two lines incessantly approaching each other, and that yet can never meet, and the philosopher's stone, and the quadrature of the circle, where the reason and effect are so opposite, might peradventure find some argument to second this bold saying of Pliny,[1] *Solum certum nihil esse certi, et homine nihil miserius aut superbius:* "This is only certain, there is nothing certain, and that nothing is more miserable or more proud than man."

CHAPTER XV.

THAT OUR DESIRES ARE AUGMENTED BY DIFFICULTIES.

THERE is no reason that has not its contrary, say the wisest philosophers. I was ruminating on the excellent saying one of the ancients alleges for the contempt of life: "No good can bring pleasure, but that for the loss of which we are before-hand prepared;"[2] *In æquo est dolor amissæ rei, et timor amittendæ;*[3] "The grief of losing a thing, and the fear of losing it, are equal;" meaning by that that the fruition of life cannot be truly pleasant to us if we are in fear of losing it. It might, however, be said, on the contrary, that we hug and embrace this good so much the more tenderly, and with so much greater affection, by how much we see it the less assured, and fear to have it taken from us; for as it is evident that fire burns with greater fury when cold comes to mix with it, so our wills are more obstinate by being opposed:

> Si nunquam Danaen habuisset ahenea turris,
> Non esset Danae de Jove facta parens.[4]
>
> "A brazen tower if Danae had not had,
> She ne'er by Jove had been a mother made:"

and that there is nothing naturally so contrary to our taste as satiety which proceeds from facility; nor any thing that so much whets it as rarity and difficulty: *Omnium rerum voluptas ipso, quo debet fugare, periculo crescit.*[5] "The pleasure of all things increases by the same danger that should deter it."

> Galla, nega; satiatur amor, nisi gaudia torquent.[6]
>
> "Galla, deny; be not too easily gain'd;
> For love will glut with joys too soon obtain'd."

To keep love in breath, Lycurgus made a decree that the married people of Lacedæmonia should never enjoy one another but by stealth; and that it should be as great a shame for them to be taken in bed together as if committing with others.[7] The difficulty of assignations, the danger of surprise, the shame of the morning,

> Et langour, et silentium,
> ..... et latere petitus imo spiritus,[8]
>
> "The langour, silence, and the deep-fetch'd sighs,"

these are what give the *haut-goût* to the sauce. How many sports, very wantonly pleasant, arise from the cleanly and modest way of speaking of the works of love? Even pleasure itself would be heightened with pain; it is much sweeter when it smarts and has the skin rippled. The courtezan Flora said she never lay with Pompey, but she made him wear the marks of her teeth.[9]

> Quod petiere, premunt arctè, faciuntque dolorem
> Corporis, et dentes inlidunt sæpe labellis...
> Et stimuli subsunt, qui instigant lædere id ipsum
> Quodcunque est, rabies unde illæ germina surgunt.[10]
>
> "What they desired they hurt, and, 'midst the bliss,
> Raise pain; and often, with a furious kiss,
> They wound the balmy lips.
> But still some sting remains, some fierce desire,
> To hurt whatever 'twas that rais'd the fire."

And so it is in every thing: difficulty gives all things their estimation. The people of the Marches of Ancona[11] more cheerfully make their vows to St. James,[12] and those of Galicia to our Lady of Loretto. They make wonderful fuss at Liege[13] about the baths of Lucca; and in Tuscany about those of Aspa; there are few Romans seen in the fencing-schools of Rome, which are full of French. The great Cato also, as well as we, nauseated his wife[14] while she was

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1 *Nat. Hist.* ii. 7.
2 Seneca, *Epist.* 4.
3 Id. *Epist.* 98.
4 Ovid, *Amor.* ii. 19. 27.
5 Seneca, *de Benef.* vii. 9.
6 Martial, iv. 37.
7 Plutarch, *Life of Lycurgus*, ii.
8 Horace, *Epod.* xi. 9.
9 Plutarch, *Life of Pompey*, i.
10 Lucret. iv. 1076.

11 In Italy, where is the celebrated shrine of our Lady of Loretto.
12 St. James of Compostella, in Galicia.
13 Near which are the baths of Spa, which Montaigne calls *Aspa*.
14 Marcia, daughter of Marcius Philippus, whom the great Cato lent to his friend Hortensius. See Plutarch, *Life of Cato of Utica*. who, however, does not say that Cato longed for his wife while his friend lived, but merely that he took her back when Hortensius died.

his, and longed for her when in the possession of another. I was fain to turn out an old stallion into the paddock, being he was vicious and not to be governed when he smelt a mare; the facility presently sated him, as towards his own; but towards strange mares, and the first that passed by the pale of his pasture, he would again fall to his importunate neighings and his furious heats, as before. Our appetite contemns and passes by what it has in possession, to run after that it has not:

Transvolat in medio posita, et fugientia captat.[1]

"Thou scorn'st the girl thou may'st with ease enjoy;
And courtest those who're difficult and coy."

To forbid us any thing, is to make us have a mind to it:

Nisi tu servare puellam
Incipis, incipiet desinere esse mea:[2]

"If thou no better guard'st that girl of thine,
She'll soon begin to be no longer mine:"

to give it wholly up to us is to beget in us contempt. Want and abundance fall into the same inconvenience:

Tibi quod superest, mihi quod desit, dolet.[3]

"Thy superfluities do trouble thee,
And what I want and pant for troubles me."

Desire and fruition equally afflict us. The rigours of mistresses are troublesome, but facility, to say truth, is still more so; forasmuch as discontent and anger, springing from the esteem we have of the thing desired, heat and actuate love; but satiety begets disgust; 'tis a blunt, dull, stupid, tired, and slothful passion.

Si qua volet regnare diu, contemnat amantem.[4]
Contemnite, amantes:
Sic hodie veniet, si qua negavit heri.[5]

"The lady that would keep her lover still,
If she be wise, will sometimes use him ill.
And the same policy with men will do,
If they sometimes do slight their ladies too;
By which means she that yesterday said Nay,
Will come and offer up herself to-day."

Why did Poppea invent the use of a mask to hide the beauties of her face, but to enhance them to her lovers?[6] Why have they veiled, even below the heels, those beauties that every one of them desires to show, and that every one of us desires to see? Why do they cover, with so many hindrances one over another, the parts where our desires and their own have their principal seat? And to what serve those great bastions of farthingales, with which our ladies fortify their haunches, but to allure our appetite and to draw us on to them, by removing them farther from us?

Et fugit ad salices, et se cupit ante videri.[7]

"And to the osiers flies herself to hide,
But doth desire to have her flight descried."

Interdum tunica duxit operta moram.[8]

"And often with her robe delay'd my joys."

To what use serves the artifice of this virgin modesty, this grave coldness, this severe countenance, this profession to be ignorant of things that they know better than we who instruct them in them, but to increase in us the desire to overcome, and with more gluttony subject to our appetites all this ceremony and all these obstacles? For there is not only pleasure, but moreover glory, to intoxicate and debauch that soft sweetness and that childish modesty, and to reduce a cold and matron-like gravity to the mercy and quality of our ardent desires: 'tis a glory, say they, to triumph over modesty, chastity, and temperance; and whoever dissuades ladies from those qualities betrays both them and himself. We should believe that their hearts tremble with affright, that the very sound of our words offends the purity of their ears, that they hate us for talking so, and only yield to our importunity by a compulsive force. Beauty, all-powerful as it is, has not wherewithal to make itself relished without the mediation of these little arts. Look at Italy, where there is the most and the finest beauty to be sold, how it is nevertheless necessitated to have recourse to other means and other artifices to render itself charming; and in truth, whatever it may do, being venal and public, it remains feeble and languishing in itself; even as in virtue itself, of two like effects, we notwithstanding look upon that as the best and most worthy wherein the most trouble and hazard is proposed.

Why God suffers his church to be harassed.

'Tis an effect of the divine Providence to suffer his holy church to be afflicted, as we see it, with so many storms and troubles, by this opposition to rouse pious souls, and to awaken them from that drowsy lethargy whereinto, by so long tranquillity, they had been immerged. If we should lay the loss we have sustained in the number of those who have gone astray, in the balance against the benefit we have had by being again put in breath, and by having our zeal and force resuscitated by reason of this opposition, I know not whether the utility would not surmount the damage.

Whether the marriage tie is rendered the firmer by taking away the means of dissolving it.

We have thought to tie the nuptial knot of our marriages more fast and firm, for having taken away all means of dissolving it; but the knot of the will and affection is so much the more slackened and made loose by how much that of constraint is drawn closer together; and on the contrary, that which kept the marriages at Rome so long in honour and inviolate, was the liberty every one that would had to

[1] Horace, *Sat.* i. 2, 108.
[2] Ovid, *Amor.* ii. 19, 47.
[3] Terence, *Phormio*, i. 3, 9.
[4] Ovid, *Amor.* ii. 19, 33.
[5] Propert. ii. 14, 19.
[6] Tacitus, *Annal.* xii. 45.
[7] Virg. *Eclog.* iii. 65.
[8] Propert. ii. 15, 6.

break them. They kept their wives the better, because they might part with them if they would; and in the full liberty of divorces they lived five hundred years and more before any one made use on't.'[1]

Quod licet, ingratum est; quod non licet, acrius urit.[2]

"What's free to us to do we slight,
What is forbidden whets the appetite."

We might here introduce the opinion of an ancient on this occasion, that executions rather whet than dull the edge of vices; that they do not beget the care of doing well, that being the work of reason and discipline; but only a care not to be taken in doing ill:

Latius excisæ pestis contagia serpunt:[3]

"The plague-sore, being lanc'd, th' infection spreads:"

I do not know that this is true; but this I experimentally know, that never civil government was by that means reformed: the order and regulation of manners depend upon some other expedient.

People who have lived contentedly and securely without offensive arms.

The Greek histories[4] make mention of the Argippians, neighbours to Scythia, who live without either rod or stick of offence; that not only no one attempts to attack them, but whoever can fly thither is safe, by reason of their virtue and sanctity of life, and no one is so bold as there to lay hands upon them; and they have applications made to them to determine the controversies that arise betwixt men of other countries. There is a certain nation, where the enclosures of gardens and fields they would preserve is made only of a string of cotton-yarn, and, so fenced, is more firm and secure than our hedges and ditches: *Furem signata sollicitant - - - Aperta effractarius prætorit*:[5] "Things sealed up invite a thief. House-breakers pass by open-doors."

Peradventure the facility of entering my house, amongst other things, has been a means to preserve it from the violence of our civil wars; defence allures an enemy, and mistrust provokes him. I enervated the soldiers' design by depriving the exploit of danger, and all matter of military glory, which is wont to serve them for pretence and excuse. Whatever is bravely is ever honourably done, at a time when justice is dead. I render them the conquest of my house cowardly and base; it is never shut to any one that knocks. My gate has no other guard than a porter, and that of ancient custom and ceremony, who does not so much serve to defend it, as to offer it with more decency and the better grace. I have no other guard or sentinel than the stars. A gentleman would play the fool to make a show of defence, if he be not really in a condition to defend himself. He that lies open on one side is every where so. Our ancestors did not think of building frontier garrisons. The means of assaulting, I mean without battery or army, and of surprising our houses, increase every day, above all the means to guard them; men's wits are generally bent that way; invasion every one is concerned in; none but the rich in defence. Mine was strong for the time when it was built; I have added nothing to it of that kind, and should fear that its strength should turn against myself; to which we are to consider that a peaceable time would require it should be dismantled. There is the danger never to be able to regain it, and it would be very hard to keep it, for in intestine dissentions your valet may be of the party you fear; and where religion is the pretext, even a man's nearest relation may be distrusted with a colour of justice. The public exchequer will not maintain our domestic garrisons; it would be exhausted: we ourselves have not means to do it without ruin, or, which is more inconvenient and injurious, without ruining the people. As to the rest, you there lose all, and even your friends will be more ready to accuse your want of vigilance and your improvidence than to pity you, and the ignorance and heedlessness of your profession. That so many garrisoned houses have been lost, whereas this of mine remains, makes me apt to suspect that they were only lost by being guarded; this gives an enemy both an invitation and colour of reason: all defence shows a face of war. Let who will come to me, in God's name; but I shall not invite them. 'Tis retirement I have chosen, for my repose from war. I endeavour to withdraw this corner from the public tempest, as I also do another corner in my soul. Our war may put on what forms it will, multiply and diversify itself into new parties; for my own part, I shall not budge. Amongst so many garrisoned houses, I am the only person of my condition, that I know of, who have purely entrusted mine to the protection of Heaven, without removing either plate, deeds, or hangings. I will neither fear nor save myself by halves. If a full acknowledgment can acquire the divine favour, it will serve me to the end: if not, I have still continued long enough to render my continuance remarkable and recordable.—I have lived thirty years!

Montaigne safe in a defenceless house during the civil wars.

CHAPTER XVI.

OF GLORY.

THERE is the name and the thing: the name is a voice which denotes and signifies the thing;

[1] Val. Maximus, ii. 1. 4. who says *five hundred and twenty years.*
[2] Ovid, *Amor.* ii. 19. 3.
[3] Rutil. *Itiner.* i. 397. in reference to the Jews and their religion.
[4] Herod. iv. 23.
[5] Seneca, *Epist.* 68.

the name is no part of the thing, or of the substance; 'tis a foreign piece joined to the thing, and without it.

How the name of God may be increased.

God, who is all fulness in himself, and the height of all perfection, cannot augment or add any thing to himself within; but his name may be augmented and increased by the blessing and praise we attribute to his exterior works, which praise, seeing we cannot incorporate it in him, forasmuch as he can have no accession of good, we attribute it to his name, which is the part out of him that is nearest to us; thus is it that to God alone glory and honour appertain; and there is nothing so remote from reason as that we should go in quest of it for ourselves; for being indigent and necessitous within, our essence being imperfect, and having continual need of melioration, 'tis to this that we ought to employ all our endeavours; we are all hollow and empty; 'tis not with wind and voice that we are to fill ourselves; we want a more solid substance to repair us; a man starved with hunger would be very simple to seek rather to provide himself with a gay garment than a good meal; we are to look after that whereof we have most need. As we have it in our ordinary prayers, *Gloria in excelsis Deo, et in terra pax hominibus*:[1] "Glory be to God in the highest, and on earth peace and good will to men." We are in want of beauty, health, wisdom, virtue, and such like essential qualities; exterior ornaments should be looked after, when we have made provision for necessary things. Divinity treats amply and more pertinently of this subject, but I am not much versed in it.

Chrysippus and Diogenes[2] were the first and the most constant authors of the contempt of glory, and maintained that, amongst all pleasures, there was none more dangerous, nor more to be avoided, than that which we derive from the approbation of others. And, in truth, experience makes us sensible of many very hurtful treasons in it; there is nothing that so poisons princes as flattery, nor any thing whereby wicked men more easily obtain credit and favour with them; nor pandarism so ably and usually made use of to corrupt the chastity of women, than to wheedle and entertain them with their own praises; the first charm the Syrens made use of to allure Ulysses was of this nature:

> "Noble Ulysses, turn thee to this side,
> Of Greece the greatest ornament and pride."[3]

These philosophers said that all the glory of the world was not worth an understanding man's holding out his finger to obtain it:[4]

> Gloria quantalibet quid erit, si gloria tantum est?[5]
>
> "What's glory in the high'st degree,
> If still it only glory be?"

I say for it alone, for it often brings several commodities along with it, for which it may be justly desired; it acquires us good-will, and renders us less subject and exposed to the injuries and insults of others, and the like. It was also one of the principal doctrines of Epicurus; for this precept of his sect, *Conceal thy life*, that forbids men to encumber themselves with offices and public negotiations, does also necessarily pre-suppose a contempt of glory, which is the world's approbation of those actions we produce in evidence. He that bids us conceal ourselves, and have no other concern but for ourselves, and that will not have us known to others, would much less have us honoured and glorified; and 'tis thus he advises Idomeneus not in any sort to regulate his actions by the common reputation or opinion, except to avoid the other accidental inconveniences that the contempt of men might bring upon him.

Those discourses are, in my opinion, very true and rational; but we are, I know not how, double in ourselves, which is the cause that what we believe we do not believe, and cannot disengage ourselves from what we condemn. Let us see the last and dying words of Epicurus; they are great, and worthy of such a philosopher, and yet they carry some marks of the recommendation of his name, and of that humour he had decried by his precepts. Here is a letter[6] that he dictated a little before his last gasp:

"*Epicurus to Hermachus, health.*

"Whilst I was passing over the happiest and last day of my life, I wrote this, but at the same time afflicted with such a pain in my bladder and bowels that nothing can be greater; but it was recompensed with the pleasure the remembrance of my discoveries and doctrines suggested to my soul. Now, as the affection thou hast ever from thy infancy borne towards me and philosophy requires, take upon thee the protection of Metrodorus's children."

This is the letter: and that which makes me interpret that the pleasure he says he had in his soul, concerning his discoveries, has some reference to the reputation he hoped for after his death, is the manner of his will, in which he gives order, "That Amynomachus and Timocrates, his heirs, should every January defray, for the celebration of his birth-day, the expense that Hermachus should appoint; and also the expense that should be made the twentieth of every moon, in entertaining the philosophers, his friends, who should assemble in honour of the memory of him and Metrodorus."[7]

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[1] St. Luke, ii. 14.
[2] Cicero, *de Finib.* iii. 17.
[3] Homer, *Odyssey*, xii. 184.
[4] Cicero, *ut supra.*
[5] Juvenal, vii. 81.
[6] Cicero, *de Finib.* ii. 30. In Laertius, *Life of Epicurus*, this letter is mentioned as being addressed to Idomeneus.—Villoison (*Anec. Græc.* tom ii. p. 159.) and Visconti (*Iconograp. Græc.* tom i. p. 216) have shown that the name should be written *Hermarchus.*
[7] Cicero, *de Finib.* ii. 31.

Carneades was head of the contrary opinion; and maintained that glory was to be desired for itself;[1] even as we embrace our posthumes for themselves, having no knowledge or enjoyment of them. This opinion has not failed to be more universally followed, as those commonly are that are most suitable to our inclinations. Aristotle gives it the first place amongst external goods; "avoid, as two extreme vices, immoderation, either in seeking or evading it."[2] I believe, if we had the books Cicero wrote upon this subject, we should have fine harangues about it; for he was so madly possessed with this passion, that if he had dared, I think he could willingly have fallen into the excess that others did, that virtue itself was not to be coveted but upon the account of the honour that always attends it:

Glory desirable for itself.

Cicero very ambitious of glory.

> Paulum sepultæ distat inertiæ
> Celata virtus:[3]
>
> "For hidden virtue's much the same as none:"

which is an opinion so false that I am vexed it could ever enter into the understanding of a man that was honoured with the name of a philosopher.

If this were true, men need not be virtuous but in public; and should be no further concerned to keep the operations of the soul, which is the true seat of virtue, regular and in order, than as they were to arrive at the knowledge of others. Is there no more in it than but only slily and with circumspection to do ill? "If thou knowest," says Carneades,[4] "of a serpent lurking in a place, where, without suspicion, a person is going to sit down, by whose death thou expectest an advantage, thou dost ill if thou dost not give him caution of his danger; and so much the more because the action is to be known by none but thyself." If we do not take up ourselves a rule of well-doing, if impunity passes with us for justice, to how many sorts of wickedness shall we every day abandon ourselves? I do not find what Sextus Peduceus did, in faithfully restoring the treasure that C. Plotius had committed to his sole secrecy and trust,[5] a thing that I have often done myself, so commendable, as I should think it an execrable baseness to have done otherwise: and I hold it of good use in our days to introduce the example of P. Sextilius Rufus, whom Cicero[6] accuses to have entered upon an inheritance contrary to his conscience, not only not against law, but even by the determination of the laws themselves; and M. Crassus and Q. Hortensius,[7] who, by reason of their authority and power, having been called in by a stranger to share in the succession of a forged will, that so he might secure his own part, satisfied themselves with having no hand in the forgery, and refused not to make their advantage and to come in for a share; secure enough if they could shroud themselves from accusations, witnesses, and the laws: *Meminerint Deum se habere testem, id est (ut ego arbitror) mentem suam.*[8] "Let them consider they have God to witness, that is (as I interpret it) their own consciences."

Virtue is a very vain and frivolous thing if it derives its recommendation from glory: 'tis to no purpose that we endeavour to give it a station by itself and separate it from fortune; for what is more accidental than reputation? *Profecto fortuna in omni re dominatur: ea res cunctas ex libidine magis quam ex vero celebrat, obscuratque.*[9] "Fortune rules in all things, and advances and depresses things more out of her own will than right and justice." So to order it that actions may be known and seen is purely the work of fortune; 'tis chance that helps us to glory, according to its own temerity. I have often see her go along before merit, and very much exceed it. He that first likened glory to a shadow did better than he was aware of: they are both of them things excellently vain: glory, also, like a shadow, goes sometimes before the body, and sometimes in length infinitely exceeds it. They that instruct gentlemen only to employ their valour for the obtaining of honour, *quasi non sit honestum quod nobilitatum non sit*;[10] "as though it were not a virtue unless ennobled;" what do they intend by that but to instruct them never to hazard themselves if they are not seen, and to observe well if there be witnesses present who may carry news of their valour: whereas a thousand occasions of well-doing present themselves when we cannot be taken notice of. How many brave actions are buried in the crowd of a battle? Whoever shall take upon him to notice another's behaviour in such a confusion is not very busy himself, and the testimony he shall give of his companion's deportment will be evidence against himself. *Vera et sapiens animi magnitudo, honestum illud, quod maxime naturam sequitur, in factis positum, non in gloria judicat.*[11] "True and wise magnanimity judges that the bravery which most follows nature more consists in action than glory."

Virtue would be a frivolous thing if it derived its recommendation from glory.

All the glory that I pretend to derive from my life is that I have lived in quiet: in quiet, not according to Metrodorus, or Arcesilaus, or Aristippus, but according to myself. For seeing philosophy has not been able to find out any

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1 *Cicero, de Finib.* iii. 17.
2 *Ethic.* ii. 7.
3 Hor. *Od.* iv. 9, 29.
4 Cicero, *de Finib.* ii. 18.
5 Id. *ib.*
6 Id. *ib.* 17.
7 Cicero, *de Offic.* iii. 18.
8 Id. *ib.* 19.
9 Sallust, *Bell Catil.* c. 8.
10 Cicero, *ut supra.* i. 4.
11 Id. *ib.* 19.

way to tranquillity that is good in common, let every one seek it for himself.

To what do Cæsar and Alexander owe the infinite grandeur of their renown but to fortune? How many men has she extinguished in the beginning of their progress, of whom we have no knowledge, who brought as much courage to the work as they, if their adverse hap had not stopped them short in the first sally of their arms? Amongst so many and so great dangers, I do not remember I have any where read that Cæsar was ever wounded: a thousand have fallen in less dangers than the least of those he went through. A great many brave actions must be expected to be performed without witness, and so lost, before one turns to account: a man is not always on the top of a breach, or at the head of an army, in the sight of his general, as upon a scaffold; a man is often surprised betwixt the hedge and the ditch; he must run the hazard of his life against a henroost, he must dislodge four rascally musketeers from a barn; he must prick out single from his party and alone make some attempt, according as necessity will have it. And whoever will observe will, I believe, find it experimentally true that occasions of the least lustre are ever the most dangerous; and that in the wars of our own times there have more brave men been lost in affairs of little moment, and in the dispute about some little paltry fort than in places of greater importance, and where their valour might have been more honourably employed.

Who thinks death unworthy of him if it be not on some signal occasion, instead of illustrating his death doth wilfully obscure his life, suffering in the mean time many very just occasions of hazarding himself to slip out of his hands; and every just one is illustrious enough, every man's conscience being a sufficient trumpet to him: *Gloria nostra est testimonium conscientiæ nostræ.*[1] "For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience." Who is only a good man that others may know it, and that he may be the better esteemed when 'tis known; who will not do well but upon condition that his virtue may be known to men, is one from whom much service is not to be expected.

> Credo che 'l resto di quel verno, cose
> Facesse degne di tenerne conto;
> Ma fur sin da quel tempo si nascose,
> Che non è colpa mia s' or non le conto;
> Perche Orlando a far l' opre virtuose,
> Piu ch' a narrarle poi, sempre era pronto;
> Ne mai fu alcuno de' suoi fatti espresso,
> Se non quando ebbe i testimoni appresso.[2]
>
> "The rest o' th' winter, I believe, was spent
> In actions worthy of eternal fame;
> Which hitherto are in such darkness pent
> That if I name them not I'm not to blame:
> Orlando's noble mind being still more bent
> To do great acts than boast him of the same;
> So that no deeds of his were ever known
> But those that luckily had lookers-on."

A man should go to the wars upon the account of duty, and expect the recompense that never fails brave and worthy actions, how private and concealed soever, nor even to virtuous thoughts; 'tis a satisfaction that a well-disposed conscience receives in itself at doing well. A man must be valiant for himself, and upon the account of the advantage it is to him, to have his courage seated in a sure and secure place against the assaults of fortune:

> Virtus, repulsæ nescia sordidæ,
> Intaminatis fulget honoribus;
> Nec sumit, aut ponit secures
> Arbitrio popularis auræ.[3]
>
> "Virtue that ne'er repulse admits,
> In taintless honour glorious sits;
> Nor takes, or leaveth dignities
> At the mere noise of vulgar cries."

It is not for show that the soul is to play its part, but for ourselves within, where no eyes can see but our own: there she defends us from the fear of death, of pain, and shame itself; she there arms us against the loss of our children, friends, and fortune; and when opportunity presents itself, she leads us on to the hazards of war, *non emolumento aliquo, sed ipsius honestatis decore;*[4] "not for any profit or advantage, but for the honour of virtue;" a much greater advantage, and more worthy to be coveted and hoped for than honour and glory, which are nothing but a favourable judgment given of us.

How contemptible is the judgment of the multitude.

A dozen men must be called out of a whole nation to judge of an acre of land; and the judgment of our inclinations and actions, the hardest and most important thing that is, we refer to the voice and determination of the rabble, the mother of ignorance, injustice, and inconstancy. Is it reasonable that the life of a wise man should depend upon the judgment of fools? *An quidquam stultius, quam, quos singulos contemnas, eos aliquid putare esse universos?*[5] "Can anything be more foolish than to think that those you despise singly can be any other than despicable when joined together?" He that makes it his business to please them will never have done; 'tis a mark that never is to be reached or hit: *Nil tam inestimabile est, quam animi multitudinis.*[6] "Nothing is so uncertain as the minds of the multitude." Demetrius[7] pleasantly said, of the voice of the people, that he made no more account of that which came from above than of that which came from below. Cicero says more: *Ego hoc judico, si quando turpe non sit, tamen non esse non turpe, quum id à multitudine laudetur.*[8] "I am of opinion that, though a thing be not foul in itself, yet it cannot but become so when commended by the multitude." No art, no activity of wit, could conduct our steps so as to follow so wandering

[1] 2 *Corin.* i. 12.
[2] Ariosto, *Orlando*, canto i. 81.
[3] Horace, *Od.* iii. 2, 17.
[4] Cicero, *de Finib.* i. 10.
[5] Id. *Tusc. Quæs.* v. 36.
[6] Livy, xxxi. 34.
[7] Seneca, *Epist.* 91. Demetrius was a Cynic philosopher, famous at Rome in the reign of Nero.
[8] *De Finib.* ii. 15.

and irregular a guide: in this windy confusion of noise, vulgar reports, and opinions, that drive us on, no way worth anything can be chosen. Let us not purpose to ourselves so floating and wavering an end: let us follow constantly after reason; let the public approbation follow us there, if it will; and as it wholly depends upon fortune, we have no reason sooner to expect it by any other way than that. Though I would not follow the straight way because it is straight, I would, however, follow it for having experimentally found that, at the end of the reckoning, 'tis commonly the most happy, and of the greatest utility: *Dedit hoc providentiâ hominibus manus, ut honesta magis juvarent.*[1] "This gift providence has given to man, that honest things should be the most delightful." The mariner of old said to Neptune, in a great tempest: "O god, thou mayest save me if thou wilt, and if thou wilt, thou mayest destroy me; but, whether or no, I will steer my rudder true."[2] I have seen, in my time, a thousand men of supple and ambiguous natures, and that no one doubted but they were more worldly wise than I, ruined where I have saved myself:

Risi successu posse carere dolos.[3]

"I laugh'd to see their unsuccessful wiles."

Paulus Æmilius, going on his glorious expedition to Macedonia, above all things charged the people of Rome not to speak of his actions during his absence.[4] The licence of judgments is a great obstacle to great affairs! Forasmuch as every one has not the firmness of Fabius against adverse and injurious voices, who rather suffered his authority to be dissected by the vain fancies of men than to fulfil less well his charge, with a more favourable reputation and popular applause.

Praise and reputation set at too high a price.

There is I know not what natural sweetness in hearing one's-self commended; but we are a great deal too fond of it:

Laudari haud metuam, neque enim mihi cornea fibra est;
Sed recti finemque, extremumque esse recuso,
"Euge" tuum, et "belle."[5]

* * * *

"Think not
That all your praises I should treat with scorn;
No, no! my nerves are n't made as dull as horn:
But that your 'Bravos!' and that senseless cry,
Prove that all's right and perfect I deny."

I care not so much what I am in the opinion of others, as what I am in my own: I would be rich of myself, and not by borrowing. Strangers see nothing but events and outward appearances; everybody can set a good face on the matter when they are full of trembling and terror within: they do not see my heart, they see but my countenance. 'Tis with good reason that men decry the hypocrisy that is in war; for what is more easy to an old soldier than to shift in time of danger, and to counterfeit bravely, when he has *no* more heart than a chicken? There are so many ways to avoid hazarding a man's own person, that we have deceived the world a thousand times before we come to be engaged in a real danger; and even then, finding ourselves in an inevitable necessity of doing something, we can make a shift for that time to conceal our apprehensions by setting a good face on the business, though the heart beats within; and had we the use of the Platonic ring,[6] which renders those invisible that wear it, if turned inwards towards the palm of the hand, a great many would very often hide themselves when they ought most to appear, and would repent being placed in so honourable a post, where necessity made them brave.

Falsus honor juvat, et mendax infamia terret
Quem, nisi mendosum et mendacem?[7]

"False honour pleases, and base calumny
Affrights,—whom? Those that love to hear a lie."

Thus we see how all the judgments that are founded upon external appearances are marvellously uncertain and doubtful, and that there is *no so* certain testimony as every one is to himself In these matters how many drummer-boys are companions of our glory? He that stands firm in an open trench, what does he in that do more than fifty poor pioneers, who open him the way, and cover it with their own bodies, for fivepence a day pay, have done before him?

Non, quidquid turbida Roma
Elevet, accedas; examenque improbum in illa
Castiges trutina: nec te quæsiveris extra.[8]

"Follow not turbid Rome's so senseless ways
Of loading ev'ry thing that's done with praise;
Of that false balance trust not to the test,
And out of thee make of thyself no quest."

The dispersing and scattering our names into many mouths we call making them more great: we will have them there well received, and that this increase turn to their advantage, which is all that can be excusable in this design. But the excess of this disease proceeds so far that many covet to have a name, be it what it will. Trogus Pompeius[9] says of Herostratus, and Titus Livius[10] of Manlius Capitolinus, that they were more ambitious of a great reputation than of a good one. This vice is very common: we are more solicitous that men speak of us, than how they speak; and 'tis enough for us that our names are often mentioned, be it after what

1 Quintil, *Instit. Orat.* i. 12.
2 Seneca, *Epist.* 85.
3 Ovid, *Heriod.* i. 18. The text, however, has *flebam successu*—"I wept to see," &c.
4 Livy, xliv. 22.
5 Pers. i. 47. *Haud* does not occur in the text.
6 *The ring of Gyges.* Plato, *Republic*, ii. 3.
7 Horace, *Epist.* i. 16. 39.
8 Persius, i. 5.
9 The instance mentioned by Trogus (*apud* John of Salisbury, viii. 5), is Pausanias, who killed Philip of Macedon: the example of Herostratus is cited by John of Salisbury not from Trogus as abridged by Justin, but from Val. Max. viii. 14, *ext.* 5.
10 Livy, vi. 11.

manner it will; it seems that to be known is in some sort to have a man's life and its duration in another man's keeping. I for my part hold that I am only in myself; and that other life of mine, which lies in the knowledge of my friends, considering it naked and simply in itself, I know very well that I am sensible of no fruit or enjoyment of it, but by the vanity of a fantastic opinion; and when I shall be dead I shall be much less sensible of it, and shall withal absolutely lose the use of those real advantages that sometimes accidentally follow it. I shall have no more handle whereby to take hold of reputation, or whereby it may take hold of me; for to expect that my name should receive it in the first place, I have no name that is enough my own: of two that I have, one is common to all my race, and even to others also: there is one family at Paris and another at Montpelier whose surname is Montaigne; another in Brittany and Xaintonge called De la Montaigne. The transposition of one syllable only is enough to ravel our affairs, so that I shall peradventure share in their glory, and they shall partake of my shame; and moreover my ancestors were formerly surnamed Eyquem, a name wherein a family well known in England at this day is concerned: as to my other name, every one can take it that will; and so, perhaps, I may honour a porter in my own stead. And besides, though I had a particular distinction by myself, what can it distinguish when I am no more? Can it point out and favour inanity?

Hunc levior cippus non imprimit ossa.
Laudat posteritas, nunc non e manibus illis,
Nunc non e tumulo, fortunaque favilla,
Nascuntur violæ?[1]

"Will, after this, thy monumental stones
Press with less weight upon thy rotted bones?
Posterity commends thee: happy thou!
But will thy manes such a gift bestow
As to make violets from thy ashes grow?"

but of this I have spoken elsewhere. For the rest, in a whole battle, where ten thousand men are maimed or killed, there are not fifteen that are taken notice of: it must needs be some very eminent greatness, or some consequence of great importance that fortune has added to it, that must signalize a private action, not of a harquebusier only, but of a captain; for to kill a man, or two, or ten, to expose a man's self bravely to the peril of death, is, indeed, something in every one of us, because we there hazard all, but for the world's concern, they are things so ordinary, and so many of them are every day seen, and there must of necessity be so many of the same kind to produce any notable effect, that we cannot thence expect any particular renown;

Casus multus hic cognitus, ac jam
Tritus, et e medio fortunæ ductus acervo.[2]

"The action once was fam'd; but now, worn old,
With common acts of fortune is enroll'd."

Of so many thousands and thousands of valiant men that have died within these fifteen hundred years in France, with their swords in their hands, not a hundred have come to our knowledge: the memory, not of commanders only, but of battles and victories, is buried and gone: the fortunes of above half the world, for want of a record, stir not from their place, and vanish without duration. If I had unknown events in my possession I think I could with great ease out-do those that are recorded, in all sorts of examples. Is it not strange that even of the Greeks and Romans, amongst so many writers and witnesses, and so many rare and noble exploits, so few are arrived at our knowledge?

Ad nos vix tenuis famæ perlabitur aura.[3]

"Which fame to these our times has scarce brought down."

It will be much if a hundred years hence it be remembered, in general, that in our times there were civil wars in France. The Lacedæmonians, entering into battle, sacrificed to the muses,[4] to the end that their actions might be well and worthily written; looking upon it as a divine, and no ordinary, favour, that brave acts should find witnesses that could give them life and memory. Do we expect that at every musket-shot we receive, and at every hazard we run, there must be a registrar ready to record it? Not to say that a hundred registrars may enrol them, whose commentaries will not last above three days, and shall never come to the sight of any one. We have not the thousandth part of the ancient writings; 'tis fortune that gives them a shorter or longer life, according to her favour; and 'tis lawful to doubt whether those we have be not the worst, not having seen the rest. Men do not write histories of things of so little moment: a man must have been general in the conquest of an empire, he must have won two and fifty set battles, and always been the weaker in number, as Cæsar did: ten thousand brave fellows, and several great captains, lost their lives bravely in his service, whose names lasted no longer than their wives and children lived:

The muses sacrificed unto by the Lacedæmonians, and why.

Quos fama obscura recondit.[5]

"Whom time has not deliver'd o'er to fame."

Even those we see behave themselves the best, three months or three years after they have been knocked on the head are no more spoken of than if they had never been. Whoever will consider, with just measure and proportion, of what kind of men, and of what sort of ac-

[1] Pers. i. 37. Montaigne has changed the sense of the Latin, and substituted *posteritas* for *convivæ*.
[2] Juvenal, xiii. 9.
[3] *Æneid*, vii. 646.
[4] Plutarch, *Apoth. of the Lac dæmon.*
[5] *Æneid*, v. 302.

What sort of glory that is, the remembrance of which is preserved in books.

tions, the glory maintains itself in the memory of books, will find that there are very few actions and very few persons of our times, who can there pretend any right. How many worthy men have we seen survive their own reputation, who have seen and suffered the honour and glory, most justly acquired in their youth, extinguished in their own presence? And for three years of this fantastic and imaginary life we must go and throw away our true and essential life, and engage ourselves in the risk of perpetual death. The sages propose to themselves a nobler and more just end in so important an enterprise: *Recte facti fecisse merces est: officii fructus ipsum officium est.*[1] "The reward of a thing well done is to have done it: the fruit of a good office is the office itself." It were, perhaps, excusable in a painter or other artisan, or in a rhetorician or grammarian, to endeavour to raise themselves a name by their works; but the actions of virtue are too noble in themselves to seek any other reward than from their own worth, and especially to seek it in the vanity of human judgments.

Why the public approbation ought to be courted.

If this false opinion, nevertheless, be of that use to the public as to keep men in their duty; if the people are thereby stirred up to virtue; if princes are touched to see the world bless the memory of Trajan and abominate that of Nero; if it moves them to see the name of that great scoundrel, once so terrible and feared, so freely cursed and reviled by every schoolboy that lights upon it; let it, in the name of God, increase, and be as much as possible nursed up, cherished, and countenanced amongst us. And Plato,[2] bending his whole endeavour to make his citizens virtuous, advises them not to despise the good esteem of the people; and says, that it falls out by a certain divine inspiration that even the wicked themselves oft-times, as well by word as opinion, can rightly distinguish the virtuous from the wicked. This person and his tutor are both marvellous bold artificers, everywhere to add divine operations and revelations where human force is wanting: *Ut tragici poetæ confugiunt ad deum, quum explicare argumenti exitum non possunt*;[3] "As the tragic poets have recourse to a god, when they cannot compass the catastrophe of their piece:" and, perhaps, for this reason it was, that Timon, railing at him, called him the great forger of miracles.[4] Seeing that men, by their insufficiency, cannot pay themselves well enough with current money, let the counterfeit be superadded. 'Tis a way that has been practised by all the legislators; and there is no government that has not had some mixture either of ceremonial vanity or false opinion, that serves for a curb to keep the people in their duty. 'Tis for this that most of them have their fabulous originals and beginnings, so enriched with supernatural mysteries: 'tis this that has given credit to bastard religions, and caused them to be countenanced by men of understanding; and for this that Numa and Sertorius, to possess their men with a better opinion of them, fed them with this foppery; one that the nymph Egeria, the other that his white hind, brought them all their councils from the gods: and the authority that Numa gave to his laws, under the title of the patronage of this goddess, Zoroaster, legislator of the Bactrians and Persians, gave to his under the name of the god Oromazis; Trismegistus, legislator of the Egyptians, under that of Mercury; Xamolxis, legislator of the Scythians, under that of Vesta; Charondas, legislator of the Chalcedonians, under that of Saturn; Minos, legislator of the Cretans, under that of Jupiter; Lycurgus, legislator of the Lacedæmonians, under that of Apollo; and Draco and Solon, legislators of the Athenians, under that of Minerva: and every government has a god at the head of it; others falsely, that truly which Moses set over the Jews at their departure out of Egypt. The religion of the Bedouins, as the Sire de Joinville reports,[5] amongst other things, enjoined a belief that the soul of him amongst them who died for his prince went into another more happy body, more beautiful than the former; by which means they much more willingly ventured their lives;

> In ferrum mens prona viris, animæque capaces
> Mortis, et ignavum est redituræ parcere vitæ.[6]
>
> "Men covet wounds, and strive death to embrace,
> To save a life that will return is base."

This is a very salutary, though an erroneous, belief. Every nation has many such examples of its own: but this subject would require a treatise by itself.

The difference betwixt that which the ladies term honour, and their duty.

To add one word more to my former discourse, I would advise the ladies no more to call that honour which is but their duty: *Ut enim consuetudo loquitur, id solum dicitur honestum quod est populari fama gloriosum*;[7] "According to the vulgar notion, which only approves that for laudable that is glorious by the public voice;" their duty is the mark, their honour but the outward rind: neither would I advise them to give that excuse in payment for their denials; for I pre-suppose that their intentions, their desire and will, which are things wherein their honour is not at all concerned, forasmuch as nothing appears without, are much better regulated than the effects:

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[1] Seneca, *Epist.* 81.
[2] *Laws*, xii.
[3] Cicero, *de Nat. Deor.* i. 20.
[4] Laertius, *Life of Plato.*
[5] In his *Memoirs*, c. 58.
[6] Lucan, i. 461.
[7] Cicero, *de Finib.* ii. 15.

Quæ, quia non licuit, non facit, illa facit :[1]

" She who not sins, whom mere restraint keeps in,
Though she forbear the act, commits the sin :"

the offence both towards God and in the conscience is as great to desire as to do: and besides, they are actions so private and secret of themselves as would be easily enough kept from the knowledge of others, wherein the honour consists, if they had not another respect to their duty, and the affection they bear to chastity for itself. Every woman of honour will much rather choose to lose her honour than to hurt her conscience.

CHAPTER XVII.

OF PRESUMPTION.

THERE is another sort of glory, which is the having too good an opinion of our own worth. 'Tis an inconsiderate affection with which we flatter ourselves, and that represents us to ourselves different from what we truly are: like the passion of love, that lends beauties and graces to the person beloved, and that makes those who are caught with it, with a depraved and corrupt judgment, consider the thing they love more perfect than it is.

The fear of being guilty of presumption ought not to give us too mean an opinion of ourselves, nor to hinder us from making ourselves known.

I would, not, nevertheless, for fear of failing on the other side, that a man should not know himself aright, or think himself less than he is; the judgment ought in all things to keep itself upright and just: 'tis all the reason in the world he should discern in himself, as well as in others, what truth sets before him: if he be Cæsar, let him boldly think himself the greatest captain in the world. We are nothing but ceremony: ceremony carries us away, and we leave the substance of things: we hold by the branches, and quit the trunk and the body: we have taught the ladies to blush when they hear that but named which they are not at all afraid to do: we dare not call our members by their right names, yet are not afraid to employ them in all sort of debauches: ceremony forbids us to express by words things that are lawful and natural, and we obey it; reason forbids us to do things unlawful and ill, and nobody obeys it. I find myself here fettered by the laws of ceremony; for it neither permits a man to speak well of himself nor ill. We will leave her there for this time.

They whom fortune (call it good or ill) has made to pass their lives in some eminent degree, may, by their public actions, manifest what they are: but they whom she has only employed in the crowd, and of whom nobody will say a word, unless they speak themselves, are to be excused if they take the boldness to speak of themselves to such whose interest it is to know them; by the example of Lucilius,

Ille velut fidis arcana sodalibus olim
Credebat libris, neque si male cesserat, usquam
Decurrens alio, neque si bene: quo fit, ut omnis
Votiva pateat veluti descripta tabella
Vita senis ;[2]

" His way was in his books to speak his mind,
As freely as his secrets he would tell
To a tried friend, and, take it ill or well,
He held his custom. Hence it came to pass
The old man's life is there, as in a glass ;"

he always committed to paper his actions and thoughts, and there pourtrayed himself such as he found himself to be: *nec id Rutilio et Scauro citra fidem aut obtrectationi fuit*.[3] " Nor were Rutilius or Scarus misbelieved or condemned for so doing."

I remember, then, that from my infancy there was observed in me I know not what kind of carriage and behaviour, that seemed to relish of pride and arrogance. I will say this by the way, that it is not inconvenient to have conditions and propensities so proper and so incorporated into us that we have not the means to feel and be aware of them: and of such natural inclinations the body will readily retain some bent, without our knowledge or consent. It was a certain affectation becoming to his beauty that made Alexander carry his head on one side, and Alcibiades to lisp; Julius Cæsar[4] scratched his head with one finger, which is the fashion of a man full of troublesome thoughts; and Cicero, as I take it, was wont to wrinkle up his nose, a sign of a man given to scoffing: such motions as these may imperceptibly happen in us. There are other artificial ones which I meddle not with, as salutations and congees, by which men for the most part unjustly acquire the reputation of being humble and courteous; one may be humble, out of pride. I am prodigal enough of my hat, especially in summer, and never am so saluted but I pay it again, from persons of what quality soever, unless they be in my own pay. I should make it my request, to some princes that I know, that they should be more sparing of that ceremony, and bestow that courtesy where it is more due; for being so indiscreetly and indifferently conferred on all, they are thrown away to no purpose: if they be without respect of persons, they lose their effect. Amongst irregular countenances, let us not forget that severe one of the Emperor Constantius, who always in public held his head quite upright, without bending or turning on either side, not so much as to look upon those who saluted him on one side, planting his body in a stiff, immovable posture, without suffering it to yield to the motion of his coach: not daring so much as to spit, blow his nose, or wipe his face, before people.[5] I know not whether the gestures that

[1] Ovid, *Amor*. iii. 4. 4.
[2] Horace, *Sat*. ii. 1. 30.
[3] Tacitus, *Agricola*, c. 1.
[4] Plutarch, *Life of Cæsar*, c. 1. The same thing is said of Pompey. Senec. *Controv*. iii. 19.
[5] Ammianus Marcellinus, xxi. 14.

were observed in me were of this first quality, and whether I had really any secret propensity to this vice, as it might well be; and I cannot be responsible for the motions of the body: but as to the motions of the soul, I will here confess what I think of the matter.

This sort of glory consists of two parts; the one in setting too great a value upon ourselves, and the other in setting too little a value upon others. As to the one, methinks these considerations ought, in the first place, to be of some force: I feel myself importuned by an error of the soul that displeases me, both as it is unjust and as it is troublesome; I attempt to correct it, but I cannot root it out; which is that I lessen the just value of things that I possess, and over-value others, because they are foreign, absent, and none of mine: this humour spreads very far. As the prerogative of authority makes husbands look upon their own wives with an unjustifiable disdain, and many fathers their children, so 'tis with me; betwixt two works of equal merit I should always throw a weight into the scale against my own; not so much that the jealousy of my preferment and bettering troubles my judgment, and hinders me from satisfying myself, as that dominion of itself begets a contempt of what is our own, and over which we have an absolute command. Foreign governments, manners, and languages, insinuate themselves into my esteem; and I am sensible that Latin allures me by favour of its dignity, to value it above its due, as it does children and the common sort of people. The economy, house, horse, of my neighbour, though no better than my own, I prize above my own, because they are not mine: moreover, being very ignorant in my own affairs, I am astonished at the assurance every one has of himself; whereas there is hardly any thing that I am sure I know, or that I dare be responsible to myself that I can do. I have not my means of doing anything stated and ready, and am only instructed therein after the effect; as doubtful of my own force as I am of another. Whence it comes to pass that if I happen to do anything commendable, I attribute it more to my fortune than my industry; forasmuch as I plan everything by chance and in fear. I have this also in general, that of all the opinions antiquity has held of men in the gross, I most willingly embrace, and most adhere to, those that most contemn and undervalue us. Methinks philosophy has never so fair a game to play as when it falls upon our vanity and presumption; when it most lays open our irresolution, weakness, and ignorance. I look upon the too good opinion that man has of himself to be the nursing mother of all the most false opinions, both public and private. Those people who ride astride upon the epicycle of Mercury, who see so far into the heavens, are worse to me than a man that comes to draw my teeth: for in the study I pursue, the subject of which is man, finding so great a variety of judgments, so great a labyrinth of difficulties one within another, so great diversity and uncertainty, even in the school of wisdom itself: you may judge, seeing those people could not resolve upon the knowledge of themselves and their own condition, which is continually before their eyes and within them, seeing they do not know how that moves which they themselves move, nor how to give us a description of the springs they themselves govern and make use of, how can I believe them about the ebbing and flowing of the Nile? "The curiosity of knowing things has been given to man for a scourge," says the Holy Scripture.

Montaigne apt to undervalue his person and possessions.

But to return to what concerns myself, it were very difficult, methinks, that any other should have a meaner opinion of himself, nay, that any other should have a meaner opinion of me, than I have of myself. I look upon myself as one of the common sort, saving in this, that I have no better opinion of myself; guilty of the meanest and most popular defects, but not disowned or excused, and do not value myself upon any other account than because I know my own value. If there be any glory in the case, 'tis superficially infused into me by the treachery of my complexion, and has no body that my judgment can discern; I am sprinkled, but not dyed: for in truth, as to the effects of the mind, there is nothing ever went from me, be it what it will, with which I am satisfied; and the approbation of others makes me not think the better of myself. My judgment is tender and difficult, especially in things that concern myself; I disown myself continually, and feel myself float and waver by reason of my weakness; I have nothing of my own that satisfies my judgment. My sight is clear and regular enough, but in working it is apt to dazzle; as I most manifestly find in poetry; I love it infinitely, and am able to give a tolerable judgment of other men's works; but, in truth, when I apply myself to it, I play the child, and am not able to endure myself. A man may play the fool in every thing else, but not in poetry;

Montaigne always displeased with his own writings, and especially his poetical essays.

> Mediocribus esse poetis,
> Non di, non homines, non concessere columnæ.[1]
>
> "But neither men, nor gods, nor columns meant
> Poets should ever be indifferent:"

I would to God this sentence were writ over the doors of all our printers, to forbid the entrance of so many rhymers!

> Verum
> Nil securius est malo poeta.[2]
>
> "But the truth is this,
> Nought more secure than a bad poet is:"

[1] Horace, *de Arte Poetica*, v. 372.

[2] Martial, xii. 63. 13.

Why have not we such people? Dionysius, the father, valued himself upon nothing more than his poetry: at the Olympic Games, with chariots surpassing all others in magnificence, he sent also poets and musicians to present his verses, with tents and pavilions royally gilt and hung with tapestry. When his verses came to be recited, the excellency of the pronunciation at first attracted the attention of the people; but when they afterwards came to weigh the meanness of the composition, they first entered into disdain, and continuing to nettle their judgments, presently proceeded to fury, and ran to pull down and tear to pieces all his pavilions; and in that his chariots neither performed any thing to purpose in the course, and that the ship which brought back his people failed of making Sicily, and was by the tempest driven and wrecked upon the coast of Tarentum, these same people certainly believed it was through the anger of the gods, incensed, as they themselves were, against that paltry poem;[1] and even the mariners themselves, who escaped from the wreck, seconded this opinion of the people, to which also the oracle, that foretold his death, seemed to subscribe: which was, "That Dionysius should be near his end when he should have overcome those who were better than himself;" which he interpreted of the Carthaginians, who surpassed him in power; and having war with them, often declined the victory, not to incur the sense of this prediction: but he understood it ill; for the god pointed at the time to the advantage that by favour and injustice he obtained at Athens over the tragic poets, better than himself, having caused his own play, called the Leneians, to be acted in emulation, presently after which victory he died, and partly of the excessive joy he conceived at his success.[2]

What I find tolerable of mine, is not so really and in itself, but in comparison of other worse things, that I see are well enough received. I envy the happiness of those that can please and hug themselves in what they do; for 'tis a very easy way of being pleased, because a man extracts that pleasure from himself; especially if he be constant in his self-conceit. I know a poet, against whom both the intelligent in poetry and the ignorant, abroad and at home, both heaven and earth, cry out that he understands very little in it; and yet, for all that, he has never a whit the worse opinion of himself, but is always beginning some new piece, always contriving some new invention, and still persists, by so much the more obstinate as it is only himself that stands up in his defence.

My works are so far from pleasing me, that as often as I retaste them they disgust me; — What notion Montaigne had of his own works.

Cum relego, scripsisse pudet; quia plurima cerno,
Me quoque, qui feci, judice, digna lini.[3]

"When I peruse, I blush at what I've writ,
And think 'tis only for the fire fit:"

I have always an idea in my soul, a certain confused image, which presents me, as in a dream, a better form than what I have made use of; but I cannot catch it, nor fit it to my purpose; and yet even that idea is but of the meaner sort. By which I conclude that the productions of those rich and great souls of former times are very much beyond the utmost stretch of my imagination or wish; their writings do not only satisfy and fill me, but they astonish me and ravish me with admiration; I judge of their beauty, I see it, if not to the utmost, yet so far at least as to show me 'tis impossible for me to aspire thither. Whatever I undertake, I owe a sacrifice to the Graces, as Plutarch says of some one,[4] to commend myself to their favour:

Si quid enim placet,
Si quid dulce hominum sensibus influit,
Debentur lepidis omnia Gratiis:

"If any thing can please that e'er I write,
If to men's minds it ministers delight,
All's to the lovely Graces due:

They abandon me throughout; all I write is rude; polish and beauty are wanting: I cannot set things off to an advantage: my handling adds nothing to the matter; for which reason I must have it forcible, very full, and that has lustre of its own. If I pitch upon subjects that are popular and gay, 'tis to follow my own inclination, who do not affect a grave and ceremonious wisdom, as the world does; and to make myself more sprightly, not my style, which would rather have them grave and severe: at least if I may call an informal and irregular way of speaking, a vulgar jargon, and a method without method, definition, division, or conclusion, perplexed like that of Amafanius and Raberius,[5] a style. I can neither please nor delight, much less ravish any one: the best story in the world is spoiled by my handling. I cannot speak but in earnest, and am totally unprovided of that facility which I observe in many of my acquaintance, of entertaining the first comers, and keeping a whole company in breath, or occupying the ear of a prince with all sorts of discourse, without being weary; they never wanting matter, by reason of the faculty and grace they have in taking hold of — Montaigne's style.

[1] Diod. Siculus, xiv. 104.

[2] Id. xv. 74. But Montaigne has here committed a singular blunder, mistaking the Leneians, feasts celebrated in honour of Bacchus by dramatic exhibitions, for the name of the tragedy, which was really called "The Ransom of Hector." See Ttes. *Chiliad.* v. 178.

[3] Ovid, *de Ponto*, i. 5. 15.

[4] Of Xenocrates, in the *Precepts of Marriage*.

[5] Amafanius et Rabirius, nulla arte adhibita, de rebus ante oculos positis vulgari sermone disputant; nihil definiunt, nihil partiuntur, nihil apta interrogatione concludunt.—Cic. *Acad.* i. 2.

the first thing started, and accommodating it to the humour and capacity of those with whom they have to do. Princes do not much like solid discourses, nor I to tell stories. The first and easiest reasons, which are commonly the best taken, I know not how to employ; I am an ill orator for the common sort: I am apt of every thing to say the utmost extreme that I know. Cicero is of opinion that, in treatises of philosophy, the exordium is the hardest part: if it be so, I do wise in sticking to the conclusion.[1] And yet we are to know how to wind the string to all notes, and the sharpest is that which is most seldom touched. There is at least as much perfection in elevating an empty, as in supporting a weighty, thing: a man must sometimes superficially handle things, sometimes go deep into them. I know very well that most men keep themselves in the lower form, for not conceiving things otherwise than by this outer bark; but I likewise know that the greatest masters, and Xenophon and Plato, are often seen to stoop to this low and popular manner of speaking and treating of things, maintaining them with graces which are never wanting to them.

As to the rest, my language has nothing in it facile and polished: 'tis rough and scornful, free and irregular in its dispositions, and therefore pleases me, if not by my judgment, by my inclination: but I very well perceive that I sometimes give myself too much rein; and that, by force of endeavour to avoid art and affectation, I fall into the other inconvenience:

> Brevis esse laboro,
> Obscurus fio.[2]
>
> "Aiming at shortness, I become obscure."

Plato says[3] that the long or the short are not properties that either take away or give lustre to language. Should I attempt to follow the other more moderate and united style, I should never attain unto it; and though the short round periods of Sallust best suit with my humour, yet I find Cæsar much greater and much harder to imitate; and though my inclination would rather prompt me to imitate Seneca's way of writing, yet I nevertheless more esteem that of Plutarch. Both in doing and speaking I simply follow my own natural way; whence, perhaps, it falls out that I am better at speaking than writing. Motion and action animate words, especially in those who lay about them briskly, as I do, and grow hot: the comportment, the countenance, the voice, the robe, and the tribunal, will set off some things that of themselves would appear no better than prating. Messala complains, in Tacitus,[4] of the straightness and stiffness of some garments in his time, and of the fashion of the benches where the orators were to declaim, that weakened their eloquence.

My French tongue is corrupted both in pro-
nunciation, and otherwise, by the barbarism of my country: I never saw a man who was a native of any of the provinces on this side of the kingdom who had not a twang of his place of birth offensive to ears purely French. And not that I am so perfect in my Perigordin I can no more speak it than German, much care; 'tis a language (as are all about me, on every side, Poitou, Xai Angouleme, Limosin, Auvergne), drawling, dirty. There is indeed towards the mountains, a sort of Gasc that I am mightily taken with, blu significant, and, in truth, a more m military language than any other as sinewy, powerful, and pertinen French is graceful, neat, and luxuria

His F spoile dialec native

As to the Latin, which was given mother-tongue, I have by discounte the ready use of speaking it, and writing it too; wherein I formerly ha ticular reputation; by which you may inconsiderable I am on that side.

Beauty is a thing of great recomm in the correspondence amongst men principal means of acquiring the favour and good-liking of one another, and no man is so barbarous and morose that does not perceive himself in some sort struck attraction. The body has a great shar being, has an eminent place there, and its structure and symmetry are of v consideration. They who go about to and separate our two principal parts f another are to blame: we must, on t trary, reunite and rejoin them: we mu mand the soul, not to withdraw to itself apart, not to despise and aban body (neither can she do it but by som lous counterfeit), but to unite herself cl to embrace, cherish, assist, govern, an it, and to bring it back and set it int way when it wanders; in sum, to be a husband to it; forasmuch as do not appear to be diverse and uniform and concurring. Christian ticular instruction concerning thi for they know that the divine jus this society and junction of body a to the making the body capable

The of t the

[1] Montaigne (observes Mr. Coste) only quotes this sentiment to ridicule Cicero, whom he treats rather as a fine orator than an acute philosopher, in which he was not much in the wrong; for whoever nicely examines Cicero's philosophical works will easily see that they are only the sentiments of Plato, Aristotle, Epicurus, Zeno, &c. elegantly and politely translated into Latin.

[2] Horace, *de Arte Poet.* v. 25.

[3] *Republic*, x.

[4] *De Oratoribus*, which treatise, it is to be observed, Montaigne ascribes definitively to Tacitus, and, indeed, it is difficult to withhold our concurrence.

wards or *punishments*; and that God has an eye to every man's ways, and will have him receive entire his chastisement or reward, according to his merits. The sect of the Peripatetics, of all others the most sociable, attributes to wisdom this sole care, equally to provide for the good of these two associate parts: and the other sects, in not sufficiently applying themselves to the consideration of this mixture shew themselves to be biassed, one for the body, and the other for the soul, with equal error; and to have lost their subject, which is man, and their guide, which they in general confess to be nature. The first distinction that ever was amongst men, and the first consideration that gave some pre-eminence over others, 'tis likely, was the advantage of beauty:

Agros divisere atque dedere
Pro facie cujusque, et viribus, ingenioque;
Nam facies multum valuit, viresque vigebant.[1]

"Then steady bounds
Mark'd out to every man his private grounds;
Each had his proper share, each one was fit,
According to his beauty, strength, or wit;
For beauty, then, and strength, had most command."

Montaigne's stature.

Now, I am something lower than the middle stature,[2] a defect that not only borders upon deformity, but carries withal a great deal of inconvenience along with it, especially to those who are in command; for the authority which a graceful presence and a majestic mien beget is wanting. C. Marius did not willingly enlist any soldiers that were not six feet high.[3] "The Courtier"[4] has, indeed, reason to desire, in the gentleman he is forming, a moderate stature rather than any other, and to reject all strangeness that should make him be pointed at. But in choosing, if he must in this mediocrity have him rather below than above the common standard, I would not do so for a soldier. Little men, says Aristotle,[5] are pretty, but not handsome; and greatness of soul is discerned in a great body, as beauty is in a conspicuous stature:[6] the Ethiopians and Indians, says he,[7] in choosing their kings and magistrates, had a special regard to the beauty and stature of their persons. They had reason; for it creates respect in those that follow them, and is a terror to the enemy to see a leader, of a brave and goodly stature, march at the head of a troop.

Ipse inter primos præstanti corpore Turnus
Vertitur, arma tenens, et toto vertice supra est.[8]

"The graceful Turnus, tallest by the head,
Shaking his arms, himself the warriors led."

Our holy and heavenly King, of whom every circumstance is with the utmost care, religion, and reverence, to be observed, has not himself refused bodily recommendation: *Speciosus forma præ filiis hominum*.[9] "He is fairer than the children of men." And Plato,[10] with temperance and fortitude, requires beauty in the conservators of his Republic. It would vex you that a man should apply himself to you, amongst your servants, to ask you, "Where is Monsieur?" and that you should only have the remainder of the compliment of the hat that is made to your barber or your secretary; as it happened to poor Philopœmen,[11] who arriving the first of all his company at an inn where he was expected, the hostess, who knew him not, and saw him an unsightly fellow, employed him to go help her maids a little to draw water, or make a fire, against Philopœmen's coming; the gentlemen of his train arriving presently after, and surprised to see him busy in this fine employment (for he failed not to obey his landlady's command), asked him what he was doing there? "I am paying," said he, "the penalty of my ugliness." The other beauties belong to women: the beauty of stature is the only beauty of men. Where there is a contemptible stature, neither the largeness and roundness of the forehead, nor the delicacy and sweetness of the eyes, nor the moderate proportion of the nose, nor the littleness of the ears and mouth, nor the evenness and whiteness of the teeth, nor the thickness of a well-set brown beard, shining like the husk of a chestnut, nor curled hair, nor the just proportion of the head, nor a fresh complexion, nor a pleasant air of the face, nor a body without any offensive scent, nor the just proportion of limbs, can make a handsome man.

His face, &c.

I am, as to the rest, strong and well knit; my face is not puffed, but full; my complexion betwixt jovial and melancholic, moderately sanguine and hot,

Unde rigent setis mihi crura, et pectora villis;[12]

"Whence 'tis my thighs so rough and bristled are,
And that my breast is so thick set with hair;"

my health vigorous and sprightly, even to a well advanced age, and rarely troubled with sickness. Such I was; for I do not make any reckoning of myself now that I am engaged in the avenues of old age, being already past forty:

Minutatim vires et robur adultum
Frangit, et in partem pejorem liquitur ætas;[13]

"Thence by degrees our strength melts all away,
And treacherous age creeps on, and things decay;"

[1] Lucret. v. 1109.
[2] Montaigne elsewhere talks of himself as being a little man. In his journey through Italy he remarks, with a sort of gratification, that the Grand Duke Francis Maria de' Medici was *his height*.
[3] Vegetius, i. 5.
[4] *Il Cortegiano*, by Balthazar Castiglione.
[5] *Ethics*, iv. 7.
[6] This is false (observes Mr. Cotton); the greatest souls have been in men of low stature; witness Alexander, &c. The contrast in Scripture between David and Goliath is beautiful.
[7] *Politics*, iv. 4.
[8] *Æneid*, vii. 783.
[9] *Psa.* xlv. 3.
[10] *Republic*, vii.
[11] Plutarch, *in vitâ*.
[12] Martial, ii. 36, 5.
[13] Lucret. ii. 1131.

what I shall be from this time forward will be but half being, and no more me; I every day escape and steal away from myself:

Singula de nobis anni prædantur euntes.[1]

"I find I am grown old, and every year
Steals something from me."

Agility and address I never had, and yet am the son of a very active and sprightly father, and that continued to be so to an extreme old age. I have seldom known any man of his condition his equal in all bodily exercises; as I have seldom met with any who have not excelled me, except in running, at which I was pretty good. In music, in singing, for which I have a very unfit voice, or in playing on any sort of instrument, they could never teach me any thing. In dancing, tennis, or wrestling, I could never arrive to more than an ordinary pitch; in swimming, fencing, vaulting, and leaping, to none at all. My hands are so clumsy that I cannot so much as write, so as to read it myself, so that I had rather do what I have scribbled over again than to take upon me the trouble to make it out; and do not read much better than I write, at least to please my hearers. I cannot handsomely fold up a letter, nor could ever make a pen, or carve at table, worth a pin, nor saddle a horse, nor carry a hawk and fly her, nor hunt the dogs, nor lure a hawk, nor speak to a horse. In fine, my bodily qualities are very well suited to those of my soul; there is nothing sprightly, only a full and firm vigour; I am patient enough of labour and pain, but it is only when I go voluntarily to the work, and only so long as my own desire prompts me to it,

Montaigne not very lithsome.

Molliter austerum studio fallente laborem:[2]

"Whilst the delight makes you ne'er mind the pain:"

otherwise, if I am not allured with some pleasure, or have other guide than my own pure and free inclination, I am there good for nothing: for I am of a humour that, life and health excepted, there is nothing for which I would bite my nails, or that I would purchase at the price of annoyance of mind and constraint:

Tanti mihi non sit opaci
Omnes arena Tagi, quodque in mare volvitur aurum.[3]

"Rich Tagus' sands so dear I would not buy,
Nor all the riches in the sea that lie."

Extremely idle, extremely given up to my own inclination, both by nature and art, I would as willingly lend a man my blood as my pains. I have a soul free and entirely its own, and accustomed to guide itself after its own fashion; having hitherto never had either master or governor imposed upon me, I have walked as far as I would, and the pace that best pleased myself; this is it that has rendered me of no use to any one but myself.

And there was no need of forcing my heavy and lazy disposition; for being born to such a fortune as I had reason to be contented with (a reason, nevertheless, that a thousand others of my acquaintance would have rather made use of for a plank upon which to pass over to seek a higher fortune, to tumult and disquiet), I sought for no more, and also got no more:

Non agimur tumidis velis Aquilone secundo,
Non tamen adversis ætatem ducimus Austris;
Viribus, ingenio, specie, virtute, loco, re,
Extremi primorum, extremis usque priores:[4]

"I am not wafted by the swelling gales
Of winds propitious, with expanded sails;
Nor yet exposed to tempest-bearing strife,
Adrift to struggle through the ways of life:
For health, wit, virtue, honour, wealth, I'm cast
Behind the foremost, but before the last:"

I had only need of what was sufficient to content me; which, nevertheless, is a government of soul, to take it right, equally difficult in all sorts of conditions, and that by custom we see more easily found in want than in abundance; forasmuch, perhaps, as according to the course of our other passions, the desire of riches is more sharpened by their use than by the entire absence of them, and the virtue of moderation more rare than that of patience. I never had any thing to desire, but happily to enjoy the estate that God by his bounty had put into my hands. I have never had any thing irksome to do; and have seen to little beyond the management of my own affairs: or, if I have, it has been upon condition to do it at my own leisure, and after my own method, committed to my trust by such as had a confidence in me, that did not importune me, and that knew my humour; for good horsemen will make a shift to get service out of a rusty and broken-winded jade.

Even my infancy was trained up after a gentle and free manner, and exempt from any rigorous subjection. All which has helped me to a complexion delicate and incapable of solicitude; even to that degree that I love to have my losses, and the disorders wherein I am concerned, concealed from me; so that, in the account of my expenses, I put down what my negligence costs me in keeping and maintaining itself;

He was naturally delicate and indolent.

Hæc nempe supersunt,
Quæ dominum fallunt, quæ prosunt furibus.[5]

"Things superfluous, and to spare;
Goods which the owner knows not of, but may
Be unconcern'd when they are stolen away."

I do not love to know what I have, that I may be the less sensible of my loss; I entreat those that serve me, where affection and integrity

[1] Horace, *Epist.* ii. 2. 55.
[2] Id. *Sat.* ii. 2. 12.
[3] Juvenal iii. 54.
[4] Horace, *Epist.* ii. 2, 20.
[5] Id. *ib.* i. 6, 45.

are wanting, if they deceive me, to make it up with an air that may look handsome. For want of firmness enough to support the shock of the adverse accidents to which we are subject, and of patience seriously to apply myself to the management of my affairs, I nourish as much as I can this feeling in myself, wholly leaving all to fortune; to take all things at the worst, and to resolve to bear that worst with temper and patience: that is the only thing I aim at, and to which I apply my whole meditation. In a danger, I do not so much consider how I shall escape it, as of how little importance it is whether I escape it or no; should I be left dead upon the place, what matter? Not being to govern events, I govern myself, and apply myself to them, if they will not apply themselves to me. I have no great art to evade, to escape from, or to force fortune, and by prudence to guide and incline things to my own bias; I have still less patience to undergo the troublesome and painful care therein required; and the most uneasy condition for me is to be suspended in urgent occasions, and to be agitated betwixt hope and fear.

He was an enemy to deliberation.

Deliberation, even in things of lightest moment, is very troublesome to me; and I find my mind more put to it to undergo the various tumblings and tossings of doubt and consultation than to set up its rest, and to acquiesce in whatever shall happen, after the die is thrown. Few passions break my sleep; but of deliberations, the least will do it. As in roads, I willingly avoid those that are sloping and slippery, and put myself into the beaten track, how dirty or deep soever, where I can fall no lower, and there seek my safety; so I love misfortunes that are purely so, that do not torment and teaze me with the uncertainty of their growing better, but that, at the first push, plunge me directly into the worst that can be expected:

Dubia plus torquent mala.[1]

"Doubtful ills do plague us most."

In events, I carry myself like a man; in their conduct, like a child: the fear of the fall more fevers me than the fall itself. It will not quit cost: the covetous man has a worse account of his passion than the poor, and the jealous man than the cuckold; and a man oft-times loses more by defending his vineyard than if he gave it up. The lowest step is the safest; 'tis the seat of constancy: there you have need of no one but yourself, 'tis there founded, and wholly stands upon its own basis. Has not this example of a gentleman very well known, some air of philosophy in it? He married, being well advanced in years, having spent his youth in good-fellowship, a great talker and a great jeerer. Calling to mind how much the subject of cuckoldry had given him occasion to talk and scoff at others, to prevent them from paying him in his own coin, he married a wife from a place where any one may have flesh for his money; "Good-morrow, whore;" "Good-morrow, cuckold;" and there was not any thing wherewith he more commonly and openly entertained those that came to see him than with this plan of his, by which he stopped the private muttering of mockers, and took off the edge of this reproach.

Disgusted at ambition, because of its uncertainty.

As to ambition, which is neighbour, or rather daughter to presumption, fortune, to advance me, must have come and taken me by the hand; for to trouble myself for an uncertain hope, and to have submitted myself to all the difficulties that accompany those who endeavour to bring themselves into credit, in the beginning of their progress, I could never have done it:

Spem pretio non emo:[2]

"I give not ready cash for hope:"

I apply myself to what I see, and to what I have in my hand; and go not very far from the shore;

Alter remus aquas, alter tibi radat arenas:[3]

"Into the waves I plunge one oar,
And with the other rake the shore:"

and besides, a man very seldom arrives to these advancements, but in first hazarding what he has of his own; and I am of opinion that, if a man has sufficient to maintain him in the condition wherein he was born and brought up, 'tis a great folly to hazard that upon the uncertainty of augmenting it. He to whom fortune has denied wherein to set his foot, and to settle to a quiet and composed way of living, is to be excused if he does venture what he has, because, happen what will, necessity puts him upon shifting for himself.

Capienda rebus in malis præceps via est:[4]

"A desperate case must have a desperate course:"

and I rather excuse a younger brother to expose what his friends have left *him*, to the courtesy of fortune, than him with whom the honour of his family is entrusted, that cannot be necessitous but by his own fault. I have found a much shorter and more easy way, by the advice of the good friends I had in my younger days, to free myself from any such ambition, and to sit still;

Cui sit conditio dulcis, sine pulvere palmæ:[5]

"Far happier he in his sweet country-seat,
To gain the palm without or dust or sweat:"

judging right enough, of my own force, that

[1] Seneca, *Agamemnon*, iii. 1, 29.
[2] Terence, *Adelph.* ii. 3, 11.
[3] Propert. iii. 3, 23.
[4] Seneca, *Agamemnon*, ii. 1, 47.
[5] Horace, *Epist.* i. 1, 51.

it was not capable of any great matters; and calling to mind the saying of the late Chancellor Olivier, "That the French were like monkeys, that clamber up a tree from branch to branch, and never stop till they come to the highest; and there shew their bald breech."[1]

> Turpe est, quod nequeas capiti committere pondus,
> Et pressum inflexo mox dare terga genu:[2]
>
> "It is a shame to load the shoulders so
> That they the burden cannot undergo;
> And the knees bending with the weight, to quit
> The pond'rous load, and turn the back to it:"

The age in which Montaigne was born not at all agreeable to his humour.

I should find the best qualities I have useless in this age: the facility of my manners would have been called weakness and negligence; my faith and conscience, if such I have, scrupulousness and superstition; my liberty and freedom, troublesome, inconsiderate, and rash. Ill luck is good for something: it is good to be born in a very depraved age; for so, in comparison of others, you shall be reputed virtuous without costing you much: he that in our days is but a parricide and sacrilegious, is an honest man and a man of honour:

> Nunc, si depositum non inficiatur amicus,
> Si reddat veterem cum tota ærugine follem,
> Prodigiosa fides, et Tuscis digna libellis,
> Quæque coronata lustrari debeat agna:[3]
>
> "Now, if a friend, miraculously just,
> Restore th' intrusted coin with all its rust,
> 'Tis deem'd a prodigy, that should in gold
> Amongst the Tuscan annals be enroll'd;
> And that a crowned lamb should offered be
> A sacrifice to such rare honesty:"

and never was time or place, wherein, for princes, were ready more certain rewards for virtue and justice. The first that shall make it his business to get himself into favour and esteem by those ways, I am much deceived if he do not, and by the best title, outstrip his concurrents: force and violence can do some things, but not always all. We see merchants, country justices, and artisans, go cheek by jowl with the best gentry in valour and military knowledge; they perform honourable actions both in public engagements and private quarrels: they fight, they defend towns in our present wars. A prince stifles his renown in the crowd: let him shine bright in humanity, truth, integrity, temperance, and especially in justice; marks rare, unknown, and exiled; 'tis by no other means but by the sole good-will of the people that he can do his business, and no other qualities can attract their good-will like those, as being of greatest utility to them: *Nil est tam populare quam bonitas.*[4] "Nothing is so popular as goodness."

By this comparison I had been great and rare; as I find myself now a pigmy and ordinary, in comparison of some past ages, wherein, if other better qualities did not concur, it was ordinary and common to see a man moderate in his revenges, gentle in resenting injuries, religious in observing his word, neither double nor supple, nor accommodating his faith to the will of others, or the turns of times: I would rather see all affairs go to wrack and ruin than falsify my faith to secure them. For as to this virtue of dissimulation, which is now in so great request, I mortally hate it; and of all vices find none that shews so much baseness and meanness of spirit. 'Tis a cowardly and servile humour to hide and disguise a man's self under a vizor, and not to dare to shew himself what he is: by it our people are trained up to treachery; being brought to speak what is not true, they make no conscience of breaking their words. A generous heart ought not to belie its own thoughts, but will make itself seen within; all there is good, or at least manly. Aristotle[5] reputes it the office of magnanimity openly and professedly to love and hate; to judge and speak with all freedom; and not to value the approbation or dislike of others, in comparison of truth. Appollonius said[6] it was for slaves to lie, and for freemen to speak truth. 'Tis the chief and fundamental part of virtue; we must love it for itself. He that speaks truth because he is obliged so to do, and because it serves him, and that is not afraid to lie when it signifies nothing to any body, is not sufficiently true. My soul naturally abominates lying, and hates the mere thought of it: I have an inward shame and sharp remorse if sometimes a lie escape me, as sometimes it does, being surprised by occasions that allow me no premeditation. A man must not always tell all, for that were folly; but what a man says should be what he thinks, otherwise 'tis knavery. I do not know what advantage men pretend to by eternally counterfeiting and dissembling, if not never to be believed when they speak the truth; this may once or twice pass upon men; but to profess their concealing their thoughts, and to brag, as some of our princes have done, that they would burn their shirts if they knew their true intentions, which was a saying of the ancient Metellus of Macedon;[7] and that who knows not how to dissemble, knows not how to rule;[8] is to give warning to all who have any thing to do with them that all they say is nothing but lying and deceit: *Quo vis versutior et callidior est, hoc invisior et suspectior, detracta opinione probitatis:*[9] "By how much any one is more subtle and cunning, by so much is he hated or suspected, the opinion of his integrity being lost and gone:" it would

Dissimulation an odious vice.

[1] This comparison is suppressed in the edition of 1595, as injurious to the French nation. The saying has also been attributed to the Chancellor Michael de l'Hospital.
[2] Propert. iii 9, 5.
[3] Juvenal, xiii. 60.
[4] Cicero, *pro Ligar.* c. 12.
[5] *Ethics*, iv. 8.
[6] Phil. p. 409, ed. of 1709.
[7] Aurel. Victor, *de Vir. Illust.* c. 66.
[8] A favourite maxim of Louis XI.
[9] Cicero, *de Offic.* ii. 9.

be a great simplicity in any one to lay any stress either on the countenance or word of a man that has put on a resolution to be always another thing without than what he is within, as Tiberius did. And I cannot conceive what interest one can have in the conversation with such men, seeing they produce nothing that is current and true; whoever is disloyal to truth, is the same to falsehood also.

Of what importance it is to princes to avoid knavery.

Those of our time who have considered, in the establishment of the duty of a prince, the good of his affairs only, and have preferred that to the care of his faith and conscience, might have something to say to a prince whose affairs fortune had put into such a posture that he might for ever establish them by only once breaking his word; but it is not so; they often buy in the same market; they make more than one peace, more than one treaty in their lives. Gain tempts them to the first breach of faith,—and almost always it presents itself, as in all other ill acts; sacrileges, murders, rebellions, treasons, are always undertaken for some kind of advantage; but this first gain has infinite mischievous consequences, throwing this prince out of all correspondence and negociation, by this example of infidelity. Solyman, of the Ottoman race, a race not very solicitous of keeping their words and treaties, when, in my infancy,[1] he made his army land at Otranto, being informed that Mercurino de Gratinare and the inhabitants of Castro were detained prisoners, after having surrendered the place, contrary to the articles of the capitulation, sent orders to have them set at liberty, saying "That having other great enterprises in hand in those parts, the disloyalty, though it carried a shew of present utility, would for the future bring on him a disrepute and distrust of infinite prejudice."

Now, for my part, I had rather be troublesome and indiscreet than a flatterer and a dissembler. I confess that there may be some mixture of pride and obstinacy in keeping myself so upright and open as I do, without any consideration of others; and methinks I grow a little too free where I ought least to be so, and that I become hot by the opposition of respect; and it may be, also, that I suffer myself to follow the propensity of my own nature, for want of art. Using the same liberty of speech and countenance towards great persons, that I bring with me from my own house, I am sensible how much it declines towards incivility and indiscretion; but, besides that I am so bred, I have not a wit supple enough to evade a sudden question, and to escape by some turn, nor to feign a truth; nor memory enough to retain it so feigned, nor, truly, assurance enough to maintain it, and play the brave out of weakness;

Montaigne naturally open and free with great men.

and therefore it is that I abandon myself to candour, and always to speak as I think, both by complexion and design, leaving the event to fortune. Aristippus was wont to say[2] that the principal benefit he had extracted from philosophy was that he spoke freely and openly to all.

Memory very useful to the judgment.

Memory is a faculty of wonderful use, and without which the judgment can very hardly perform its office; for my part I have none at all. What any one will propose to me, he must do it by parcels, for to answer a speech consisting of several heads I am not able: I could not receive a commission by word of mouth, without a note-book. And when I have a speech of consequence to make, if it be long, I am reduced to the miserable necessity of getting by heart, word for word, what I am to say; I should otherwise have neither manner nor assurance, being in fear that my memory would play me a slippery trick. But this way is no less difficult to me than the other; I must have three hours to learn three verses; and besides, in a work of a man's own, the liberty and authority of altering the order, of changing a word, incessantly varying the matter, makes it harder to stick in the memory of the author. The more I mistrust it the worse it is; it serves me best by chance; I must negligently solicit it; for if I press it 'tis astounded, and, after it once begins to stagger, the more I sound it the more it is perplexed; it serves me at its own hour, not at mine.

Montaigne's aversion to any sort of constraint.

And the same defect I find in my memory, I find also in several other parts: I fly command, obligation, and constraint; that which I can otherwise do naturally and easily, if I impose it upon myself by an express and strict injunction, I cannot do it: even the members of my body, over which a man has a more particular jurisdiction, sometimes refuse to obey me, if I enjoin them a necessary service at a certain hour: this tyrannical and compulsive appointment baffles them; they shrink up either through fear or spite, and fall into a trance. Being once in a place where it is looked upon as the greatest discourtesy imaginable not to pledge those that drink to you, though I had there all liberty allowed me, I tried to play the good-fellow out of respect to the ladies that were of the party, according to the custom of the country: but there was sport enough; for this threatening and preparation that I had to force myself, contrary to my custom and inclination, did so stop my throat, that I could not swallow one drop; and I was deprived of drinking so much as to help my meat; I found myself gorged, and my thirst quenched, by the quantity of drink my imagination had swallowed. This effect is most manifest in such as have the most vehement and powerful imagi-

[1] In 1537, when Montaigne was four years old.

[2] Laertius, *in vitâ*.

nation; but it is natural, notwithstanding, and there is no one that does not, in some measure, experience it. They offered an excellent archer, condemned to die, to save his life, if he would shew some notable proof of his art; but he refused to try, fearing lest the too great contention of his will should make him shoot wide, and that, instead of saving his life, he should also lose the reputation he had got of being a good marksman. A man that thinks of something else will not fail to take over and over again the same number and measure of steps, even to an inch, in the place where he walks; but if he makes it his business to measure and count them, he will find that what he did by nature and accident, he cannot so exactly do by design.

My library, which is a good one for a country library, is situated in a corner of my house: if any thing comes in my head that I have a mind to look there for, or to write, lest I should forget it in but going across the court, I am fain to commit it to the memory of some other person. If I venture in speaking, to digress never so little from my subject, I am infallibly lost, which is the reason that I keep myself strictly and drily close in discourse. I am forced to call the men that serve me either by the names of their offices or their country; for names are very hard for me to remember; I can tell, indeed, that there are three syllables, that it has a harsh sound, and that it begins or ends with such a letter, but that's all: and if I should live long, I do not know but I should forget my own name, as some others have done. Messala Corvinus was two years without any trace of memory;[1] which is also said of George Trapezuntius;[2] and for my own interest, I often meditate what a kind of life theirs was, and if, without this faculty, I should have enough others left to support me with any manner of ease; and, prying narrowly into it, I fear that this privation, if absolute, destroys all the other functions of the soul:

Montaigne's bad memory.

> Plenus rimarum sum, hac atque illac perfluo.[3]
>
> "I'm full of chinks, and leak out every way."

It has befallen me more than once to forget the watch-word I had three hours before given or received; and to forget where I had hid my purse, whatever Cicero is pleased to say of the matter:[4] I help myself to lose what I have a particular care to lock safe up. *Memoria certe non modo philosophiam, sed omnis vitæ usum, omnesque artes, una maxime continet.*[5] "The memory in itself contains not only all philosophy, but all the use and all the arts, of life." The memory is the receptacle and sheath of all science; and therefore mine being so treacherous, if I know little, I cannot much complain. I know in general the names of the arts, and of what they treat, but nothing more. I turn over books, I do not study them; what I retain I do not know to be another's; 'tis only there that my judgment has made its advantage in the discourses and imaginations with which it has been filled; the author, place, words, and other circumstances, I immediately forget: and am so excellent at forgetting that I no less forget my own writings and compositions than the rest: I am very often quoted to myself, and am not aware of it. Whoever should enquire of me where I had the verses and examples that I have here huddled together, would puzzle me to tell him; and yet I have not borrowed them but from famous and known places, not satisfying myself that they were rich, if I moreover had them not from rich and honourable hands, where there was a concurrence of authority as well as reason. It is no great wonder if my book runs the same fortune that other books do, and if my memory loses what I have writ, as well as what I have read, and what I give, as well as what I receive.

Besides the defect of memory, I have others which very much contribute to my ignorance: I have a slow and heavy wit, the least cloud stops its progress, so that, for example, I never proposed to it any never so easy a riddle that it could find out; there is not the least idle subtlety that will not gravel me; in games, where the mind is required, as chess, cards, draughts, and the like, I understand nothing beyond the commonest points. I have a slow and perplexed apprehension, but what it once apprehends it apprehends well, closely and profoundly, for the time it retains it. My sight is perfect, entire, and discovers at a very great distance, but is soon weary; which makes me that I cannot read long, but am forced to have one to read to me. The younger Pliny can inform such as have not experienced it themselves, what, and how important an impediment this is to those who addict themselves to study.[6]

His apprehension dull.

His sight.

There is no so wretched and so illiterate a soul wherein some particular faculty is not seen to shine; no soul so buried in sloth and ignorance but it will make a sally at one end or

[1] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* vii. 24., who says also utely that Messala forgot his own name.

[2] George of Trebizond, a Greek who came to Rome in the papacy of Eugenius IV., and there published various works. He died about the year 1484, in extreme old age, having forgotten all he formerly knew.

[3] Ter. *Eun.* I. ii. 25.

[4] *De Senect.* c. vii. *Nec vero quemquam senum audivi oblitum quo loco thesaurum obruisset;* "I never heard of an old man's forgetting the place where he had hid his treasure."

[5] Cicero, *Acad.* ii. 7.

[6] Pliny, *Epist.* v. 8; who, in giving an account how Pliny the Elder, his uncle, employed his time in study, remarks among other things: "One day a friend of his, who was present when Pliny's secretary was reading to him, stopped the latter for the purpose of making him repeat some words he had mispronounced. Pliny asked him whether he had not understood their meaning?—'Certainly,' replied the friend.—'Why, then, did you prevent his going on? Here are more than ten lines lost!' So great an economist was he of time."

another; and how it comes to pass that a mind, blind and asleep to every thing else, shall be found sprightly, clear, and excellent, in some one particular effect, we are to enquire of our masters. But the beautiful souls are they that are universal, open, and ready for all things; if not instructed, at least capable of being so; which I say to accuse my own; for whether it be through infirmity or negligence (and to neglect that which lies at our feet, which we have in our hands, and what nearest concerns the use of life, is far from my doctrine), there is not a soul in the world so awkward as mine and so ignorant of many ordinary things, and such as a man cannot without shame be ignorant of. I must give some examples.

His ignorance in the most common things.

I was born and bred up in the country, and amongst husbandmen; I have had business and housekeeping in my own hands ever since my predecessors, who were lords of the estate I now enjoy, left me to succeed them: and yet I cannot cast up accounts, nor reckon my counters; most of our current money I do not know; nor the difference between one grain and another, either growing or in the barn, if it be not too obvious; and scarcely can distinguish between the cabbage and lettuce in my garden: I do not so much as understand the names of the chief instruments of husbandry, nor the most ordinary elements of agriculture, which the very children know; much less the mechanic arts, traffic, merchandize, the variety and nature of fruits, wines and meats; nor how to make a hawk fly, nor to physic a horse or a dog; and, since I must publish my whole shame, 'tis not above a month ago that I was trapped in my ignorance of the use of leaven to make bread, or to what end it was to keep wine in the vat. They conjectured of old, at Athens, an aptitude to the mathematics in him they saw ingeniously bavin up a burthen of brushwood:[1] truly, they would draw a quite contrary conclusion from me; for, give me the whole provision and necessaries of a kitchen, I should starve. By these features of my confession, men may imagine others to my prejudice. But whatever I deliver myself to be, provided it be such as I really am, I have my end; neither will I make any excuse for committing to paper such mean and frivolous things as these: the meanness of the subject compels me to it. They may, if they please accuse my project, but not my progress: so it is that, without any body's needing to tell me, I sufficiently see of how little weight and value all this is, and the folly of my design; 'tis enough that my judgment does not contradict itself, of which these are the essays:

Nasutus sis usque licet, sis denique nasus,
Quantum noluerit ferre rogatus Atlas,
Et possis ipsum tu deridere Latinum,
Non potes in nugas dicere plura meas,
Ipse ego quam dixi: quid dentem dente juvabit
Rodere? Carne opus est, si satur esse velis.
Ne perdas operam; qui se mirantur, in illos
Virus habe; nos hæc novimus esse nihil.[2]

"Nose out my blunders till thy nose appear
So great that Atlas it refuse to bear;
Though even 'gainst Latinus thou inveigh,
Against my trifles thou no more can'st say
Than I have said myself: then to what end
Should we to render tooth for tooth contend?
Thou must have flesh if thou'dst be full, my friend,
Lose not thy labour; but on those that do
Admire themselves, thy utmost venom throw,
That these things nothing are, full well we know."

I am not obliged not to utter absurdities, provided I am not deceived in them, and know them to be such; and to trip knowingly is so ordinary with me that I seldom do it otherwise, and rarely trip by chance. 'Tis no great matter to add ridiculous actions to the temerity of my humour, since I cannot ordinarily help supplying it with those that are vicious.

I was present one day at Barleduc,[3] when King Francis the Second, for a memorial of René, king of Sicily, was presented with a picture he had drawn of himself. Why is it not in like manner lawful for every one to draw himself with a pen as he did with a crayon? I will not therefore omit this further blemish, though unfit to be published, which is irresolution; a defect very incommodious in the negotiations of the affairs of the world. In doubtful enterprizes I know not which to choose:

Ne si, ne no, nel cor mi suona intero:[4]

"I cannot, from my heart, say yes or no:"

I can maintain an opinion, but I cannot choose one. By reason that, in human things, to what side soever a man inclines, so many appearances present themselves that confirm us in it (and the philosopher Chrysippus said,[5] that he would of Zeno and Cleanthes, his masters, learn their doctrines only; for as to the proofs and reasons, he should find enough of his own); which way soever I turn, I still furnish myself with causes and likelihood enough to fix me there; which makes me detain within me doubt and the liberty of choosing till occasion presses; and then, to confess the truth, I, for the most part, throw the feather into the wind, as the saying is, and commit myself to the mercy of fortune; a very light inclination and circumstance carries me along with it;

Dum in dubio est animus, paulo momento huc atque
Illuc impellitur.[6]

"While he is divided in his mind, a little matter will turn him one way or t'other."

[1] Montaigne was mistaken in fixing the fact at Athens; for, according to Diogenes Laertius, ix. 53, it was Protagoras, of Abdera, who being observed by Democritus to be very ingenious at making faggots, he thought him capable of attaining to the sublimest sciences, and took care therein to instruct him. Hence it is very likely that this was not at Athens, but at Abdera, which was the country both of Protagoras and Democritus; and Aulus Gellius expressly says so, v. 3.

[2] Martial, ii. 13.

[3] In the month of September, 1559.

[4] Petrarch, p. 208. edit. di Giolito, 1557.

[5] Laertius, *in vitâ*.

[6] Terence, *And.* i. 6. 32.

The uncertainty of my judgment is so equally balanced, in most occurrences, that I could willingly refer it to be decided by the chance of a die; and observe, with great consideration of our human infirmity, the examples that the divine history itself has left us of this custom of referring to fortune and chance the determination of elections in doubtful things: *Sors cecidit super Matthiam*:[1] "The lot fell upon Matthew." Human reason is a two-edged and a dangerous sword: observe, in the hand of Socrates, her most intimate and familiar friend, how many several points it has. Thus I am good for nothing but to follow and suffer myself to be easily carried away with the crowd; I have not confidence enough in my own strength to take upon me to command and lead; I am very glad to find the way beaten before me by others. If I must run the hazard of an uncertain choice, I am rather willing to do so under such a one as is more confident in his opinions than I am in mine, whose ground and foundation I find to be very slippery and unsure.

Montaigne not given to change.

And yet I do not easily change, by reason that I discern the same weakness in contrary opinions: *ipsa consuetudo assentiendi periculosa esse videtur, et lubrica*;[2] "the very custom of assenting seems to be dangerous and slippery;" especially in political affairs, there is a large field open for contestation:

> Justa pari premitur veluti cum pondere libra
> Prona, nec hac plus parte sedet, nec surgit ab illa.[3]
>
> "Like a just balance press'd with equal weight,
> Nor dips nor rises, but the beam is straight."

Machiavel's writings, for example, were solid enough for the subject, yet were they easy enough controverted; and they who have taken up the cudgels against him have left as great a facility of controverting them. There was never wanting, in that kind of argument, replies upon replies, and as infinite a contexture of debates as our wrangling lawyers have extended in favour of suits:

> Cædimur, et totidem plagis consumimus hostem;[4]
>
> "By turns the foe beats us and we the foe,
> Dealing to each, alternate, blow for blow;"

the reasons having little other foundation than experience, and the variety of human events presenting us with infinite examples of all sorts of forms. An understanding person of our times says that whoever would, in contradiction of our almanacs, write cold where they say hot, and wet where they say dry, and always put the contrary of what they foretel, if he were to lay a wager, he would not care which side he took, excepting where no uncertainty could fall out, as to promise excessive heats at Christmas, or extremity of cold at Midsummer, which cannot possibly be: I have the same opinion of these political controversies; be on what side you will, you have as fair a game to play as your adversary, provided you do not proceed so far as to jostle principles that are too manifest to be disputed: and yet 'tis my notion, in public affairs there is no government so ill, provided it be ancient and has been constant, that is not better than change and alteration. Our manners are infinitely corrupted, and wonderfully incline to grow worse: of our laws and customs, there are many that are barbarous and monstrous: nevertheless, by reason of the difficulty of reformation and the danger of stirring things, if I could put something under to stay the wheel, and keep it where it is, I would do it with all my heart:

> Numquam adeo fœdis, adeoque pudendis
> Utimur exemplis, ut non pejora supersint.[5]
>
> "Bad as the instances we give, 'tis plain,
> Others might be produc'd of fouler stain."

The worst thing that I find in our state is the instability of it; and that our laws, no more than our clothes, can settle in any certain form. It is very easy to accuse a government of imperfection, for all mortal things are full of it: it is very easy to beget in a people a contempt of its ancient observances; never any man undertook it but he succeeded; but to establish a better regimen in the stead of that a man has overthrown, many who have attempted this have foundered in the attempt. I very little consult my prudence in my conduct; I am willing to let it be guided by the public rule. Happy people, who do what they are commanded better than they who command, without tormenting themselves with the causes, who suffer themselves gently to roll on, after the celestial revolution. Obedience is never pure nor calm in him who argues and disputes.

In what Montaigne esteems himself.

In fine, to return to myself, the only thing by which I esteem myself to be something is that wherein never any man thought himself to be defective; my recommendation is vulgar and common; for who ever thought he wanted sense? It would be a proposition that would imply a contradiction in itself; 'tis a disease that never is where it is discerned; 'tis tenacious and strong, but what the first ray of the patient's sight does nevertheless pierce through and disperse, as the beams of the sun do a thick mist: to accuse one's self would be to excuse one's self, in this case; and to condemn, to absolve. There never was porter or silly girl that did not think they had sense enough for their need. We easily enough admit an advantage over us of courage, bodily strength, experience, disposition, or beauty in others; but an advantage in judgment we

[1] Acts, i. 26.
[2] Cicero, *Acad.* ii. 21.
[3] Tibullus, iv. 41.
[4] Horace, *Epist.* ii. 2. 97.
[5] Juvenal, viii. 183.

yield to none; and the reasons that simply proceed from the natural arguing of others, we think, if we had but turned our thoughts that way, we should ourselves have found it, as well as they. Knowledge, style, and such parts as we see in other works, we are readily aware if they excel our own; but for the simple products of the understanding, every one thinks he could have found out the like, and is hardly sensible of the weight and difficulty, unless, and then with much ado, in an extreme and incomparable distance; and whoever should be able clearly to discern the height of another's judgment, would be also able to raise his own to the same pitch. So that it is a sort of exercise, from which a man is to expect very little praise; a kind of composition of small repute. And besides, for whom do you write? The learned, to whom the authority appertains of judging books, know no other value but that of learning, and allow of no other process of wit but that of erudition and art; if you have mistaken one of the Scipios for another, what is all the rest you have to say worth? whoever is ignorant of Aristotle, according to their rule, is in some sort ignorant of himself: heavy and vulgar souls cannot discern the grace of a high and unfettered style. Now these two sorts of men make up the world. The third sort, into whose hands you fall, of souls that are regular and strong of themselves, is so rare that it justly has neither name nor place amongst us; and 'tis pretty well time lost to aspire unto it, or to endeavour to please it.

Whether a person is to value himself for his writings.

'Tis commonly said that the justest dividend nature has given us of her favours is that of sense; for there is no one that is not contented with his share: Is it not reason? For whoever should discern beyond that would see beyond his sight. I think my opinions are good and sound; but who does not think the same of his? One of the best proofs I have that mine are so is the small esteem I have of myself; for had they not been very well assured, they would easily have suffered themselves to have been deceived by the peculiar affection I have to myself, being one that places it almost wholly in myself, and do not let much run out. All that others distribute amongst an infinite number of friends and acquaintance, to their glory and grandeur, I dedicate to the repose of my own mind, and to myself; that which escapes thence is not properly by my direction:

What grounds Montaigne had for thinking his opinions right.

Mihi nempe valere et vivere doctus.[1]

"To love myself I very well can tell,
So as to live content, and to be well."

Now I find my opinions very bold and constant, in condemning my own imperfection; and to say the truth, 'tis a subject upon which I exercise my judgment, as much as upon any other. The world looks always *opposite*; I turn my sight inwards, and there fix and employ it. Every one looks before him, I look into myself; I have no other business but with myself; I am eternally meditating upon myself, control and taste myself. Other men's thoughts are ever wandering abroad, if they set themselves to thinking; they are still going forward;

Nemo in sese tentat descendere;[2]

"No man attempts to dive into himself;"

for my part, I circulate in myself; and this free humour, of not over-easily subjecting my belief, I owe principally to myself; for the strongest and most general imaginations I have are those that, as a man may say, were born with me: they are natural, and entirely my own. I produced them crude and simple, with a strong and bold production, but a little troubled and imperfect; I have since established and fortified them with the authority of others, and the sound examples of the ancients, whom I have found of the same judgment; they have given me faster hold, and a more manifest fruition and possession of that I had before. The reputation that every one pretends to, of vivacity and promptness of wit, I seek in regularity; the glory they pretend to from a brave and honourable action, or some particular excellency, I claim from order, conformity, and tranquillity of opinions and manners: *Omnino si quidquam est decorum, nihil est profecto magis, quam æquabilitas universæ vitæ, tum singularum actionum; quam conservare non possis, si, aliorum naturam imitans, omittas tuam.*[3] "If anything be entirely decent, nothing certainly can be more so than a uniformity of the whole life, and in every particular action of it; which thou canst not positively observe and keep, if, imitating other men's natures, thou layest aside thy own."

Here, then, you see to what degree I find myself guilty of this first part, that I said was in the vice of presumption. As to the second, which consists in not having a sufficient esteem for others, I know not whether or no I can so well excuse myself; but, whatever comes on't, I am resolved to speak the truth. And whether, perhaps, it be, that the continual frequentation I have with the humours of the ancients, and the idea of those great souls of past ages, puts me out of taste both with others and myself; or that, in truth, the age we live in does produce but very indifferent things; yet so it is, that I see nothing worthy of any great admiration. Neither, indeed, have I so great an intimacy with many men as is requisite to make a right judgment of them; and those with whom my condition

Montaigne not much prepossessed in favour of his own times.

[1] Lucret. v. 959.
[2] Persius, iv. 23.
[3] Cicero, *de Offic.* i. 31.

makes me the most frequent are, for the most part, men that have little care of the culture of the soul, but that look upon honour as the sum of all blessings, and valour as the height of all perfection.

He loved to commend merit, whether in his friends or enemies.

What I see that is handsome in others I very readily commend and esteem; nay, I often say more in their commendation than I think they really deserve, and give myself so far leave to lie; for I cannot invent a false subject. My testimony is never wanting to my friends in what I conceive deserves praise; and where a foot is due I am willing to give them a foot and a half; but to attribute to them qualities that they have not, I cannot do it, nor openly defend their imperfections. Nay, to my enemies, I frankly and ingenuously give their due testimony of honour; my affection alters, my judgment not; and I never confound my quarrels with other circumstances that are foreign to them; and I am so jealous of the liberty of my judgment that I can very hardly part with it for any passion whatever. I do myself a greater injury in lying, than I do him of whom I tell a lie.

Enemies honoured by the Persians for their virtue.

This commendable and generous custom is observed of the Persian nation: that they spoke of their mortal enemies, and with whom they were at deadly war, as honourably and justly as their virtues deserved.

I know men enough that have several fine parts: one wit, another courage, another address, another conscience, another language; one one science, another another; but a man generally great, and that has all these brave parts together, or any one of them to such a degree of excellence that we should admire him, or compare him with those we honour of times past, my fortune never brought me acquainted me with; and the greatest I ever knew, I mean for the natural parts of the soul, was Stephen de la Boëtie: his was a full soul indeed, and that had every way a beautiful aspect; a soul of the old stamp, and that had produced great effects, had fortune been so pleased, having added much to those great natural parts by learning and study.

Praise of Stephen de la Boëtie.

How it comes to pass I know not, and yet it is certainly so, there is as much vanity and weakness of judgment in those who profess the greatest abilities, who take upon them learned callings and bookish employments, as in any other sort of men whatever; either because more is required and expected from them, and that common defects are inexcusable in them, or rather because the opinion they have of their own learning makes them more bold to expose and lay themselves too open, by which they lose and betray themselves. As an artificer more betrays his want of skill in a rich matter he has in hand, if he disgrace the work by ill handling, and contrary to the rules required, than in a matter of less value; and as men are more displeased at a disproportion in a statue of gold than in one of plaster, so do these, when they exhibit things that in themselves, and in their place, would be good; for they make use of them without discretion, honouring their memories at the expense of their understanding, and making themselves ridiculous, to honour Cicero, Galen, Ulpian, and St. Jerome.

Men of letters are vain, and of weak understandings.

I willingly fall again into the discourse of the vanity of our education, the end of which is not to render us good and wise, but learned; and she has obtained it: she has not taught us to follow and embrace virtue and prudence, but she has imprinted in us their derivation and etymology; we know how to decline virtue, if we know not how to love it; if we do not know what prudence is really, and in effect, and by experience, we have the etymology and meaning of the word by heart. We are not content to know the extraction, kindred, and alliances of our neighbours, we would moreover have them our friends, and will establish a correspondency and intelligence with them; but this education of ours has taught us the definitions, divisions, and partitions of virtue, as so many surnames and branches of a genealogy, without any further care of establishing any familiarity or intimacy between her and us; she has culled out for our initiary instruction, not such books as contain the soundest and truest opinions, but those that speak the best Greek and Latin; and by these fine words has instilled in our fancy the vainest humours of antiquity.

A good education alters the judgment and manners; as it happened to Polemon,[1] a young debauched Greek, who going by chance to hear one of Xenocrates' lectures, did not only observe the eloquence and learning of the professor, and not only brought away the knowledge of some fine matter, but a more manifest and a more solid profit, which was the sudden change and reformation of his former life. Who ever found such an effect of our discipline?

> Faciasne, quod olim
> Mutatus Polemon? ponas insignia morbi,
> Fasciolas, cubital, focalia; potus ut ille
> Dicitur ex collo furtim carpsisse coronas,
> Postquam est impransi correptus voce magistri?[2]
>
> "Canst thou, like Polemon reclaim'd, remove
> Thy foppish dress, those symptoms of thy love;
> As he when drunk, with garlands round his head,
> Chanc'd once to hear the sober Stoic read;
> Asham'd, he took his garlands off, began
> Another course, and grew a sober man?

The manners of the meaner sort of people more regular than those of the philosophers.

That seems to me to be the least contemptible condition of men which, by its plainness and simplicity is seated in the lowest rank, and invites us to a more regular conversation: I find the manners and language of country

[1] *Laertius, in vitâ.*

[2] Horace, *Sat.* ii. 3. 235.

people commonly better suited to the rule and prescription of true philosophy than those of our philosophers themselves. *Plus sapit vulgus, quia tantum, quantum opus est, sapit.*[1] "The vulgar are so much the wiser, because they only know what is needful for them to know."

The most remarkable men whom I have judged by outward appearances (for, to judge of them according to my own method, I must penetrate a great deal deeper), for war and military conduct, were the Duke of Guise, who died at Orleans, and the late Marshal Strozzi. For men of great ability, and no common virtue, Olivier and De l'Hospital, chancellors of France. Poetry too, in my opinion, has flourished in this age of ours; we have abundance of very good artificers in the trade;—Aurat,[2] Beza, Buchanan, l'Hospital, Montdoré,[3] and Turnebus: as to the French, I believe they have raised poetry to the highest pitch to which it can ever arrive; and in those parts of it wherein Ronsard and Du Bellay excel, I find them little inferior to the ancient perfection. Adrian Turnebus knew more, and knew what he did know better, than any man of his time, or long before him. The lives of the late Duke of Alva, and of our Constable De Montmorency, were both of them great and noble, and that had many rare turns of fortune; but the beauty and glory of the death of the last, in the sight of Paris and of his king, in their service, against his nearest relations, at the head of an army, victorious through his conduct, and by a bold stroke, in so extreme an old age, merits, methinks, to be recorded amongst the most remarkable events of our times; as also the constant virtue, sweetness of manners, and conscientious facility, of Monsieur de la Noue,[4] in so great an injustice of armed parties (the true school of treason, inhumanity, and robbery), wherein he always kept up the reputation of a great and experienced captain.

I have taken a delight to publish in several places the hopes I have of Mary de Gournay le Jars,[5] my adopted daughter, beloved by me with more than a paternal love, and treasured up in my solitude and retirement as one of the best parts of my own being: I have no regard to anything in this world but her. If a man may presage from her youth, her soul will one day be capable of very great things; and, amongst others, of the perfection of that sacred friendship, to which we do not read that any of her sex could ever yet arrive; the sincerity and solidity of her manners are already sufficient for it; her affection towards me more than superabundant, and such as that there is nothing more to be wished, if not that the apprehension she has of my end, from the five and fifty years I had reached when she knew me, might not so much afflict her. The judgment she made of my first *Essays*, being a woman so young, and in this age, and alone in her own place; and the notable vehemence wherewith she loved and desired me, upon the sole esteem she had of me, before she ever saw my face, are things very worthy of consideration.

Other virtues have little or no credit in this age: but valour is become popular by our civil wars; and in this we have souls great even to perfection, and in so great number that the choice is impossible to be made.

This is all of the extraordinarily uncommon pre-eminence that has hitherto arrived at my knowledge.

CHAPTER XVIII.

OF GIVING THE LIE.

Why Montaigne speaks so often of himself in this work.

WELL but, some one will say to me, this design of making a man's self the subject of his writings were excusable in rare and famous men, who by their reputation had given others a curiosity to be fully informed of them. It is true, I confess it, and know very well, that tradesmen will scarce lift their eyes from their work to look at an ordinary man, when they will forsake their business and their shops to stare at an eminent person when he comes to town. It misbecomes any other to give his own character, but such a one who has qualities worthy of imitation, and whose life and opinions may serve for examples. Cæsar and Xenophon had whereon to found their narrations, in the greatness of their own performances, a just and solid foundation: and it were also to be wished that we had the journal papers of Alexander

[1] Lactant. *Divin. Instit.* iii. 5.

[2] Or rather *Dorat*, of which *Aurat(us)* is merely the Latinized form. This learned poet, Joseph Scaliger informs us, wrote more than 50,000 verses—French, Greek, and Latin.

[3] Pierre Montdoré, the least known of those here named, was master of requests, and librarian to the king. He is made mention of by L'Hospital in his Latin poems (page 91 and 521, ed. of 1825), and by Saint-Marthe in his *Eloges*. The rigourists who reproach Montaigne for having cited the Calvinist Theodore de Beza might equally have been scandalized at his mentioning Montdoré; for this learned man, a master of Aristotle and a skilful mathematician, was persecuted in 1567, and driven from Orleans, his native place, for his attachment to the new opinions. He retired to Sancerre, in Berri, where he died in 1571.

[4] A celebrated Calvinist hero, whose political and military discourses were printed in 1587.

[5] See the article *Gournay* in Bayle's *Dictionary*, where you will find that this young lady's opinion of the first *Essays* of Montaigne gave the occasion for this adoption, long before she ever saw Montaigne. A passage which Bayle quotes from M. Pasquier, in the note A, contains some remarkable particulars of this adoption:—"Montaigne," says Pasquier, "having in 1588 made a long stay at Paris, Mademoiselle le Jars came thither, on purpose to see him; and she and her mother carried him to their house at Gournay, where he spent two months in two or three visits, and met with as hearty a welcome as he could desire; and, finally, this virtuous lady, being informed of Montaigne's death, crossed almost through the whole kingdom of France with passports, as well from her own desire as by invitation from Montaigne's widow and daughter, to mix her tears with theirs, whose sorrows were boundless."

the Great, the commentaries that Augustus, Cato, Sylla, Brutus, and others, left of their actions: men love and study the representations of such men, even in copper and marble.

This remonstrance is very true; but it very little concerns me:

Nor recito cuiquam, nisi amicis, idque rogatus;
Non ubivis coramve quibuslibet: in medio qui
Scripta foro recitent, sunt multi, quique lavantes.[1]

"I seldom do rehearse, and when I do
'Tis to my friends, and with reluctance too,
Not before ev'ry one, and ev'rywhere:
We have too many that rehearsers are,
In baths, the forum, and the public square."

I do not here form a statue to erect in the most eminent square of a city, in the church, or any public place;

Non equidem hoc studeo, bullatis ut mihi nugis
Pagina turgescat,
Secreti loquimur;[2]

"I study not to make my pages swell
With mighty trifles—private things I tell;"

'tis for the corner of some library, and to entertain a neighbour, a kinsman, or a friend, that has a mind to renew his acquaintance and familiarity with me in this image I have made of myself. Others have been encouraged to speak of themselves, because they found the subject worthy and rich; I, on the contrary, am the bolder, by reason the subject is so poor and sterile that I cannot be suspected of ostentation. I judge freely of the actions of others; I give little of my own to judge of, because they are nothing; I do not find so much good in myself as that I can't tell of it without blushing. What contentment would it be to me to hear any thus relate to me the manners, faces, countenances, the ordinary words and fortunes of my ancestors! How attentively should I listen to it! Truly it would be a bad nature to despise so much as the pictures of our friends and predecessors, the fashion of their clothes and arms. I preserve a bit of writing, a seal, a prayer-book, a particular sword, that has been used by them; and have not thrown the long staves my father generally carried in his hand out of my closet: *Paterna vestis, et annulus, tanto carior est posteris, quanto erga parentes major affectus.* "A father's garment and ring are by so much dearer to his posterity, as they had the greater affection towards him." If my posterity, nevertheless, should be of another mind, I shall be revenged on them; for they cannot care less for me than I shall then do for them. All the traffic that I have in this with the public is, that I borrow those utensils of their writing which are more easy and most at hand; and in recompense shall, perhaps, keep a pound of butter in the market from melting in the sun:

Ne toga cordyllis, ne penula desit olivis;[3]
Et laxas scombris sæpe dabo tunicas.[4]

"I'll furnish plnice and olives with a coat,
And cover mack'rel when the sun shines hot."

And though nobody should read me, have I lost my time in entertaining myself so many idle hours in pleasing and useful thoughts? In moulding this figure upon myself, I have been so oft constrained to temper and comport myself in a right posture, that the copy is truly taken, and has in some sort formed itself: painting myself for others, I have put myself on a better colouring than I had before. I have no more made my book than my book has made me: 'tis a book consubstantial with the author, of a peculiar design, a member of my life, and whose business is not designed for others, as that of all other books is. In giving myself so continual and so exact an account of myself, have I lost any time? For they who sometimes survey themselves only cursorily, do not so strictly examine themselves, nor penetrate so deep, as he who makes it his business, his study, and his whole employment, who intends a lasting record, with all his fidelity and with all his force: the most delicious pleasures do so digest themselves within that they avoid leaving any trace of themselves, and avoid the sight not only of the people, but of any particular man. How often has this meditation diverted me from troublesome thoughts? And all that are frivolous should be reputed so. Nature has presented us with a large faculty of entertaining ourselves alone, and often calls us to it, to teach us that we owe ourselves in part to society, but chiefly and mostly to ourselves. That I may habituate my fancy even to meditate in some method and to some end, and to keep it from losing itself and roving at random; 'tis but to give it a body, and to book all the thoughts that present themselves to it: I give ear to my whimsies, because I have to record them. It sometimes falls out that, being displeased at some action that civility and reason will not permit me openly to reprove, I here disgorge myself, not without design of public instruction: these poetical lashes,

Zon sur l'œil, zon sur le groin,
Zon sur le dos du Sagoin,[5]

"A jerk over the eye, one the snout,
Let Sagoin be jerk'd throughout,"

imprint themselves better upon paper than upon the most sensible flesh. What if I listen to books a little more attentively than ordinary, since I watch if I can purloin any thing that may adorn or support my own? I have not at

Montaigne talks so much of himself that he might the better know himself, and give his own true character.

[1] Hor. i. 4. 73. Instead of *coactus*, as Horace has it in the first verse, Montaigne has substituted *rogatus*, which more exactly expresses his thought.
[2] Pers. v. 19.
[3] Martial, xiii. l. 1.
[4] Catull. xciv. 8.
[5] Marot, in his epistle entitled *Fripelippes, valet de Marot à Sagon.*

all studied to make a book; but I have in some sort studied because I had made it; if it be studying to pinch now one author and then another, either by the head or foot, not with any design to steal opinions from them, but to assist, second, and fortify those I already have embraced.

Montaigne's horror of lying.

But who shall we believe in the report he makes of himself, in so corrupt an age? considering there are so few, if any at all, whom we can believe when speaking of others, where there is less interest to lie. The first feature in the corruption of manners is the banishment of truth; for, as Pindar says,[1] to be true is the beginning of a great virtue, and the first article that Plato requires in the governor of his republic. The truth of these days is not that which really is, but what every man persuades others; as we give the name of money, not only to good pieces, but even to the false also, if they are current and will pass. Our nation has long been reproached with this vice; for Salvianus Massiliensis, who lived in the time of the emperor Valentinian, says[2] "That lying and forswearing themselves is not a vice with the French, but a way of speaking." He that would enhance upon this testimony might say that it is now a virtue with them: men form and fashion themselves to it as to an exercise of honour; for dissimulation is one of the most notable qualities of this age.

I have often considered whence this custom, that we so religiously observe, should spring, of being more highly offended with the reproach of this vice so familiar to us, than any other; and that it should be the highest injury can in words be done us, to reproach us with a lie. Upon reflection, I find it is natural for us to defend that part that is most open, and to repudiate the vice that most stains us; it seems as if, by resenting and being moved at the accusation, we in some sort acquit ourselves of the fault; though we have it in effect, we condemn it in outward appearance. May it also not be, that this reproach seems to imply cowardice and meanness of spirit? Of which can there be a more manifest sign than to eat a man's own words?—What, to lie against a man's own knowledge? Lying is a base unworthy vice; a vice that one of the ancients[3] pourtrays in the most odious colours, when he says "That it is to manifest a contempt of God, and withal a fear of men." It is not possible more excellently to represent the horror, baseness, and irregularity of it; for what can a man imagine more hateful and contemptible than to be a coward towards men and valiant against God? Our intelligence being by no other way to be conveyed to one another but by speaking, who falsifies that betrays public society; 'tis the only way by which we communicate our thoughts and wills; 'tis the interpreter of the soul; and if it deceives us, we no longer know, nor have any other tie upon one another. If that deceive us, it breaks all our correspondence, and dissolves all the ties of government. Certain nations of the new discovered Indies (no matter for naming them, being they are no more: for, by a wonderful and unheard of example, the desolation of that conquest has extended to the utter abolition of names and the ancient knowledge of places), offered their gods human blood, but only such as was drawn from the tongue and ears, to expiate for the sin of lying, as well heard as pronounced. The good fellow of Greece[4] was wont to say that children were amused with toys and men with words.

Lying an argument of the contempt of God.

As to the divers usage of our giving the lie, and the laws of honour in that case, and the alterations they have received, I shall refer saying what I know of them to another time; and shall learn, if I can, in the mean time, at what time the custom took beginning, of so exactly weighing and measuring words, and of making our honours so interested in them; for it is easy to judge that it was not anciently amongst the Greeks and Romans; and I have often thought it strange to see them rail at and give one another the lie without any farther quarrel. Their laws of duty steered some other course than ours. Cæsar is sometimes called thief, and sometimes drunkard,[5] to his teeth We see the liberty of invectives they utterec against one another, among the greatest war chiefs of both nations, where words are only revenged with words, and never lead to any thing else.

The Greeks and Romans not so delicate in the article of lying as we are.

CHAPTER XIX.

OF LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE.

'Tis usual to see good intentions, if carried on without moderation, push men on to very vicious effects. In this dispute, which at this time agitates France in civil war, the best and soundest cause, no doubt, is that which maintains the ancient religion and government of the kingdom: nevertheless, amongst the good men of that party (for I do not speak of those that only make it a pretext, either to execute their own particular revenges, or to gratify their avarice, or to pursue the favour of princes; but of those who engage in the quarrel out of true

Religious zeal often extravagant, and consequently unjust.

[1] See Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* vi. 16. Stobœus, *Serm.* xi.
[2] *De Gubernat. Dei*, i. 14.
[3] Plutarch, *Life of Lysander.*
[4] Id. *ib.*
[5] Id. *Life of Pompey*, c. 16. *Life of Cato of Utica*, c. 7.

zeal to religion, and a holy affection to maintain the peace and government of their country), of these, I say, we see many whom passion transports beyond the bounds of reason, and sometimes inspires with counsels that are unjust and violent, and moreover inconsiderate and rash.

It is certain that in those first times, when our religion began to gain authority with the laws, zeal armed many against all sorts of Pagan books,[1] by which the learned suffer an exceeding great loss; a disorder that I conceive did more prejudice to letters than all the flames of the barbarians: of this Cornelius Tacitus is a very good testimony; for though the emperor Tacitus, his kinsman, had by express order furnished all the libraries in the world with his work, nevertheless one entire copy could not escape the curious search of those who desired to abolish it, for only five or six idle clauses that were contrary to our belief.

They also had the trick, easily to lend undue praises to all the emperors who did any thing for us, and universally to condemn all the actions of those who were our adversaries, as is evidently manifest in the emperor Julian, surnamed the apostate.[2] This was, in truth, a very great and rare man; a man in whose soul philosophy was imprinted in the best characters; by which he professed to govern all his actions; and, in truth, there is no sort of virtue of which he has not left behind him very notable examples: in chastity (of which the whole course of his life has given manifest proof), we read the same of him that was said of Alexander and Scipio, that being in the flower of his age, for he was slain by the Parthians at one and thirty, of a great many very beautiful captives, he would not so much as look upon one. As to his justice, he took himself the pains to hear the parties, and although he would, out of curiosity, inquire what religion they were of, nevertheless the hatred he had to ours never gave any counterpoise to the balance. He himself made several good laws, and cut off a great part of the subsidies and taxes imposed and levied by his predecessors.[3]

The character of the emperor Julian.

We have two good historians who were eyewitnesses of his actions; one of whom, Marcellinus, in several places of his history, sharply reproves an edict of his, whereby he interdicted all Christian rhetoricians and grammarians to keep school or to teach; and says he could wish that act of his had been buried in silence. It is likely that had he done any more severe things against us, he, so affectionate as he was to our party, would not have omitted it. He was, indeed, sharp against us, but yet no cruel enemy; for our own people tell this story of him, that one day, walking about the city of Chalcedon, Maris, bishop of that place, was so bold as to tell him that he was impious, and an enemy to Christ; at which, say they, therein affecting a philosophical patience, he was no farther moved than to reply: "Go, poor wretch, and lament the loss of thy eyes;" to which the Bishop replied again, "I thank Jesus Christ for taking away my sight, that I may not see thy impudent face." Assuredly, this action of his savours nothing of the cruelty he is said to have exercised towards us. He was, says Eutropius,[4] my other witness, "an enemy to Christianity, but without shedding blood."

And, to return to his justice, there is nothing in that whereof he can be accused, the severity excepted he practised in the beginning of his reign against those who had followed the party of Constantius, his predecessor.[5] As to his sobriety, he lived always a soldier's kind of life; and kept a table in the most profound peace, like one that prepared and inured himself to the austerities of war. His vigilance was such that he divided the night into three or four parts, of which the least was dedicated to sleep; the rest was spent either in visiting the condition of his army and guards in person, or in study; for, amongst his other rare qualities, he was very excellent in all sorts of learning. 'Tis said of Alexander the Great that when a-bed, for fear lest sleep should divert him from his thoughts and studies, he had always a bason set by his bed-side, and held one of his hands out with a ball of copper in it, to the end that, beginning to fall asleep, and his fingers leaving their hold, the ball by falling into the bason might awake him; but the other had his mind so bent upon what he had a mind to do, and so little disturbed with fumes, by reason of his singular abstinence, that he had no need of any such invention. As to his military experience, he was excellent in all the qualities of a great captain; as it was likely he should, being almost all his life in a continual exercise of war; and most of that time with us, in France, against the Germans and Franks: we hardly read of any man that ever saw more dangers, or that gave more frequent proofs of his personal valour.

His death has something in it parallel with that of Epaminondas, for he was wounded with an arrow, and tried to pull it out, and had done it, but that being edged it cut and disabled his hand. He incessantly called out that they should carry him again in this condition into the heat of the battle, to encourage his soldiers, who very bravely disputed the battle without him till night parted the armies. He stood

1 Vopiscus, in *Tacit Imp.* c. 10.

2 What follows about the Emperor Julian was blamed, during our author's stay at Rome, in 1581, by the "*Maître du Sacre Palais* (says Montaigne, in his Journey); but the censor left it to my conscience to modify what I should think in bad taste." Our essayist accordingly made no alteration; and this chapter has furnished Voltaire with most of the materials for his eulogium on Julian.

3 Ammianus Marcellinus, xxiv. 8.

4 Id. x. 8.

5 Ammianus Marcell. xxii. 2; from whom, also, the following illustrations of Julian's character are taken.

obliged to his philosophy for the singular contempt he had for his life and all human things. He had a firm belief of the immortality of the soul.

In matter of religion he was wrong throughout; he was surnamed the Apostate, for having relinquished ours; though, methinks, 'tis more likely that he had never thoroughly embraced it, but had dissembled, out of obedience to the laws, till he came to the empire. He was in his own so superstitious that he was laughed at for it by those of the same opinion, of his own time, who jeeringly said that had he got the victory over the Parthians, he had destroyed the breed of oxen in the world, to supply his sacrifices.

He was, moreover, besotted with the art of divination, and gave authority to all sorts of prognostics. He said, amongst other things at his death, that he was obliged to the gods, and thanked them in that they had not cut him off by surprise, having long before advertised him of the place and hour of his death; nor by a mean and unmanly death, more becoming lazy and delicate people; nor by a death that was languishing, long, and painful; and that they had thought him worthy to die after that noble manner, in the progress of his victories, and in the height of his glory. He had had a vision like that of Marcus Brutus, that first threatened him in Gaul, and afterwards appeared to him in Persia, just before his death. These words, that some[1] make him say when he felt himself wounded, "Thou hast conquered, Nazarene;" or, as others, "Content thyself, Nazarene," would hardly have been omitted, had they been believed by my witnesses, who, being present in the army, have set down to the least motions and words of his end; and the same with certain other miracles that are recorded of him.

His remarkable death.

And, to return to my subject, he long nourished, says Marcellinus, paganism in his heart; but, all his army being Christians, he durst not own it. But in the end, seeing himself strong enough to dare to discover himself, he caused the temples of the gods to be thrown open, and did his utmost to set on foot and to encourage idolatry. Which the better to effect, having at Constantinople found the people disunited, and also the prelates of the church divided amongst themselves, having convened them all before him, he gravely and earnestly admonished them to calm those civil dissensions, and that every one should freely, and without fear, follow his own religion: which he did the more sedulously solicit in hope that this licence would augment the schisms and faction of their division, and hinder the people from re-uniting, and consequently fortifying themselves against him by their unanimous intelligence and concord; having experienced, by the cruelty of some Christians, "that there is no beast in the world so much to be feared by man, as man." These are very nearly his own words.

Wherein this is very worthy of consideration, that the Emperor Julian made use of the same recipe of liberty of conscience to enflame the civil dissensions, that our kings do to extinguish them. A man may say, on one side, that to give the people the reins to entertain every man his own opinion, is to scatter and sow division, and, as it were, to lend a hand to augment it, there being no sense nor correction of law to stop and hinder their career; but, on the other side, a man may also say that, to give the people the reins to entertain every man his own opinion, is to mollify and appease them by facility and toleration, and dull the point which is whetted and made sharper by rarity, novelty, and difficulty. And I think it is better for the honour and the devotion of our kings, that not having been able to do what they would, they have made a shew of being willing to do what they could.

The liberty of conscience granted, in Montaigne's time, to the Protestants.

CHAPTER XX.

THAT WE TASTE NOTHING PURE.

THE imbecility of our condition is such that things cannot, in their natural simplicity and purity, fall to our use; the elements that we enjoy are changed, even metals themselves; and gold must in some sort be debased with the alloy of some other matter to fit it for our service: neither has virtue, so simple as that which Aristo, Pyrrho, and also the Stoics have made, "the principal end of life," nor the Cyrenaick and Aristippean pleasure, been without mixture useful to it. Of the pleasure and goods that we enjoy, there is not one exempt from some mixture of ill and inconvenience:

> Medio de fonte leporum
> Surgit amari aliquid, quod in ipsis floribus angat,[2]
>
> "Something that's bitter will arise,
> Even amidst our jollities."

Our extremest pleasure has some air of groaning and complaining in it; would you not say that it is dying of pain? Nay, when we forge the image of it, in its excellence, we stuff it with sickly and painful epithets, langour, softness, feebleness, faintness, *morbidezza*; a great testimony of their consanguinity and consubstantiality. The most profound joy has more of gravity than gaiety in it; the most extreme and most full contentment, more of the temperate than of the wanton: *Ipsa felicitas, se nisi temperat, premit*:[3] "Even felicity, unless it moderates itself, oppresses." Ease chews and grinds us, according to the old Greek verse, which says, "The gods sell us all the goods

[1] Theodoret. *Hist. Eccles.* iii. 20.

[2] Lucret. iv. 1130.

[3] Seneca, *Epist.* 74

they give us;"[1] that is to say, that they give us nothing pure and perfect, and that we do but purchase them at the price of some evil.

Pain and pleasure joined at one end, as appears from melancholy.

Labour and pleasure, very unlike in nature, associate, nevertheless, by I know not what natural conjunction. Socrates says[2] that some god tried to mix in one mass and to confound pain and pleasure; but not being able to do it, he bethought him at least to couple them by the tail. Metrodorus said,[3] that in sorrow there is some mixture of pleasure. I know not whether or no he intended any thing else by that saying; but, for my part, I am of opinion that there is design, consent, and complacency in giving a man's self up to melancholy; I say, besides ambition, which may also have to do in the business, there is some shadow of delight and delicacy which smiles upon and flatters us, even in the very lap of melancholy. Are there not some complexions that feed upon it?

Est quædam flere voluptas:[4]

"A certain kind of pleasure 'tis to weep:"

and one Attalus in Seneca says,[5] that the memory of our lost friends is as grateful to us as bitterness in wine too old, is to the palate,

Minister vetuli, puer, Falerni
Ingere mi calices amariores,[6]

"Come, boy, bring hither old Falernian wine,
And with the bitt'rest fill the bowl that's mine,"

and as apples that have a sweet tartness. Nature discovers this confusion to us: painters hold that the same motions and pleats of the face that serve for weeping serve for laughter too: and indeed, before the one or the other be finished, do but observe the painter's manner of handling, and you will be in doubt to which of the two the design tends: and the extremity of laughter at last brings tears: *Nullum sine auctoramento malum est.*[7] "No evil is without its compensation."

Constant and universal pleasure not to be borne by man.

When I imagine man abounding with all the pleasures and conveniences that are to be desired (let us put the case that all his members were always seized with a pleasure like that of generation in its most excessive height), I feel him melting under the weight of his delight, and see him utterly unable to support so pure, so continual, and so universal a pleasure. Indeed he is running away whilst he is there, and naturally makes haste to escape, as from a place where he cannot stand firm, and where he is afraid of sinking.

When I the most strictly and religiously confess myself, I find that the best virtue I have has in it some tincture of vice; and I am afraid that Plato, in his purest virtue (I who am as sincere and perfect a lover of him and of virtue of that stamp as any other whatever), if he had listened and laid his ear close to himself, as no doubt he did, he would have heard some jarring sound of human mixture; but faint and remote, and only to be perceived by himself. Man is wholly and throughout but patched and motley. Even the laws of justice themselves cannot subsist without mixture of injustice: insomuch that Plato says,[8] they undertake to cut off the hydra's head who pretend to clear the law of all inconvenience. *Omne magnum exemplum habet aliquid ex iniquo, quod contra singulos utilitate publica rependitur*, says Tacitus:[9] "Every great example has in it some mixture of injustice, which recompenses the wrong done to particular men by the public utility."

The justest laws have some mixture of injustice.

It is likewise true that, for the usage of life and the service of public commerce, there may be some excess in the purity and perspicacity of our minds; that penetrating light has in it too much of subtilty and curiosity: we must a little stupify and blunt and abate them, to render them more obedient to example and practice, and a little veil and obscure them, the better to proportion them to this dark and earthy life: and therefore common and less speculative souls are found to be more proper and more successful in the management of affairs; and the elevated and exquisite opinions of philosophy more unfit for business. This sharp vivacity of soul, and the supple and restless volubility attending it, disturb our negociations. We are to manage human enterprizes more superficially and roughly, and leave a great part to fortune: it is not necessary to examine affairs with so much subtilty and depth; a man loses himself in the consideration of so many contrary lustres, and so many various forms: *Volutantibus res inter se pugnantes, obtorpuerant - - - animi.*[10] "Whilst they considered of things so different in themselves, they were astonished, and knew not what to do."

Common understandings more proper for affairs than the more refined.

'Tis what the ancients say of Simonides; that by reason his imagination suggested to him, upon the question King Hiero had put to him[11] (to answer which he had many days to meditate in), several sharp and subtle considerations, whilst he doubted which was the most likely, he totally despaired of the truth.

Who dives into, and in his inquisition comprehends all circumstances and consequences,

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1 τῶν πόνων
Πωλοῦσιν ἡμῖν πάντα ταγαθοὶ θεοί,
Epicharmus *apud* Xenophon, *Mem. of Socrat.* ii. 1, 20.

2 In Plato's dialogue, entitled *Phædon.*

3 Seneca, *Epist.* 99.

4 Ovid, *Trist.* iv. 3 27.

5 Seneca, *Epist.* 63.

6 Catull. xxvii. 1.

7 Seneca, *Epist.* 69.

8 Republic, iv. 5. Montaigne has slightly altered the idea of Plato.

9 *Annals*, xiv. 44.

10 Livy, xxxii. 20.

11 *What God was?*

hinders his election: a middling engine is equally sufficient for executions of less or greater weight and moment. The best managers are those who can worst give account why they are so; and the greatest talkers for the most part do nothing to the purpose. I know one of this sort of men, and a most excellent director in all sorts of good management, who has miserably let an hundred thousand livres yearly revenue slip through his hands. I know another, who speaks and gives better advice than any of his council; and there is not in the world a fairer show of a soul and of greater understanding than he has; nevertheless, when he comes to the test, his servants find him quite another thing; and this without putting mischances down to the account.

CHAPTER XXI.

AGAINST IDLENESS.

THE Emperor Vespasian, being sick with the disease whereof he died, did not for all that neglect to inquire after the state of the empire; and even in bed continually dispatched very many affairs of great consequence; for which, being reproved by his physician, as a thing prejudicial to his health, "An emperor," said he, "should die standing."[1] A fine saying, in my opinion, and worthy of a great prince. The Emperor Adrian since made use of words to the same purpose;[2] and kings should be often put in mind of it, to make them know that the great office conferred upon them, of the command of so many men, is not an employment of ease; and that there is nothing can so justly disgust a subject, and make him unwilling to expose himself to labour and danger for the service of his prince, as to see him in the mean time devoted to his ease and unmanly delights; or to be solicitous of his preservation, who so much neglects that of his people.

In what posture a prince ought to die.

Whoever will take upon him to maintain that 'tis better for a prince to carry on his wars by others than in his own person, fortune will furnish him with examples enough of those whose lieutenants have brought great enterprizes to a happy issue, and of those also whose presence had done more hurt than good. But no virtuous and valiant prince can with patience endure such dishonourable advice. Under colour of saving his head, like the statue of a saint, for the happiness of his kingdom, they degrade him from, and declare him incapable of, his office, which is military throughout. I know one[3] who would much rather be beaten, than to sleep whilst another fights for him; and who never without jealousy heard of any brave thing done, even by his own officers in his absence. And Selim I. said, with very good reason, in my opinion, "That victories obtained without the master were never complete;" much more would he have said that that master ought to blush for shame to pretend to any share in the honour, having contributed nothing to the work but his voice and thought; nor even so much as those, considering that, in such works as that, the direction and command that deserve honour are only such as are given upon the place, and in the heat of the business. No pilot performs his office by standing still. The princes of the Ottoman family, the first in the world in military fortune, have warmly embraced this opinion; and Bajazet the Second, with his son, that swerved from it, spending their time in sciences and other in-door employments, gave great blows to their empire: and Amurath the Third, now reigning, following their example, begins to find the same. Was it not Edward the Third, king of England, who said this of our Charles the Fifth? "There never was king who so seldom put on his armour, and yet never king who cut me out so much work." He had reason to think it strange, as an effect of chance more than of reason. And let those seek out some other to join with them than me, who will reckon the kings of Castile and Portugal amongst warlike and magnanimous conquerors, because, at the distance of twelve hundred leagues from their lazy abode, by the conduct of their captains, they made themselves masters of both Indies; of which it remains to be seen if they have but the courage to go and in person to enjoy them.

He ought to command his armies in person.

The activity and sobriety requisite in princes.

The Emperor Julian said yet further,[4] "That a philosopher and a brave man ought not so much as to breathe;" that is to say, not to allow any more to bodily necessities than what we cannot refuse, keeping the soul and body still intent and busy about honourable, great, and virtuous things. He was ashamed if any one in public saw him spit or sweat (which is said also of the Lacedæmonian young men, and by Xenophon[5] of the Persians), forasmuch as he conceived that exercise, continual labour, and sobriety, ought to have dried up all those superfluities. What Seneca says will not be inapt for this place, that the ancient Romans kept their[6] youth always standing. They taught them nothing, says he, that they were to learn sitting.

'Tis a generous desire to wish to die usefully and like a man, but the effect lies not so much in our resolution as in good fortune. A thousand have proposed to themselves in battle, either to overcome or die, who

The desire of making a useful exit is laudable, though the thing be not in our power.

[1] Suetonius, *in vitâ*.
[2] Spartian, *Verus*, c. 6.
[3] Probably Henry IV.
[4] Zonaras, *Life of Julian*, towards the end.
[5] *Cyropædia*, i. 2. 16.
[6] Seneca, *Epist.* 88.

have failed both in the one and the other; wounds and imprisonment crossing their design, and compelling them to live against their will. There are diseases that overthrow even our desires and our knowledge. Fortune was not bound to second the vanity of the Roman legions, who bound themselves by oath either to overcome or die: *Victor, Marce Fabi, revertar ex acie: si fallo, Jovem patrem, Gradivumque Martem, aliosque iratos invoco Deos.*[1] "I will return, Marcus Fabius, a conqueror from the army. If I fail, I invoke the indignation of Father Jove, Mars, and the other offended gods, upon me." The Portuguese say that, in a certain place of their conquest of the Indies, they met with soldiers who had condemned themselves with horrible execrations to enter into no composition, but either to cause themselves to be slain, or to remain victorious; and had their heads and beards shaved in token of this vow. 'Tis to much purpose to hazard ourselves and to be obstinate; it seems as if blows avoided those that present themselves too briskly to danger, and do not willingly fall upon those who too willingly seek them, but defeat them of their design. Such there have been who, after having tried all ways, not having been able, with all their endeavour, to obtain the favour of dying by the hand of the enemy, have been constrained, to make good their resolution of bringing home the honour of victory, or of losing their lives, to kill themselves even in the heat of battle. Of which there are other examples; but this is one:—Philistus, general of the naval army of Dionysius the Younger against those of Syracuse, gave them battle, which was sharply disputed, their forces being equal: in which engagement he had the better at first, through his own valour; but, the Syracusans drawing about his galley to environ him, after having done great things in his own person to disengage himself, hoping for no relief, with his own hand he took away that life he had so liberally and in vain exposed to the fury of the enemy.[2]

Muley Moluch, king of Fez, who had just won, against Sebastian, king of Portugal, that battle so famous for the death of three kings, and by the transmission of that great kingdom to the crown of Castile, was extremely sick when the Portuguese entered in an hostile manner into his dominions; and from that day forward grew worse and worse, still drawing nearer to and foreseeing his end. Yet never did man employ himself more vigorously and bravely than he did upon this occasion. He found himself too weak to undergo the pomp and ceremony of entering into his camp, which after their manner is very magnificent, and full of action; and therefore resigned that honour to his brother; but that was also all of the office of a general that he resigned; all the rest useful and necessary he most exactly and laboriously performed in his own person; his body lying upon a couch, but his judgment and courage upright and firm to his last gasp, and in some sort beyond it. He might have worn out his enemy, indiscreetly advanced into his dominions, without striking a blow; and it was a very unhappy occurrence that, for want of a little life, or somebody to substitute in the conduct of this war, and in the affairs of a troubled state, he was compelled to seek a doubtful and bloody victory, having another, by a better and surer way, already in his hands; notwithstanding, he wonderfully managed the continuance of his sickness in consuming the enemy, and in drawing them a long way from the naval army and the maritime places they had on the coast of Africa, even till the last day of his life, which he designedly reserved for this great contest. He ordered his battle in a circular form, environing the Portuguese army on every side, which circle coming to close in the wings, and to draw up close together, did not only hinder them in the conflict (which was very sharp, through the valour of the young invading king), considering they were every way to make a front; but prevented their flight after the defeat, so that finding all passages possessed and shut up by the enemy, they were constrained to close up together again: *coacervanturque non solum cæde, sed etiam fuga*, and there they were slain in heaps upon one another, leaving to the conqueror a very bloody and entire victory. Dying, he caused himself to be carried and hurried from place to place where most need was; and passing through the files encouraged the captains and soldiers one after another; but, a corner of his battle being broken, he was not to be held from mounting on horseback sword in hand; he did his utmost to break from those about him, and to rush into the thickest of the battle, they all *the* while withholding him, some by the bridle, some by his robe, and others by his stirrups. This last effort totally overwhelmed the little life he had left; they again lay him upon his bed. Coming to himself again, and starting out of his swoon, all other faculties failing, to give his people notice that they were to conceal his death (the most necessary command he had then to give, that his soldiers might not be discouraged with the news), he expired with his finger upon his mouth, the ordinary sign of keeping silence.[3] Whoever lived so long and so far in death? Whoever died more like a man?

The extreme degree of courageously treating death, and the most natural, is to look upon it not only without astonishment, but without care, continuing the wonted course of life even into it, as Cato did, who entertained himself in study, and went to sleep, having a violent and bloody one in his head and heart, and the weapon in his hand.

[1] Livy, ii. 46.
[2] Plutarch, *Life of Dion*, c. 8.
[3] De Thou, *book* lxv. observes that it was said Charles de Bourbon gave the same signal, when he was expiring at the foot of the walls of Rome, which his troops took by storm just after his death.

CHAPTER XXII.

OF RIDING POST.

I HAVE been none of the least able in this exercise, which is proper for men of my pitch, short and well knit; but I give it over: it shakes us too much to continue it long. I was just now reading[1] that King Cyrus, the better to have news brought him from all parts of the empire, which was of a vast extent, caused it to be tried how far a horse could go in a day without baiting; and at that distance appointed stages and men, whose business it was to have horses always in readiness to mount those who were despatched to them. And some say that this swift way of posting is equal to that of the flight of cranes.

Post-horses first set up by Cyrus.

Cæsar says that Lucius Vibullius Rufus, being in great haste to carry intelligence to Pompey, rid day and night, still taking fresh horses for the greater diligence and speed;[2] (and he himself, as Suetonius reports,[3] travelled a hundred miles a day in a hired coach;) but he was a furious courier; for where the rivers stopped his way he always passed them by swimming, without turning out of his road to look for either bridge or ford. Tiberius Nero, going to see his brother Drusus, who was sick in Germany, travelled two hundred miles in four and twenty hours, having three coaches.[4] In the wars the Romans had against King Antiochus, T. Sempronius Gracchus, says Livy, *Per dispositos equos propè incredibili celeritate ab Amphissa tertio die Pellam pervenit*:[5] "upon horses purposely laid on, he, by an almost incredible speed, rid in three days from Amphissa to Pella:" and it appears, from this place, that they were established posts, and not purposely laid on upon this occasion.

Cecina's invention to send back news to his family was much more quick; for he took swallows along with him from home, and turned them out towards their nests when he would send back any news, setting a mark of some colour upon them, to signify his meaning, according to what he and his people had before agreed upon.[6]

Pigeons taught to carry letters.

At the theatre at Rome masters of families carried pigeons in their bosoms, to which they tied letters, when they had a mind to send any orders to their people at home; and the pigeons were trained up to bring back answer. D. Brutus made use of the same bird when besieged in Mutina,[7] and others elsewhere have done the same.

In Peru they rid post upon men's shoulders, who took them upon their shoulders in a certain kind of litter made for that purpose, and ran with such agility that at their full speed the first couriers threw their load to the second, without making any stop, and so on.

I understand that the Wallachians, the Grand Seignior's couriers, perform wonderful dispatch, by reason they have liberty to dismount the first they meet on the road, giving him their own tired horse; and to preserve themselves from being weary they gird themselves tight about the middle with a broad girdle, as many others do; but I could never find any benefit by it.

CHAPTER XXIII.

OF ILL MEANS EMPLOYED TO A GOOD END.

THERE is a wonderful relation and correspondence in this universal government of the works of nature, which very well makes it appear that it is neither accidental nor carried on by divers masters. The diseases and conditions of our bodies are in like manner manifest in states and governments: kingdoms and republics are founded, flourish, and decay with age, as we do.

Political states subject to the same accident as the human body.

We are subject to a repletion of humours, useless or dangerous; either of those that are good (for even those physicians are afraid of; and as we have nothing in us that is permanent, they say that a too brisk and vigorous perfection of health must be abated by art, lest, as our nature cannot rest in any certain condition, and not having whither to rise to mend itself, it makes too sudden and too disorderly a retreat; and therefore they prescribe wrestlers to purge and bleed, to reduce that superabundant health); or else of those that are evil, which is the ordinary cause of sickness. States are very often sick of the like repletion, and different sorts of purgations have been wont to be used. Sometimes a great number of families are turned out to clear the country, who seek out new abodes elsewhere, and encroach upon others; after this manner our ancient Franks came from the remotest part of Germany to seize upon Gaul, and to drive thence the first inhabitants; so was that infinite deluge of men made up that came into Italy under the conduct of Brennus and others; so the Goths and Vandals, as also the people who now possess Greece, left their native country to go settle in other places where they might have more room; and there is scarce two or three little corners of the world that have not felt the effects of such removals. The

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[1] In the *Cyropædia* of Xenophon, viii. 6. 9.
[2] *De Bello Civili*, iii. 11.
[3] *Life of Cæsar*, c. 57.
[4] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* vii. 20.
[5] Livy, xxxvii. 7.
[6] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* x. 24.
[7] Id. *ib.* 77.

Romans by this means erected their colonies; for perceiving their city to grow immeasurably populous, they eased it of the most unnecessary people, and sent them to inhabit and cultivate the lands they had conquered; sometimes also they purposely maintained wars with some of their enemies, not only to keep their men in action, for fear lest idleness, the mother of corruption, should bring upon them some worse inconvenience,

> Et patimur longæ pacis mala; sævior armis
> Luxuria incumbit;[1]
>
> "We suffer ills from a long peace by far
> Greater and more pernicious e'en than war;"

but also to serve for a blood-letting to their republic, a little to evaporate the too vehement heat of their youth, and to prune and cleanse the branches from the stock too luxuriant in wood; and to this end it was that they formerly maintained so long a war with Carthage.

In the treaty of Bretigny, Edward the Third, King of England, would not, in the general peace he then made with our king, comprehend the controversy about the duchy of Brittany, that he might have a place wherein to discharge himself of his soldiers, and that the vast number of English he had brought over to serve him in that expedition might not return back and inundate England.[2] And this also was one reason why our King Philip consented to send his son John on that foreign expedition, that he might take along with him a great number of hot young men that were then in his pay.

There are many in our times who talk at this rate, wishing that this hot emotion, that is now amongst us, might discharge itself on some neighbouring war, for fear lest the peccant humours that now reign in this politic body of ours, unless diffused further, should keep the fever still in force, and at last cause our total ruin; and, in truth, a foreign is much more supportable than a civil war. But I do not believe that God would favour so unjust a design as to offend and quarrel with others for our convenience:

The utility of a foreign war.

> Nil mihi tam valde placeat, Rhamnusia virgo,
> Quod temere invitis suscipiatur heris.[3]
>
> "In unjust war, against another's right,
> For sake of plunder, may I ne'er delight."

And yet the weakness of our condition often pushes us upon the necessity of making use of ill means to a good end. Lycurgus, the most virtuous and perfect legislator that ever was, invented this unjust practice of making the Helots, who were their slaves, drunk by force, by so doing to teach his people temperance; to the end that the

Men taught to use bad means for obtaining a good end.

Spartans, seeing them so overwhelmed and buried in wine, might abhor the excess of this vice.[4] And yet they were more to blame who of old gave leave that criminals, to what sort of death soever condemned, should be cut up alive by the physicians, that they might make a true discovery of our inward parts, and build their art upon greater certainty:[5] for if we must run into excesses, 'tis more excusable to do it for the health of the soul than for that of the body; as the Romans trained up the people to valour, and the contempt of dangers and death, by those furious spectacles of gladiators and fencers, who being to fight it out till the last, cut, mangled, and killed one another in their presence:

> Quid vesani aliud sibi vult ars impia ludi,
> Quid mortes juvenum, quid sanguine pasta voluptas?
>
> "Of such inhuman sports what further use,
> What pleasure can the blood of men produce?"

And this custom continued till the Emperor Theodosius's time:

> Arripe dilatam tua, dux, in tempora famam,
> Quodque patris superest, successor laudis habeto . . .
> Nullus in urbe cadat, cujus sit pœna voluptas . . .
> Jam solis contenta feris, infamis arena
> Nulla cruentatis homicidia ludat in armis.[6]
>
> "Prince, take the honours destin'd for thy reign—
> Inherit of thy father those remain—
> Henceforth let none at Rome for sport be slain.
> Let none but beasts blood-stain the theatre,
> And no more homicides be acted there."

It was in truth a wonderful example, and of great advantage for the training up the people, to see every day before their eyes a hundred, two hundred, nay, a thousand couples of men armed against one another, cut one another to pieces with so great constancy of courage that they were never heard to utter so much as one syllable of weakness or commiseration; never seen to turn back, nor so much as to make one cowardly step to evade a blow, but rather expose their necks to the adversary's sword, and present themselves to receive the stroke; and many of them, when wounded to death, have sent to ask the spectators if they were satisfied with their behaviour, before they lay down to die upon the place. It was not enough for them to fight and die bravely, but cheerfully too; insomuch that they were hissed and cursed if they made any dispute about receiving their death; the very girls themselves set them on:

> Consurgit ad ictus,
> Et, quoties victor ferrum jugulo *inserit*, illa
> Delicias ait esse suas, pectusque jacentis
> Virgo modesta jubet converso pollice rumpi.[7]
>
> "The modest virgin is delighted so
> With the fell sport that she applauds the blow;
> And when the victor bathes his bloody brand
> In's fellow's throat, and lays him on the sand,
> Then she's most pleas'd, and shews, by signs, she'd fain
> Have him rip up the bosom of the slain."

[1] Juvenal, vi. 291.
[2] Froissart. tome i.
[3] Catullus, lxviii. 77.
[4] Plutarch, *in vitâ.*
[5] Cornel. Celsi, *Medecina, Præf.*
[6] Prudent. *Adv. Symmac.* ii. 643.
[7] Id. *ib.* 617.

The first Romans only condemned criminals to this example; but afterwards they employed innocent slaves in the work, and even freemen too, who sold themselves for this purpose; nay, senators and knights of Rome; and also women:

Nunc caput in mortem vendunt, et funus arenæ,
Atque hostem sibi quisque parat, cum bella quiescunt;[1]

"They sell themselves to death, and, since the wars
Are ceas'd, each for himself a foe prepares;"

Hos inter fremitus novosque lusus .... *
Stat sexus rudis insciusque ferri,
Et pugnas capit improbus viriles:[2]

"Amidst these tumults and alarms
The tender sex, unskill'd in arms,
Immodestly will try their might,
And now engage in manly fight:"

which I should think very strange and incredible if we were not accustomed every day to see, in our own wars, many thousands of men of other nations, for money to stake their blood and their lives in quarrels wherein they have no manner of concern.

CHAPTER XXIV.

OF THE ROMAN GRANDEUR.

I WILL only say a word or two on this infinite argument to shew the simplicity of those who compare the pitiful grandeurs of these times to that of Rome. In the seventh book of Cicero's Familiar Epistles (and let the grammarians put out that surname of *familiar* if they please, for in truth it is not very proper; and they who, instead of *familiar*, have substituted *ad familiares*, may gather something to justify them for so doing out of what Suetonius says in the Life of Cæsar, that there was a volume of letters of his *ad familiares*), there is one directed to Cæsar, being then in Gaul, wherein Cicero repeats these words, which were in the end of another letter that Cæsar had written to him: "As to what concerns Marcus Furius, whom you have recommended to me, I will make him king of Gaul; and if you would advance any other friend of yours, send him to me."[3] It was no new thing for a simple citizen of Rome, as Cæsar then was, to dispose of kingdoms; for he took away that of King Deiotarus from him, to give it to a gentleman of the city of Pergamus called Mithridates;[4] and those who wrote his life record several kingdoms by him sold; and Suetonius says[5] that he had at once from King Ptolemy three millions six hundred thousand crowns, which was very near selling him his kingdom.

Tot Galatæ, tot Pontus eat, tot Lydia nummis.[6]

"So much for Pontus, so much for Lydia, so much for Galatea."

Mark Antony said[7] that the grandeur of the people of Rome was not so much seen in what they took as what they gave; and, indeed, some ages before Antony, they had dethroned one amongst the rest, with so wonderful authority, that in all the Roman History I have not observed anything that more denotes the height of their power. Antiochus possessed all Egypt, and was about conquering Cyprus, and other appendages of that empire. Being upon the progress of his victories, C. Popilius came to him from the Senate, and at their first meeting refused to take him by the hand till he had first read the letters he brought him. The king having read them, told him he would consider of them; but Popilius made a circumference about him with the wand he had in his hand, saying, "Return me an answer, that I may carry back to the Senate, before thou stirrest out of this circle." Antiochus, astonished at the roughness of so positive a command, after a little pause replied, "I will obey the Senate's command;"[8] and then it was that Popilius saluted him as a friend to the people of Rome. After having renounced so great a monarchy, and such a torrent of successful fortune, upon three scratches of the pen; in earnest he had reason, as he afterwards did, to send the Senate word, by his ambassadors, that he had received their order with the same respect as if it had been sent by the immortal gods.[9]

A great king deprived of his conquests by a letter from the Roman senate.

All the kingdoms that Augustus gained by the right of war he either restored to those who had lost them, or presented them to strangers. And Tacitus, in reference to this, speaking of Cogidunus, king of England, gives us, by a touch, a marvellous idea of that infinite power: "The Romans," says he, "were from all antiquity accustomed to leave the kings they had subdued in possession of their kingdoms under their authority, that they might have even kings to be their slaves:" *Ut haberent instrumenta servitutis et reges.*[10] 'Tis likely that Solyman, whom we have seen make a gift of Hungary and other principalities, had therein more respect to this consideration than to that he was wont to allege, viz., that he was glutted and overcharged with so many monarchies, and so much dominion, as his own valour and that of his ancestors had acquired.

Why the Romans restored their conquered kingdoms to their owners.

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[1] Manilius, *Astron.* iv. 225.
[2] Statius, *Sylv.* i. 6. 51.
[3] Cicero, *Epist. Fam.* vii. 5. The most received text has the name *M. Orfium.* Some commentators have regarded Cæsar's offer as a mere jest; but Montaigne, who takes it as a serious offer, may very well be in the right, for Cæsar's proposal may merely have extended to making Cicero's friend one of the petty *reguli*, whom the Romans appointed over districts in the various parts of their conquests.
[4] Cicero, *de Divinat.* ii. 37.
[5] *Life of Cæsar*, c. 54.
[6] Claud, *in Eutrop.* i. 203.
[7] Plutarch, *in vitâ.*
[8] Livy, xlv. 12.
[9] Id. *ib.*
[10] Tacitus, *Agricol.* c. 14.

CHAPTER XXV.

NOT TO COUNTERFEIT BEING SICK.

THERE is an epigram in Martial of very good sense, for he has of all sorts, where he pleasantly tells the story of Cælius, who, to avoid making his court to some great men of Rome, to wait their rising, and to attend them abroad, pretended to have the gout; and, the better to colour this pretence, anointed his legs, and had them wrapped up in a great many clouts and swathings, and perfectly counterfeited both the gesture and countenance of a gouty person, till in the end fortune did him the kindness to make him gouty indeed.

Gout counterfeit became a real gout.

> Tantum cura potest, et ars doloris!
> Desit fingere Cælius podagram.[1]
>
> "So much has counterfeiting brought about,
> Cælius has ceased to counterfeit the gout."

I think I have read somewhere in Appian[2] a story like this, of one, who to escape the proscriptions of the Triumviri of Rome, and the better to be concealed from the discovery of those who pursued him, having shaded himself in a disguise, would yet add this invention, to counterfeit having but one eye; but when he came to have a little more liberty, and went to take off the plaister he had a great while worn over his eye, he found he had totally lost the sight of it indeed, and that it was absolutely gone. 'Tis possible that the action of sight was dulled for having been so long without exercise, and that the optic power was wholly retired into the other eye: for we evidently perceive that the eye we keep shut sends some part of its virtue to its fellow, so that the remaining eye will swell and grow bigger; as also idleness, with the heat of ligatures and plaisters, might very well have brought some gouty humour upon this dissembler in Martial.

Reading in Froissard[3] the vow of a troop of young English gallants, to carry their left eyes bound up till they were arrived in France, and had performed some notable exploit upon us, I have oft been tickled with the conceit of its befalling them as it did the before-named Roman, and that they had returned with but an eye a-piece to their mistresses, for whose sakes they had entered into this vow.

It is proper to hinder children from counterfeiting personal defects.

Mothers have reason to rebuke their children when they counterfeit having but one eye, squinting, lameness, or any other personal defect; for, besides that their bodies being then so tender may be subject to take an ill bent, fortune, I know not how, sometimes seems to take a delight to take us at our word; and I have heard several examples related of people who have become really sick by only feigning to be so. I have always used, whether on horseback or on foot, to carry a stick in my hand, and so as to affect doing it with a grace: many have threatened that this trick would one day be turned into necessity; that is, that I should be the first of my family that should have the gout.

But let us a little lengthen this chapter, and vary it with a piece of another colour, concerning blindness. Pliny[4] reports of one, that, once dreaming he was blind, found himself in the morning so indeed, without any preceding infirmity in his eyes. The force of imagination might assist in this case, as I have said elsewhere; and Pliny seems to be of the same opinion: but it is more likely that the motions which the body felt within (of which physicians, if they please, may find out the cause), which took away his sight, were the occasion of his dream.

Let us add another story, akin to this subject, which Seneca[5] relates in one of his Epistles: "You know," says he, writing to Lucilius, "that Harpaste, my wife's fool, lives upon me as an hereditary charge; for, as to my own taste, I have an aversion to those monsters; and if I have a mind to laugh at a fool, I need not seek him far, I can laugh at myself. This fool has suddenly lost her sight. I tell you a strange, but a very true thing; she is not sensible that she is blind, but eternally importunes her keeper to take her abroad, because she says the house is dark. I pray you to believe that what we laugh at in her happens to every one of us; no one knows himself to be avaricious. Besides, the blind call for a guide; we stray of our own accord. I am not ambitious, we say; but a man cannot live otherwise at Rome; I am not wasteful, but the city requires a great expense; 'tis not my fault if I am choleric, and if I have not yet established any certain course of life; 'tis the fault of youth. Let us not seek our disease out of ourselves; 'tis in us, and planted in our bowels: and even this, that we do not perceive ourselves to be sick, renders us more hard to be cured. If we do not betimes begin to dress them, when shall we have done with so many wounds and evils wherewith we abound? And yet we have a most sweet and charming medicine in philosophy; for all the rest give no pleasure till after the cure: this pleases and heals at once." This is what Seneca says: he has carried me from my subject; but there is advantage in the change.

CHAPTER XXVI.

OF THUMBS.

TACITUS reports[6] that amongst certain barbarian kings their manner was, when they

[1] Martial, vii. 39, 8.
[2] *Civil Wars*, iv.
[3] Vol. i.
[4] *Nat. Hist.* vii. 50.
[5] *Ep.* 50.
[6] *Annals*, xii. 47.

would make a firm obligation, to join their right hands close to one another, and twist their thumbs; and when, by force of straining, the blood mounted to the ends, they lightly pricked them with some sharp instrument, and mutually sucked them.

Physicians say[1] that the thumbs are the masters of the hand, and that their Latin etymology is derived from *pollere*.[2] The Greeks called them ἀντιχείρ, as who should say "another hand." And it seems that the Latins also sometimes take them in this sense for the whole hand:

> Sed nec vocibus excitata blandis,
> Molli pollice nec rogata, surgit.[3]

It was at Rome a signification of favour to depress and turn in the thumbs,

> Fautor utroque tuum laudabit pollice ludum,[4]
>
> "Thy patron, when thou mak'st thy sport,
> Will with both thumbs applaud thee for't,"

and of disfavour to elevate and thrust them outward:

> Converso pollice vulgi
> Quemlibet occidunt populariter.[5]
>
> "The vulgar with reverted thumbs
> Kill each one that before them comes."

The Romans exempted from war all such as were maimed in the thumbs, as having no longer sufficient strength to hold their weapons. Augustus confiscated the estate of a Roman knight, who had wilfully cut off the thumbs of two young children he had, to excuse them from going into the armies.[6] And before him, the senate, in the time of the Italian war, had condemned Caius Vatienus to perpetual imprisonment, and confiscated all his goods, for having purposely cut off the thumb of his left hand, to exempt himself from that expedition.[7]

Some one, I forget who,[8] having won a naval battle, cut off the thumbs of all his vanquished enemies, to render them incapable of fighting and of handling the oar. The Athenians also caused the thumbs of those of Ægina to be cut off, to deprive them of the precedence in the art of navigation.[9]

In Lacedæmonia, pedagogues chastised their scholars by biting their thumbs.[10]

CHAPTER XXVII.

COWARDICE THE MOTHER OF CRUELTY.

I HAVE often heard it said that cowardice is the mother of cruelty; and I have found, by experience, that that malicious and inhuman animosity and fierceness is usually accompanied with a feminine weakness. I have seen the most cruel people, and upon very frivolous occasions, very apt to cry. Alexander, the tyrant of Pheres, durst not be a spectator of tragedies in the theatre, for fear lest his citizens should see him weep at the misfortunes of Hecuba and Andromache, who himself caused so many people every day to be murdered without pity.[11] Is it meanness of spirit that renders them so pliable to all extremities? Valour, whose effect is only to be exercised against resistance,

> Nec nisi Bellantis gaudet cervice juvenci,[12]
>
> "Neither, unless he fight,
> In conquering a bull doth take delight,"

stops when it sees the enemy at its mercy; but pusillanimity, to say that it was also in the action, not having dared to meddle in the first act, that of danger, rushes into the second, that of blood and massacre. The execution after victories is commonly performed by the rascality and hangers-on of an army; and that which causes so many unheard-of cruelties in domestic wars is that the rout are flushed in being up to the elbows in blood, and ripping up bodies that lie prostrate at their feet, having no sense of any other valour:

> Et lupus, et turpes instant morientibus ursi,
> Et quæcunque minor nobilitate fera est:[13]
>
> "None but the wolves, the filthy bears, and all
> The baser beasts, will on the dying fall:"

like cowardly house-curs, that in the house worry and tear the skins of wild beasts they durst not come near in the field. What is it in these times of ours that causes our quarrels to be all mortal? and that whereas our fathers had some degree in their revenge, we now begin with the last in ours, and that at the first meeting nothing is said but "Kill?" what is this but cowardice?

Every one is sensible that there is more bravery and disdain in subduing an enemy than in cutting his throat, and in making him yield than in putting him to the sword; besides that the appetite of revenge is better satisfied and pleased, because its only aim is to make itself felt: and this is the reason why we do not fall upon a beast or a stone when it hurts us, because they are not capable of being sensible of our revenge; and to kill a man is to save him from the injury and offence we intend him. And as Bias[14] cried out to a wicked

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[1] Ateius Capito, *apud* Macrobius, *Saturnalia*, vii. 13.
[2] "To be powerful."
[3] Martial, xii. 98. 8. The verses are too free to be translated, in however free a version.
[4] Horace, *Ep.* i. 18. 66.
[5] Juvenal, iii. 36.
[6] Suetonius, *in vitâ*, c. 24.
[7] Valerius Max. v. 3. 3. It is supposed that the term *poltroon* is derived from the Latin words expressing this circumstance—*pollice tronco*.
[8] Philocles, one of the Athenian generals in the Peloponesian war. Plutarch, *Life of Lysander*.
[9] Cicero, *de Off.* iii. 11.
[10] Plutarch, *Life of Lycurgus*.
[11] Plut. *Life of Pelopidas*.
[12] Claudian. *Ep. ad Hadrianum*, v. 30.
[13] Ovid, *Trist.* iii. 5. 35.
[14] Plutarch, *on the Delay of Divine Justice*. Montaigne is mistaken in supposing that Bias pitied the *Orchomenians*; it is Patroclus, one of the interlocutors in the dialogue, who cites this example of the tardy vengeance of the gods on the traitor Lycisscus.

fellow, "I know that, sooner or later, thou wilt have thy reward, but I am afraid I shall not see it;" and pitied the Orchomenians, that the penitence of Lyciscus for the treason committed against them, came in a season when there was no one remaining alive of those who had been interested in the offence, and whom the pleasure of this penitence should have affected: so revenge is to be repented of when the person on whom it is executed is deprived of the means of suffering under it; for as the avenger will look on to enjoy the pleasure of his revenge, so the person on whom he takes revenge should be a spectator too, to be afflicted and to repent. "He will repent it," we say; but because we have given him a pistol-shot through the head do we imagine he repents? On the contrary, if we but observe we shall find that he makes a mouth at us in falling: and so far from penitence, that he does not so much as repine at us; and we do him the kindest office of life, which is to make him die insensibly and suddenly. We have afterwards to hide ourselves, and run from place to place, from the officers of justice, who pursue us, whilst he is at rest. Killing is good to frustrate an offence to come, not to revenge one that is already past: 'tis more an act of fear than bravery, of precaution than courage, and of defence than attempt. It is manifest that by it we quit both the true end of revenge and the care of our reputation; we are afraid if he lives he will do us another injury as great as the first; 'tis not out of animosity to him, but care of thyself, that thou riddest him out of the way.

Revenge is rendered of no effect by killing an enemy.

In the kingdom of Narsingua this expedient would be useless to us; where not only soldiers, but tradesmen also, end their differences by the sword. The king never denies the field to any that will fight; and sometimes, when they are persons of quality, looks on, rewarding the victor with a chain of gold; but for the which any one that will may fight with him again: by which means, by having come off from one combat, he becomes engaged in many.

Duels common in the kingdom of Narsingua.

If we thought by virtue to be always masters of our enemies, and to triumph over them at pleasure, we should be sorry they should escape from us as they do, by dying. We have a mind to conquer, but more with safety than honour; and in our quarrel more pursue the end than the glory.

Asinius Pollio, who, being a worthy man, was the less to be excused, committed a like error; who, having written a libel against Plancus, forbore to publish it till he was first dead: which was to bite one's thumb at a blind man, to rail at one that is deaf, and to wound a man that has no feeling, rather than to run the hazard of his resentment. So it was said about him: "That it was only for hobgoblins to wrestle with the dead."[1] He that stays to see the author die whose writings he intends to question, what does he say, but that he is as weak as quarrelsome? It was told Aristotle that some one had spoken ill of him: "Let him do more," said he,[2] "let him whip me too, provided I am not there."

Pollio's libel against Plancus.

Our fathers contented themselves to revenge an insult with a lie, the lie with a box of the ear, and so forward; they were valiant enough not to fear their adversary living and provoked: we tremble for fear so long as we see them on foot: and that this is so, does not our noble practice of these days, equally to prosecute to death both him that has offended us and him we have offended, make it out? 'Tis also a kind of cowardice that has introduced the custom of seconds, thirds, and fourths in our duels: they were formerly duels; they are now skirmishes, rencounters, and battles. Solitude was doubtless terrible to those who were the first inventors of this practice, *quum in se cuique minimum fiduciæ esset;* "they had little confidence in themselves;" for naturally any company whatever is comfortable in danger. Third persons were formerly called in to prevent disorder and foul play only, and to be witness of the fortune of the combat: but since they have brought it to this pass that these themselves engage, whoever is invited cannot handsomely stand by as an idle spectator, for fear of being suspected either of want of affection or courage. Besides the injustice and unworthiness of such an action, of engaging other force and valour in the protection of your honour than your own, I conceive it a disadvantage to a brave man, and who only relies upon himself, to shuffle his fortune with that of a second; every one runs hazard enough in himself, without hazarding for another, and has enough to do to assure himself in his own valour for the defence of his life, without entrusting a thing so dear in a third man's hand. For, if it be not expressly agreed upon before to the contrary, 'tis a combined party of all four, and if your second be killed, you have two to deal withal, with good reason: and to say that it is foul play, it is so indeed; as it is, well-armed, to charge a man that has but the hilt of a sword in his hand, or, clear and untouched, a man that is desperately wounded; but if these be advantages you have got by fighting, you may make use of them without reproach. The disparity and inequality is only weighed and considered from the condition of the combatants when they began; as to the rest, you may take your fortune: and though you alone had three enemies upon you at once, your two companions being

Seconds introduced in duels by cowardice.

[1] It was Plancus himself who made this answer. Pliny, *Preface to Vespasian.*

[2] Laertius, *in vitâ.*

killed, you have no more wrong done you than I should do, in a battle, by running a man through I should see engaged with one of our own men, with the like advantage. The nature of society will have it so; where there is troop against troop,[1] as where our Duke of Orleans challenged Henry, king of England, a hundred against a hundred; three hundred against as many, as the Argians against the Lacedæmonians;[2] and three to three, as the Horatii against the Curiatii, the multitude on either side is considered but as one single man: the hazard every where, where there is company, being confused and mixed.

A story of a duel between some French gentlemen, in which a brother of Montaigne was engaged.

I have a domestic interest in this discourse; for my brother, the Sieur de Matecoulom, was at Rome invited by a gentleman, with whom he had no great acquaintance, and who was defendant, and challenged by another, to be his second. In this duel he found himself matched with a gentleman much better known to him;—I wish they would give me some reason for these laws of honour, which so frequently run counter to all reason.—After having dispatched his man,[3] seeing the two principals still on foot and sound, he ran in to disengage his friend. What could he do less? Should he have stood still, and, if chance would have ordered it so, have seen him he was come thither to defend, killed before his face? What he had hitherto done signified nothing to the business; the quarrel was yet undecided. The courtesy that you can and certainly ought to show to your enemy, when you have reduced him to an ill condition, and have a great advantage over him, I do not see how you can show, where the interest of another is in the case, where you are only called in as an assistant, and the quarrel is none of yours. He could neither be just nor courteous at the hazard of him he was to serve; and so he was enlarged from the prisons of Italy at the speedy and solemn request of our king. Indiscreet nation! We are not content to make our vices and follies known to the world by report only, but we must go into foreign countries, there to show them what fools we are! Put three Frenchmen into the deserts of Lybia, they will not live a month together without fighting; so that you would say that this peregrination was a thing purposely designed to give strangers the pleasure of our tragedies, and for the most part such as rejoice and laugh at our miseries. We go into Italy to learn to fence, and fall to practise at the expense of our lives before we have learned it; and yet, by the order of discipline, we should put the theory before the practice: we discover ourselves to be but learners:

> Primitiæ juvenis miseræ, bellique propinqui
> Dura rudimenta![4]
>
> "O curs'd essay of arms, disastrous doom!
> Prelude of bloody fields and fights to come!
> Hard elements of inauspicious war!"

I know 'tis an art very useful to its end; (in a duel betwixt two princes, cousins-german, in Spain, the elder, says Livy,[5] by his skill and dexterity in arms, easily surmounted the greater and less managed strength of the younger); and an art of which the knowledge, as I experimentally know, hath inspired some with courage above their natural measure; but this is not properly valour, because it supports itself upon address, and is founded upon something besides itself. The honour of combat consists in the jealousy of courage, and not of skill; and therefore I have known a friend of mine, famed as a great master in this exercise, in his quarrels make choice of such arms as might deprive him of this advantage, and that wholly depended upon fortune and assurance, that they might not attribute his victory rather to his skill in fencing than his valour. When I was young, gentlemen avoided the reputation of good fencers, as injurious to them; and learned with all imaginable privacy to fence, as a trade of subtlety, derogating from true and natural valour:

> Non schivar, non parar, non ritirarsi
> Voglion costor, ne qui destrezza ha parte;
> Non danno i colpi or finti, or pieni, or scarsi;
> Togli e l' ira e l' furor l' uso dell' arte.
> Odi le spade orribilmente urtarsi
> A mezzo il ferro: il pie d' orma non parte;
> Sempre è il pie fermo, e la man sempre in moto;
> Nè scende taglio in van, nè punta a voto.[6]
>
> "They neither shrunk, nor vantage sought of ground,
> They travers'd not, nor skipt from part to part,
> Their blows were neither false nor feigned found,
> Fury and rage would let them use no art.
> Their swords together clash with dreadful sound,
> Their feet stand fast, and neither stir nor start,
> They move their hands, stedfast their feet remain,
> Nor blow nor foin they struck, nor thrust in vain."

Butts, tilting, and barriers, the images of warlike fights, were the exercises of our forefathers: this other exercise is so much the less noble that it only respects a private end; that it teaches us to ruin one another, against law and justice, and that it every way always produces very ill effects. It is much more worthy and becoming to exercise ourselves in things that rather strengthen than weaken our government, and that tend to the public safety and common glory. Publius Rutilius, consul, was the first that taught the soldiers to handle their arms with skill, and joined art to valour: not for the use of private quarrel, but for war, and the quarrels of the people of Rome;[7] a popular and patriotic art of defence: and besides the example of Cæsar,[8] who commanded his men to

[1] Monstrelet, vol. i. c. 9.
[2] For the Plain of Thyrea. Herod. i. 82. Pausanias, x 9. *Athenæus*, xv. 6.
[3] The details of this duel may be found in Brantome, *On Duels*.
[4] *Æneid*, xi. 156.
[5] Livy, xxviii. 21.
[6] Tasso, *Gerusal.* c. 12, st. 55.
[7] Val. Max. ii. 3, 2.
[8] Plutarch, *in vitâ*.

aim chiefly at the face of Pompey's soldiers in the battle of Pharsalia, a thousand other commanders have also bethought them to invent new forms of weapons, and new ways of striking and defending, according as occasion required.

But as Philopœmen[1] condemned wrestling, wherein he excelled, because the preparatives that are therein employed were different from those that appertain to military discipline, to which alone he conceived men of honour ought to apply themselves, so it seems to me that this address to which we form our limbs, those twistings and motions which young men are taught in this new school, are not only of no use, but rather the contrary, and hurtful to the manner of fight in battle; our people, too, commonly make use of particular weapons, peculiarly designed for this purpose: and I have known, when it has been disapproved that a gentleman, challenged to fight with rapier and poinard, should appear in the equipage of a man at arms; or that another should take his cloak instead of a poinard. It is worthy of consideration that Laches, in Plato, speaking of learning to fence after a manner like ours, says that he never knew any great soldier come out of that school, especially the masters of it: and indeed, as to them, our own experience tells us as much. As to the rest, we may at least conclude that they are qualities of no relation nor correspondence; and, in the education of the children of his government, Plato[2] interdicts the art of boxing, introduced by Amycus and Epeius, and that of wrestling, by Antæus and Cercyo, because they have another end than to render youth fit for the service of war, and contribute nothing to it. But I see I am somewhat strayed from my theme.

The art of boxing inderdicted by Plato.

The Emperor Maurice, being advertised by dreams and several prognostics, that one Phocas, an obscure soldier, should kill him, questioned his brother-in-law, Philippicus, who this Phocas was, and what his nature, qualities, and manners; and so soon as Philippicus, amongst other things, had told him that he was cowardly and timorous, the emperor immediately thence concluded that he was then a murderer and cruel.[3] What is that that makes tyrants so bloody? 'Tis only the solicitude of their own safety, and that their faint hearts can furnish them with no other means of securing themselves than in exterminating those that may hurt them, even so much as to women, for fear of a scratch:

Cowards naturally cruel and bloody.

Cuncta ferit, dum cuncta timet.[4]

"He strikes at all, who every one does fear."

The first cruelties are exercised for themselves; thence springs the fear of a just revenge, which afterwards produces a series of new cruelties to obliterate one another. Philip, king of Macedon, who had so much to do with the people of Rome, agitated with the horror of so many murders committed by his appointment, and doubting of being able to keep himself secure from so many families, at divers times mortally injured and offended by him, resolved to seize all the children of those he had caused to be slain, to dispatch them daily one after another, and so to establish his own repose.[5]

One act of cruelty necessarily produces others.

Fine matter is never impertinent, however placed; and therefore I, who more consider the weight and utility of what I deliver than its order and connexion, need not fear in this place to bring in a fine story, though it be a little by the bye; for when they are rich in their own native beauty, and are able to justify themselves, the least end of a hair will serve to draw them into my argument.

Amongst others condemned by Philip, Herodicus, prince of Thessaly, had been one: he had moreover, after him, caused his two sons-in-law to be put to death, each leaving a son very young behind him; Theoxena and Archo were their two widows. Theoxena, though highly courted to it, could not be persuaded to marry again. Archo married Poris, the greatest man among the Ænians, and by him had a great many children, which she, dying, left in a tender age. Theoxena, moved with a maternal charity towards her nephews, that she might have them under her own eyes, and in her own protection, married Poris. Presently comes a proclamation of the king's edict. This brave-spirited mother suspected the cruelty of Philip, and, afraid of the insolence of the soldiers towards these fine and tender children, boldly declared that she would rather kill them with her own hands than deliver them. Poris, startled at this protestation, promised her to steal them away, and to transport them to Athens, and there commit them to the custody of some faithful friend of his. They took therefore the opportunity of an annual feast, which was celebrated at Ænia in honour of Æneas, and thither they went. Having appeared by day at the public ceremonies and banquet, they stole at night into a vessel prepared for that purpose, to escape away by sea. The wind proved contrary, and finding themselves in the morning within sight of the land from whence they had launched over night, were made after by the guards of the port. At their approach, Poris laboured all he could to make the mariners do their utmost to escape from the pursuers; but Theoxena, frantic with affection

[1] Plutarch, *in vitâ*.
[2] *Laws*, vii.
[3] Zonaras and Cedrenus, *H. of the Emp. Maurice*.
[4] Claud. *in Eutrop.* i. 182.
[5] Livy, xl. 3.

and revenge, recurring to her former resolution, prepared arms and poison, and exposing these before them: "Come, my children," said she, "death is now the only means of your defence and liberty, and shall administer occasion to the gods to exercise their sacred justice; these sharp swords, these full cups, will open you the way to it; courage, fear nothing. And thou, my son, who art the eldest, take this steel into thy hand, that thou may'st the most bravely die." The children, having on one side so powerful a counsellor, and the enemy at their throats on the other, ran all of them eagerly upon what was next to hand, and, half dead, were thrown into the sea. Theoxena, proud of having so gloriously provided for the safety of all her children, clasping her arms with great affection about her husband's neck: "Let us, my friend," said she, "follow these boys, and enjoy the same sepulchre they do." And, so embraced, threw themselves headlong overboard into the sea; so that the ship was carried back empty of the owners into the harbour.

Tyrants contrive to lengthen the torments of those they put to death.

Tyrants, at once both to kill and to make their anger felt, have pumped their wits to invent the most lingering deaths. They will have their enemies dispatched, but not so fast that they may not have leisure to taste their vengeance.[1] And therein they are mightily perplexed, for if the torments they inflict are violent, they are short; if long, they are not then so painful as they desire; and thus they torment themselves in contriving how to torment others. Of this we have a thousand examples of antiquity, and I know not whether we, unawares, do not retain some traces of this barbarity.

All that exceeds a simple death appears to me pure cruelty. Our law cannot expect that he whom the fear of being executed, by being beheaded or hanged, will not restrain, should be any more awed by the imagination of a languishing fire, burning pincers, or the wheel. And I know not, in the mean time, whether we do not throw them into despair; for in what condition can the soul of a man, expecting four-and-twenty hours together to be broke upon a wheel, or, after the old way, nailed to a cross, be? Josephus relates[2] that in the time of the war the Romans made in Judea, happening to pass by where they had three days before crucified certain Jews, he amongst them knew three of his own friends, and obtained the favour of having them taken down; of whom two, he says, died, the third lived a great while after.

Chalcondylas, a writer of good credit, in the records he has left behind him of things that happened in his time, and near him,[3] tells us, as of the most excessive torment, of what the Emperor Mechmet very often practised, of cutting off men in the middle, by the diaphragm, with one blow of a scymitar; by which it happened that they died, as it were, two deaths at once, and both the one part and the other, says he, were seen to stir and struggle a great while after, in very great torment. I do not think there was any great suffering in this motion: the torments that are most dreadful to look on are not always the greatest to endure; and I find those that other historians relate to have been practised upon the Epirot lords, to be more horrid and cruel, where they were condemned to be flayed alive by pieces, after so malicious a manner that they continued fifteen days in this misery.

As also these two others: Crœsus,[4] having caused a gentleman, the favourite of his brother Pantaleon, to be seized, carried him into a fuller's shop, where he caused him to be scratched and carded with cards and combs belonging to that trade till he died. George Sechel, chief commander of the peasants of Poland, who committed so many mischiefs under the title of the crusade, being defeated in battle, and taken by the waywode of Transylvania, was for three days bound naked upon the rack, exposed to all sorts of torments that any one could contrive against him, during which time many other prisoners were kept fasting. In the end, he living and looking on, they made his beloved brother Lucat, for whom only he entreated, taking upon himself the blame of all their evil actions, to drink his blood; and caused twenty of his most favoured captains to feed upon him, tearing his flesh in pieces with their teeth, and swallowing the morsels. The remainder of his body and bowels, so soon as he was dead, were boiled, and others of his followers compelled to eat them.[5]

CHAPTER XXVIII.

ALL THINGS HAVE THEIR SEASON.

SUCH as compare Cato the Censor with the younger Cato that killed himself, compare two beautiful natures, and much resembling one another. The first acquired his reputation several ways, and excels in military exploits and the utility of his public avocations; but the virtue of the younger, besides that it were blasphemy to compare any to him in vigour, was much more pure and unblemished; for who can acquit the Censor of envy and ambition, having dared to jostle the honour of Scipio, a man in worth, valour, and all other excellent qualities, infinitely beyond him, or any other of his time?

The virtue of Cato of Utica preferable to that of Cato the Censor.

[1] An allusion to Caligula's saying, "I wish them to feel themselves dying." In the *History of his Life*, towards the end.

[2] *Hist. of the Turks*, x. at the beginning. [4] Herod. i. 92.

[3] *Chronicle of Curion*, book iv. p. 700. Curens, *Annals of Silesia*, p. 233.

That which they report of him, amongst other things, that, in his extreme old age, he put himself upon learning the Greek tongue with a greedy appetite, as if to quench a long thirst,[1] does not seem to make much for his honour; it being properly what we call being twice a child. All things have their season, even the best; and a man may say his Paternoster out of time; as they accused T. Quintus Flaminius, that, being general of an army, he was seen praying apart in the time of a battle that he won:

Imponet finem sapiens et rebus honestis.[2]

"The wise man limits even proper things."

Eudemonidas, seeing Xenocrates, when very old, still very intent upon his school-lessons, "When will this man be wise," said he, "if he is still learning?"[3] And Philopœmen, to those who extolled King Ptolemy for every day inuring his person to the exercise of arms, "It is not," said he, "commendable in a king of his age to exercise himself in those things; he ought now really to employ them."[4] The young are to make their preparations, the old to enjoy them, say the sages;[5] and the greatest vice they observe in us is that our desires incessantly grow young again; we are always re-beginning to live.

Our studies and desires should sometimes be sensible of age. We have one foot in the grave, and yet our appetites and pursuits spring every day new upon us:

Tu secanda marmora
Locas sub ipsum funus, et, sepulchri
Immemor, struis domos:[6]

"Command the pillar'd dome to rise,
When, lo! the tomb forgotten lies."

The longest of my designs is not above a year's extent: I think of nothing now but ending, rid myself of all new hopes and enterprizes, take my last leave of every place I depart from, and every day dispossess myself of what I have: *Olim jam nec perit quidquam mihi, nec acquiritur . . . plus superest viatici quam viæ:*[7] "Henceforward I will neither lose nor get; I have more wherewith to defray my journey, than I have way to go:

Vixi, et, quem dederat cursum fortuna, peregi.[8]

"I've lived, and finish'd the career
Wherein my fortune placed me here."

To conclude; 'tis the only comfort I find in my old age, that it mortifies in me several cares and desires wherewith life is disturbed; the care how the world goes, the care of riches, of grandeur, of knowledge, of health, of myself. There are some who are learning to speak, at a time when they should learn to be silent for ever. A man may always study, but he must not always go to school. What a contemptible thing is an old abecedarian!

Diversos diversa juvant, non omnibus annis
Omnia conveniunt:[9]

"For several things do several men delight;
And all things are not for all ages right."

If we must study, let us study what is suitable to our present condition, that we may answer as he did, who, being asked to what end he studied in his decrepidage: "That I may go out better," said he, "and at greater ease." Such a study was that of the younger Cato, feeling his end approach, and which he met with in Plato's Discourse of the Immortality of the Soul; not, as we are to believe, that he was not long before-hand furnished with all sorts of ammunition for such a departure; for of assurance, an established will and instruction, he had more than Plato in all his writings; his knowledge and courage were in this respect above philosophy; he applied himself to his study, not for the service of his death; but, as a man whose sleeps were never disturbed in the importance of such a deliberation, he also, without choice or change, continued his studies with the other accustomary actions of his life. The night that he was denied the prætorship, he spent in play; that wherein he was to die, he spent in reading: the loss either of life or of office was all one to him.

What ought to be an old man's study.

CHAPTER XXIX.

OF VIRTUE.

I FIND, by experience, that there is a vast difference betwixt the starts and sallies of the soul and a resolute and constant habit; and very well perceive there is nothing we may not do; nay, even to the surpassing the Divinity itself, says some one,[10] forasmuch as it is more to render a man's self impassable by his own study and energy, than to be so by his natural condition; and even to be able to conjoin to man's imbecility and frailty a godly resolution and assurance; but it is by fits and starts; and in the lives of those heroes of times past, there are sometimes miraculous sallies, and that seem infinitely to exceed our natural force; but they are indeed but sallies; and 'tis hard to believe that in these so elevated qualities a man can so thoroughly imbue the soul that they should become constant and, as it were, natural in him. It accidentally happens even to us, who are but abortive births of men, sometimes

Man seldom attains to a capacity of acting steadily and regularly, according to the principles of solid virtue.

[1] Plutarch, *Life of Cato the Censor.*
[2] Id. *Parallel of T. Q. Flaminius and Philopœmen.*
[3] Id. *Apoth. of the Lacedæm.*
[4] Id. *in vitâ.*
[5] Seneca, *Epist.* 36.
[6] Horace, *Od.* ii. 18. 17.
[7] Seneca, *Epist.* 77.
[8] *Æneid*, iv. 653.
[9] *Pseudo.* Gallus, i. 104.
[10] Seneca, *Epist.* 73. *de Provid.* c. 5.

to dart out our souls, when roused by the discourses and examples of others, much beyond their ordinary stretch; but 'tis a kind of passion that pushes and pricks them on, and in some sort ravishes them from themselves; for this whirlwind once blown over, we see that they insensibly flag and slacken of themselves, if not to the lowest degree, at least so as to be no more the same; insomuch as that, upon every trivial occasion, the losing of a hawk, or the breaking of a glass, we suffer ourselves to be moved little less than one of the common sort. I am of opinion that, order, moderation, and constancy excepted, all things are to be done by a man that is indifferent and defective in general. "Therefore it is," say the sages, "that to make a right judgment of a man, you are chiefly to observe his common actions, and surprise him in his every day habits."[1]

Pyrrho, he who erected so pleasant a knowledge upon ignorance, endeavoured, as all the rest who were really philosophers did, to make his life correspond with his doctrine. And because he maintained the imbecility of human judgment to be so extreme as to be incapable of any choice or inclination, and would have it wavering and suspended, considering and receiving all things as indifferent, 'tis said that he always comported himself after the same manner and countenance: if he had begun a discourse, he would always end what he had to say, though the person he was speaking to had gone away; and if he walked, he never stopped for any impediment that stood in his way, being preserved from precipices, the justle of carts, and other like accidents, by the care of his friends:[2] for to fear or to avoid any thing had been to justle his own propositions, which deprived the senses themselves of all certainty and election. Sometimes he suffered incisions and cauteries with so great constancy as never to be seen so much as to wince or shut his eyes. 'Tis something to bring the soul to these imaginations, 'tis more to join thereto the effects; and yet not impossible; but to conjoin them with such perseverance and constancy as to make them habitual is certainly, in attempts so remote from common custom, almost incredible to be done. Therefore it was that being one day taken in his house terribly scolding with his sister, and being reproached that he therein transgressed his own rules of indifference; "What!" said he, "must this foolish woman also serve for a testimony to my rules?" Another time, being seen defending himself against a dog, "It is," said he, "very hard totally to put off man; and we must endeavour and force ourselves to resist and encounter things first by effects, but at least by reason."[3]

Extraordinary effects produced by a sudden resolution.

About seven or eight years since, a husbandman, who is still living, but two leagues from my house, having been long tormented with his wife's jealousy, coming one day home from his work, and she welcoming him with her accustomed railing, entered into so great fury that, with a sickle he had yet in his hand, he totally cut off all those parts that she was jealous of, and threw them in her face. And 'tis said that a young gentleman of our nation, brisk and amorous, having by his perseverance at last mollified the heart of a fair mistress, enraged that upon the point of fruition he found himself unable to perform, and that

Non viriliter
Iners senile penis extulerat caput,[4]
"The part he most had need of play'd him false,"

so soon as ever he came home, he deprived himself of it and sent it his mistress, a cruel and bloody victim for the expiation of his offence. If this had been done upon a mature consideration, and upon the account of religion, as the priests of Cybele did, what should we say of so high an action?

A few days since, at Bergerac, within five leagues of my house, up the river Dordogne, a woman having over-night been beaten and abused by her husband, a choleric, ill-conditioned fellow, resolved to escape from his ill usage at the price of her life; and going, so soon as she was up the next morning, to visit her neighbours, as she was wont to do, and having let some words fall as to recommending to them her affairs, she took a sister of hers by the hand and led her to the bridge; where being, and, as it were in jest, without any manner of alteration in her countenance, there taking leave of her, she threw herself headlong from the top into the river, and was drowned. That which is the most remarkable in this is that this resolution was a whole night maturing in her head.

It is quite another thing with the Indian women; for it being the custom there for the men to have many wives, and the best beloved of them to kill herself at her husband's decease, every one of them makes it the business of her whole life to obtain this privilege, and gain this advantage over her companions; and the good offices they do their husbands aim at no other recompense but to be preferred in accompanying them in death:

Ubi mortifero jacta est fax ultima lecto,
Uxorum fusis stat pia turba comis:
Et certamen habent lethi, quæ viva sequatur
Conjugium; pudor est non licuisse mori;
Ardent victrices, et flammæ pectora præbent,
Imponuntque suis ora perusta viris.[5]

[1] Diog. Laert. ix. 63.

[2] Yet Montaigne says, in the twelfth chapter of this book, that they who represent Pyrrho in this light extend his doctrine beyond what it really was; and that, like a rational man, he made use of all his corporeal and spiritual faculties as rule and reason.

[3] Laertius, *in vitâ*.

[4] Tibul. *Priap.* carm. 84.

[5] Propertius, iii. 13, 17.

"When to the pile they throw the kindling brand,
The pious wives with hair dishevell'd stand,
Striving which living shall in death attend
Her spouse, and gain an honourable end:
Those thus preferred their breasts to flame expose,
And their scorched lips to their dead husband's close."

A certain author of our times reports that he has seen in those oriental nations this custom in practice, that not only the wives bury themselves with their husbands, but even the slaves he has enjoyed also, which is done after this manner:—The husband being dead, the widow may, if she will (but few do), demand two or three months respite, wherein to order her affairs. The day being come, she mounts on horseback, dressed as for her wedding, and with a cheerful countenance says she is going to sleep with her spouse, holding a looking-glass in her left hand, and an arrow in the other; being thus conducted in pomp, accompanied with her kindred and friends, and a great concourse of people, rejoicing, she is at last brought to the public place appointed for such spectacles. This is a spacious square, in the midst of which is a pit full of wood, and adjoining to it a mount raised four or five steps, upon which she is brought and served with a magnificent repast; which being done, she falls to dancing and singing, and gives order when she thinks fit to kindle the fire. This being performed, she descends, and taking the nearest of her husband's relations by the hand, they walk together to the river close by, where she strips herself stark naked, and, having distributed her clothes and jewels to her friends, plunges herself into the water, as if there to cleanse herself from her sins; coming out thence, she wraps herself in yellow linen of eight and twenty ells long; and again giving her hand to this kinsman of her husband's, they return back to the mount, where she makes a speech to the people, and recommends her children to them, if she have any. Betwixt the pit and the mount there is commonly a curtain drawn, to screen the burning furnace from their sight, which some of them, to manifest their great courage, forbid. Having ended what she has to say, a woman presents her with a vessel of oil, wherewith to anoint her head and her whole body; which having done with, she throws it into the fire, and in an instant precipitates herself after. Immediately the people throw a great many billets and logs upon her, that she may not be long in dying, and convert all their joy into sorrow and mourning. If they are persons of meaner condition the body of the defunct is carried to the place of sepulture, and there placed sitting, the widow kneeling before him, and embracing the corpse closely, and thus remains, while they build round them a wall, which so soon as it is raised to the height of the woman's shoulders, some of her relations come behind her, and, taking hold of her head, writhe her neck; and so soon as she is dead the wall is presently raised up and closed, where they remain entombed.

There was in the same country, something like this in their Gymnosophists; for not by constraint of others, nor by the impetuosity of a sudden humour, but by the express profession of their order, their custom was, so soon as they arrived at a certain age, or that they saw themselves threatened by any disease, to cause a funeral pile to be erected for them, and on the top a stately bed, where, after having joyfully feasted their friends and acquaintance, they lay them down with so great resolution that, fire being applied to it, they were never seen to stir hand or foot;[1] and after this manner one of them, Calanus by name, expired in the presence of the whole army of Alexander the Great.[2] And he was neither reputed holy nor happy amongst them that did not thus destroy himself; dismissing his soul, purged and purified by the fire, after having consumed all that was earthly and mortal. This constant premeditation of the whole life is that which makes the wonder.

The Gymnosophists voluntarily burnt.

Amongst our other controversies, that as to the word *fatum* is also crept in; and, to tie things to come, and even our own wills, to a certain and inevitable necessity, we are still upon this argument of time past: "Since God foresees that all things shall so fall out, as doubtless he does, it must then necessarily follow that they must so fall out." To which our masters reply, "That the seeing any thing should come to pass, as we do, and as God himself also does (for, all things being present with him, he rather sees than foresees), is not to compel an event; that is, we see because things do fall out, but things do not fall out because we see; events cause knowledge, but knowledge does not cause events. That which we see happen does happen; but it might have happened otherwise; and God, in the catalogue of the causes of events, which he has in his presence, has also those which we call accidental and involuntary, which depend upon the liberty he has given our free-will, and knows that we shall do amiss, because we would do so"

Now I have seen a great many commanders encourage their soldiers with this fatal necessity; for, if our time be limited to a certain hour, neither the enemy's shot, nor our own boldness, nor our flight and cowardice, can either shorten or prolong our lives. This is easily said, but see who will be so persuaded; and if it be so that a strong and lively faith draws along with it actions of the same, certainly this faith we so much brag of is very light in this age of ours, unless the contempt it has of works makes it disdain their company. So it is that to this very purpose, the Sieur de Joinville, as credible a witness as any other whatever, tells us of the

[1] Quint. Curt. viii. 9; Strabo, xv.

[2] Plutarch, *Life of Alexander.*

Bedouins, a nation amongst the Saracens, with whom the king St. Louis had to do in the Holy Land, that they in their religion did so firmly believe the number of every man's days to be from all eternity prefixed and set down by an inevitable decree, that they went naked to the wars, excepting a Turkish sword, and their bodies only covered with a white linen cloth: and, for the greatest curse they could utter when they were angry, this was always in their mouth: "Accursed be thou, as he that arms himself for fear of death."[1] This is a testimony of faith very much beyond ours. And of this sort is that, also, that two monks of Florence gave in our fathers' days.[2] Being engaged in some controversy of learning, they agreed to go both of them into the fire, in the public square, to prove the faith of each in his arguments; and all things were prepared, and the thing just upon the point of execution, when it was interrupted by an unexpected accident.

A young Turkish lord, having performed a notable exploit in his own person in the sight of both armies, that of Amurath and that of Huniades, ready to join battle, being asked by Amurath, who, in so tender and inexperienced years (for it was his first sally in arms), had inspired him with so brave a courage, replied that his chief tutor for valour was a hare; "For being," said he, "one day a hunting I found a hare sitting, and though I had a brace of excellent greyhounds with me, yet methought it would be best for sureness to make use of my bow; for she sat very fair. I then fell to letting fly my arrows, and shot forty that I had in my quiver, not only without hurting, but without starting her from her form. At last I slipped my dogs after her, but to no more purpose than I had shot. By which I understood that she had been secured by her destiny; and that neither darts nor swords can wound without the permission of fate, which we can neither hasten nor defer." This story may serve to let us see, by the way, how flexible our reason is to all sorts of images. A person of great years, name, dignity, and learning, boasted to me to have been induced to a certain very important mutation in his faith, by a strange, whimsical incitement, and otherwise so very inconclusive, that I thought it much stronger the contrary way: he called it a miracle, and I too, but in another sense. The Turkish historians say that the persuasion those of their nation have imprinted in them of the fatal and unalterable prescription of their days does manifestly conduce to the giving them great assurance in dangers. And I know a great prince who makes a very fortunate use of it; whether it be that he does really believe it, or that he makes it his excuse for so wonderfully hazarding himself: may fortune be not too soon weary of her favour to him.

The common foundation of the courage of the Turks

There has not happened in our memory a more admirable effect of resolution than in those two who conspired the death of the Prince of Orange.[3] 'Tis to be wondered at how the second, that executed it, could ever be persuaded into an attempt wherein his companion, who had done his utmost, had had so ill success; and after the same method, and with the same arms, to go attack a prince, armed with so recent cause of distrust, powerful in followers and bodily strength, in his own hall, amidst his guards, and in a city wholly at his devotion. He assuredly employed a very resolute arm and courage, enflamed with furious passion. A poinard is sure for striking home: but, by reason that more motion and force of hand is required than with a pistol, the blow is more subject to be put by and hindered. That this man went to a certain death I make no doubt; for the hopes any one could flatter him withal could not find place in any sober understanding; and the conduct of his exploit sufficiently manifests that he had no want of that, any more than of courage. The motives of so powerful a persuasion may be diverse, for our fancy does what it will both with itself and us. The execution that was done near Orleans was nothing like this;[4] there was in that more of chance than vigour; the wound was not m[illegible] if fortune had not made it so; [illegible] to shoot on horseback, and at a distance, one whose body was in motion by the moving of his horse, was the attempt of a man who had rather miss his blow than fail of saving himself; as was apparent by what followed after; for he was so astonished and stupified with the thought of so high an execution, that he totally lost his judgment, both to find his way and govern his tongue. What needed he to have done more than to fly back to his friends and cross the river? 'Tis what I have done in less dangers, and I think of very little hazard, how broad soever the river may be, provided your horse have good going in, and that you see on the other side good landing according to the stre[illegible] The other,[5] when they pronounced his dreadful sentence: "I was prepared for it," said he; "and I will make you wonder at my patience."

The Assassins, a nation bordering upon Phœnicia, are reputed, amongst the Mahometans, a people of great devotion and purity of manners. They hold that the nearest way to gain Paradise is to kill some one of a contrary religion; which is the reason

A people who believe assassination the surest path to Paradise.

[1] *Mem. de Joinville*, c. 30.

[2] On the 7th April, 1498. See the history of the famous Jerome Savonarola, in the *Mem. of Comines*, viii. c. 19; Guicciardini, iii.; Bayle, at the word *Savonarola*; Sismondi, *Républiques Italiennes*. c. 98, vol. xii.

[3] The founder of the Republic of Holland. On the 18th March, 1582, he was wounded with a pistol-shot by a Biscayan, named Tean de Jaureguy. Recovering from this, he was killed on the 10th July, 1584, by a pistol-shot, in his house at Delft, by Balthazar Gerard, a native of Franche-Compté.

[4] The assassination of the Duke of Guise, by Poltrot.

[5] Gerard.

they have often been seen, being but one or two, without arms, to make an attempt against powerful enemies at the price of a certain death, and without any consideration of their own danger. So was our Count Raimond of Tripoli assassinated (which word is derived from their name), in the heart of his city, during our enterprises of the holy war.[1] And likewise Conrad, marquis of Montserrat,[2] the murderers at their execution carrying themselves with great pride and glory that they had performed so brave an exploit.

CHAPTER XXX.

OF A MONSTROUS CHILD.

THIS story shall go by itself; for I will leave physicians to discourse of it. Two days ago I saw a child which two men and a nurse, who called themselves the father, the uncle, and the aunt of it, carried about to get money by shewing it, by reason it was so strange a creature. It was, as to all the rest, of a common form, and could stand upon its feet; could go and gabble much like other children of its age; it had never as yet taken any other nourishment but from the nurse's breasts, and what, in my presence, they tried to put into its mouth, it only chewed a little and spit out again without [illegible] its cry, indeed, seemed a little odd [illegible]ticular; it was just fourteen months old. Under the breast it was joined to another child, but without a head, and that had the spine of the back without motion, the rest entire; for though it had one arm shorter than the other, this was broken by accident at their birth; they were joined breast to breast, as if a lesser child would reach its arms about the neck of one something bigger. The juncture and thickness of the place where they were conjoined was not above four fingers, or thereabouts, so that if you thrust up the imperfect child you might see the navel of the other below it; so the joining was betwixt the paps and the navel. The navel of the imperfect child could not be seen, but all the rest of the belly could; so that all the rest that was not joined of the imperfect one, as arms, buttocks, thighs, and legs, hung dangling upon the other child, and might reach to the mid-leg. The nurse moreover told us that it urined at both bodies; and also the members of the other were nourished, sensible, and in the same plight with that she gave suck to; excepting that they were shorter and less. This double body, and several limbs belonging to one head, might be interpreted a favourable prognostic to the king,[3] of maintaining the various parts of our state under the union of his laws; but lest the event should prove otherwise, 'tis better to let it alone; for, except in things past, there is no divination; *Ut, quum facta sunt, tum ad conjecturam aliqua interpretatione revocentur*,[4] "so as, when they are come to pass, they should then by some interpretation be recalled to conjecture," as 'tis said of Epimenides, that he always prophesied of things past.[5]

I have lately seen a herdsman in Medoc, of about thirty years of age, who has no sign of any genital parts: he has three holes, by which he voids his water; he is bearded, has desire, and covets the society of women.

Whether there are monsters properly so called.

Those that we call monsters are not so to God, who sees in the immensity of his work the infinite forms that he has comprehended therein; and it is to be believed that this figure which astonishes us has relation to some other of the same kind unknown to man. From his omniscience nothing but the good, the usual, and the regular proceeds; but we do not discern the disposition and relation: *Quod crebro videt non miratur, etiamsi, cur fiat, nescit. Quod antè non vidit, id, si evenerit, ostentum esse censet.*[6] "What he often sees he does not admire, though he be ignorant how it comes to pass. But when a thing happens he never saw before, that he looks upon as a portent." What falls out contrary to custom we say is contrary to nature; but nothing, whatever it be, is contrary to her. Let therefore this universal and natural reason expel the error and astonishment that novelty brings along with it.

CHAPTER XXXI.

OF ANGER.

PLUTARCH is admirable throughout, but especially where he judges of human actions. The fine things he says in the parallel of Lycurgus and Numa, upon the subject of our great folly in abandoning children to the care and government of their fathers, are very easily discerned. The most of our civil governments, as Aristotle says,[7] leave, after the manner of the Cyclops, to every one the ordering of their wives and children according to their own foolish and indiscreet fancy; and the Lacedæmonian and Cretensian are almost the only governments that have committed the education of children to the laws: who does not see that in a state all depends upon their nurture and bringing up? And yet they are left to the mercy of parents, let them be as foolish and wicked as they will, without any check.

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[1] In 1151, at Tripoli.
[2] At Tyre, 24th April, 1192.
[3] Henry III.
[4] Cicero, *de Divin.* ii. 22.
[5] Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, iii. 12.
[6] Cicero, *ut supra.*
[7] *Ethics*, x. 9.

Amongst other things, how often have I, as I have passed along the streets, had a good mind to get up a farce, to revenge the poor boys whom I have seen flayed, knocked down, and miserably beaten, by some father or mother mad with rage! You shall see them come out with fire and fury sparkling in their eyes,

Of the indiscretion of parents, who punish their children in the madness of passion.

Rabie jecur incendente, feruntur
Præcipites; ut saxa jugis abrupta, quibus mons
Subtrahitur, clivoque latus pendente recedit,[1]

"As when impetuous winds and driving rain
Have mined a rock that overhung the plain,
The massy ruin falls with thundering force,
And bears down all that interrupts its course,"

(and, according to Hippocrates, the most dangerous maladies are those that disfigure the countenance), with a roaring and terrible voice, very often against those that are but just come from nurse. And there they are lamed and spoiled with blows, whilst our justice takes no cognizance of it, as if these maims and dislocations were not executed upon members of our common-wealth:

Gratum est, quod patriæ civem populoque dedisti,
Si facis ut patriæ sit idoneus, utilis agris,
Utilis et bellorum et pacis rebus agendis.[2]

"True, you have given a citizen to Rome,
And she shall thank you if the youth become,
By your o'er-ruling care, or soon or late,
An useful member of the parent state:
Fit to assist the earth in her increase,
And proper for affairs of war and peace."

There is no passion that so much transports men from their right judgments as anger. No one would demur at punishing a judge with death who should condemn a criminal upon the account of his own choler; why any more then should parents and pedants be allowed to whip and chastise children in their anger? 'Tis then no longer correction, but revenge. Chastisement is instead of physic to children; and should we endure a physician who should be animated against and enraged at his patient?

The faults of the person whom we punish in anger seem to us different from what they are in reality.

We ourselves, to do well, should never lay a hand upon our servants whilst our anger lasts; whilst the pulse beats quick, and that we feel an emotion in ourselves, let us defer the business; things will appear otherwise to us when we are calm and cool. 'Tis then passion that commands, 'tis then passion that speaks, and not we; faults seen through passion are magnified, and appear much greater to us than they really are, as bodies do being seen through a mist.[1] He who is hungry uses meat; but he that will make use of correction should have no appetite, either of hunger or thirst, to it. And, moreover, chastisements that are inflicted with deliberation and discretion are much better received, and with greater benefit, by him who suffers; otherwise he will not think himself justly condemned by a man transported with anger and fury; and will allege his master's excessive passion, his inflamed countenance, his unwonted oaths, his emotion and precipitous rashness, for his own justification:

Ora tument iræ, nigrescunt sanguine venæ,
Lumina Gorgoneo sævius igne micant.[3]

"Rage swells the lips, with black blood fill the veins,
And in their eyes fire worse than Gorgons' reigns."

Suetonius reports,[4] that Caius Rabirius having been condemned by Cæsar, the thing that most prevailed upon the people, to whom he had appealed, to determine the cause in his favour, was the animosity and vehemency that Cæsar had manifested in that sentence.

A digression on Plutarch's good nature and equity.

Saying is one thing, doing another; we are to consider the sermon and the preacher distinctly. Those men took a pretty business in hand who in our times have attempted to shake the truth of our church by the vices of her ministers; she draws her proofs elsewhere; 'tis a foolish way of arguing, and that would throw all things into confusion; a man whose manners are good may have false opinions, and a wicked man may preach truth, nay, though he believe it not himself. 'Tis doubtless a fine harmony when doing and saying go together; and I will not deny but that saying, when action follows, is of greater authority and efficacy; as Eudamidas said, hearing a philsopher talk of military affairs: "These things are finely said, but he that speaks them is not to be believed, for his ears have never been used to the sound of the trumpet."[5] And Cleomenes, hearing an orator declaiming upon valour, burst out into laughter; at which the other, being angry, "I should," said he to him, "do the same if it were a swallow that spoke of this subject; but if it were an eagle I should willingly hear him."[6] I perceive, methinks, in the writings of the ancients that he who speaks what he thinks strikes much more home than he that only dissembles. Hear but Cicero speak of the love of liberty; hear Brutus speak of it; his very writings sound that this man would purchase it at the price of his life. Let Cicero, the father of eloquence, treat of the contempt of death, and let Seneca do the same: the first languishingly drawls it out, so that you perceive he would make you resolve upon a thing on which he is not resolved himself; he inspires you not with courage, for he himself has none; the other animates and inflames

Parallel of Cicero and Seneca.

[1] Juvenal, vi. 647.
[2] Id. xiv. 70.
[3] Ovid, *de Arte Am.* iii. 503.
[4] *Life of Cæsar.*
[5] Plutarch, *Apoth. of the Lacedæm.*
[6] Id. *ib.*

you. In the same way, I never read an author, of those who treat of virtue and of great actions, that I do not closely examine what kind of man he was himself; for the Ephori at Sparta seeing a dissolute fellow propose a wholesome advice to the people commanded him to hold his peace, and intreated a virtuous man to attribute to himself the invention, and to propose it.[1]

Plutarch's writings, if well understood, sufficiently speak their author; and so that I think I know him even into his soul, and yet I could wish that we had some account of his life. And I am thus far wandered from my subject, upon the account of the obligation I have to Aulus Gellius for having left us in writing this story of his manners, that has a bearing on my subject of anger:—A slave of his, a vicious, ill-conditioned fellow, but that had the precepts of philosophy often ringing in his ears, having for some offence of his been stripped by Plutarch's command, whilst he was whipping muttered at first that it was without cause, and that he had done nothing to deserve it; but at last falling in good earnest to exclaim against, and to rail at, his master, he reproached him that he was no philosopher, as he had boasted himself to be; that he had often heard him say it was indecent to be angry, nay, had writ a book to that purpose; and that causing him to be so cruelly beaten in the height of his rage totally gave the lie to all his writings. To which Plutarch calmly and coldly answered, "How, knave!" said he, "by what dost thou judge that I am now angry? Does either my face, my colour, or my voice, give any manifestation of my being moved? I do not think my eyes look fierce, that my countenance appears troubled, or that my voice is dreadful. Am I red? do I foam? does any word escape my lips I ought to repent? Do I start? do I tremble with fury? For those, I tell thee, are the true signs of anger." And so turning to the fellow that was whipping him, "Ply on thy work," said he, "whilst this gentleman and I dispute." This is the story.[3]

Plutarch reproached for anger by a slave of his.

Archytas Tarentinus, returning from a war wherein he had been captain-general, found all things in his house in very great disorder, and his lands quite out of tillage, through the ill husbandry of his steward; whom having caused to be called to him, "Go," said he; "if I were not in anger I would soundly drub your sides."[4] Plato likewise, being highly offended with one of his slaves, gave Speusippus orders to chastise him, excusing himself from doing it because he was in anger.[5] And Charillus, a Lacedæmonian, to a Helot, who carried himself insolently and audaciously towards him; "By the gods!" said he, "if I were not angry I would immediately put thee to death."[6]

That correction never ought to be given in anger.

'Tis a passion that is pleased with and flatters itself. How often, being moved under a false cause, if the person offending makes a good defence, and presents us with a just excuse, are we vexed at truth and innocence itself? In proof of which, I remember a marvellous example of antiquity: Piso, otherwise a man of very eminent virtue, being moved against a soldier of his, for that returning alone from forage he could give him no account where he had left his companion, took it for granted that he had killed him, and presently condemned him to death. He was no sooner mounted upon the gibbet but behold his wandering companion arrives; at which all the army were exceedingly glad, and after many embraces of the two comrades, the hangman carried both the one and the other into Piso's presence, all the assistants believing it would be a great pleasure even to him himself; but it proved quite contrary; for, through shame and spite, his fury, which was not yet cool, redoubled; and, by a subtlety which his passion suddenly suggested to him, he made three criminal for having found one innocent, and caused them all to be dispatched. The first soldier, because sentence had passed upon him; the second, who had lost his way, because he was the cause of his companion's death; and the hangman, for not having obeyed the order given him.

The fury of women provoked by your not answering them.

Such as have had to do with testy women may have experienced into what a rage it puts them to oppose silence and coldness to their fury, and for a man to disdain to nourish their anger. The orator Celius was wonderfully choleric by nature; and to one who supped in his company, a man of gentle and sweet conversation, and who, that he might not move him, approved and consented to all he said; he, impatient that his ill humour should thus spend itself without aliment: "For the love of the gods! contradict me in something," said he, "that we may be two."[6] Women, in like manner, are only angry that others may be angry again, in imitation of the law of love. Phocion, to one that interrupted his speaking by injurious and very opprobrious words made no other return than silence, and to give him full liberty and leisure to vent his spleen; which he having accordingly done, and the storm blown over, without any mention of this disturbance he proceeded in his discourse where he had left off before.[7] No answer can nettle a man like such contempt.

Of the most choleric man in France (anger

[1] Aulus Gellius, xviii. 3.
[2] Id. i. 26.
[3] Cicero, *Tusc Quæs.* iv. 36. Val. Max. iv. 1. *ext* 1.
[4] Seneca, *de Ira*, iii. 12.
[5] Plutarch, *Apotheg.*
[6] Seneca, *de Ira.* iii. 18.
[7] Plutarch, *Inst. to those who manage State Affairs.*

is always an imperfection, but more excusable in a soldier, for in that trade it cannot sometimes be avoided), I often say that he is the most patient man that I know, and the most discreet in bridling his passions; which agitate him with so great violence and fury,

Magno veluti cum flamma sonore
Virgea suggeritur costis undantis aheni,
Exultantque æstu latices, furit intus aquai,
Fumidus, atque altè spumis exuberat amnis;
Nec jam se capit unda; volat vapor ater ad auras;[1]

"So when unto the boiling cauldron's side
A crackling flame of brushwood is applied,
The bubbling liquors there like springs are seen
To swell and foam to higher tides within;
Above the brims they force their fiery way,
Black vapours climb aloft, and cloud the day;"

that he must of necessity cruelly constrain himself to moderate it. And, for my part, I know no passion which I could with so much violence to myself attempt to cover and conceal; I would not set wisdom at so high a price; and do not so much consider what he does, as how much it costs him to do no worse.

Another boasted himself to me of the regularity and sweetness of his manners, which is in truth singular; to whom I replied, "That it was indeed something, especially in persons of so eminent quality as himself, upon whom every one had their eyes, to present himself always well-tempered to the world; but that the principal thing was to make provision for within and for himself; and that it was not well, in my opinion, to order his business so as inwardly to grate himself, which I was afraid he did in putting on and outwardly maintaining this mask and appearance of calm."

A man incorporates anger by concealing it, as Diogenes said to Demosthenes, who, for fear of being seen in a tavern, withdrew himself into it; "The more you retire the farther you enter in."[2] I would rather advise that a man should give his servant a box of the ear a little unseasonably than wreck his fancy to represent this grave and composed countenance; and had rather discover my passions than hide them at my own expense: they grow less in venting and manifesting themselves; and 'tis much better their point should act without than be turned against ourselves within: *Omnia vitia in aperto leviora sunt; et tunc perniciosissima quum, simulata sanitate, subsidunt.*[3] "All vices are less dangerous when open to be seen, and then most pernicious when they lurk under a dissembled good temper."

Rules to be observed in the discovery of anger against domestics.

I admonish all those in my family who have authority to be angry, in the first place to manage their anger, and not to lavish it upon every occasion, for that lessens the effect: rash and constant scolding runs into custom, and renders itself despised; what you lay on a servant for a theft is not felt, because it is the same he has seen you a hundred times employ against him for having ill washed a glass, or set a stool out of place: secondly, that they are not angry to no purpose, but make sure that their reprehensions reach him with whom they are offended; for ordinarily they rail and bawl before he comes into their presence, and continue scolding an age after he is gone;

Et secum petulans amentia certat:[4]

"And petulant madness with itself contends:"

they attack his shadow, and push the storm in a place where no one is either chastised or interested, but in the clamour of their voice. I likewise in quarrels condemn those who huff and vapour without an enemy; these rodomontades should be reserved to discharge upon the offending party:

Mugitus veluti cum prima in prælia taurus
Terrificos ciet, atque irasci in cornua tentat,
Arboris obnixus trunco, ventosque lacessit
Ictibus, et sparsa ad pugnam proludit arena.[5]

"So doth the bull, in his lov'd female's sight,
Proudly he bellows, and preludes the fight:
He tries his mighty horns against a tree,
And meditates his absent enemy:
He pushes at the winds; he digs the strand
With his black hoofs, and spurns the yellow sand."

The author's anger on great and little occasions.

When I am angry, my anger is very sharp, but withal very short, and as private as I can; I lose myself, indeed, in promptness and violence, but not in trouble, so that I throw out all sorts of injurious words at random, and without choice, and never consider pertinently to dart my language where I think it will deepest wound; for I commonly make use of no other weapon in my anger than my tongue. My servants have a better bargain of me in great occasions than in little: the little ones surprise me; and the mischief on't is that, when you are once over the precipice, 'tis no matter who gave you the push, for you always go to the bottom; the fall urges, moves, and makes haste of itself. In great occasions this satisfies me, that they are so just, every one expects a reasonable indignation; and then I glorify myself in deceiving their expectation: against these I fortify and prepare myself; they disturb my head, and threaten to transport me very far, should I follow them; I can easily contain myself from entering into one of these passions, and am strong enough, when I expect them, to repel their violence, be the cause never so great: but if a passion once prepossess and seize me, it carries me away, be it for never so small a matter: I bargain thus with those who may have to contend with me: "When you see me first moved, let me alone, right or wrong: I'll do

[1] *Æneid*, vii. 462.
[2] Laertius, *in vita*.
[3] Seneca, *Ep.* 56.
[4] Claudian, *in Eutrop.* i. 237.
[5] *Æneid*, xii. 103.

the same for you." The storm is only begot by concurrence of angers, which easily spring from one another, and are not born together: let every one have his own way, and we shall be always at peace. A profitable advice, but hard to execute. Sometimes, also, it falls out that I put on a seeming anger, for the better governing of my house, without any real emotion. As age renders my humours more sharp, I study to oppose them; and will, if I can, order it so that, for the future, I may be so much the less peevish and hard to please, as I have more excuse and inclination to be so, although I have heretofore been reckoned amongst those that have the greatest patience.

A word to conclude this chapter. Aristotle says[1] "that anger sometimes serves for arms to virtue and valour." 'Tis likely it may be so: nevertheless, they who contradict him[2] pleasantly answer that 'tis a weapon of novel use; for we move all other arms, this moves us; our hands guide it not, 'tis it that guides our hands; it holds us, we hold not it.

Whether wrath is proper to animate virtue and valour.

CHAPTER XXXII.

DEFENCE OF SENECA AND PLUTARCH.

THE familiarity I have had with these two authors, and the assistance they have lent to my age and to my book, wholly built up of what I have taken from them, oblige me to stand up for their honour.

As to Seneca, amongst a million of little pamphlets that those of the so called reformed religion disperse abroad for the defence of their cause, and which sometimes proceed from so good a hand that 'tis pity his pen is not employed in a better subject, I have formerly seen one that, to complete the parallel he would fain make out betwixt the government of our late poor King Charles the Ninth and that of Nero, compares the late Cardinal of Lorraine with Seneca; their fortunes, in having both of them been prime ministers in the government of their princes, and their manners, conditions, and deportments, having been very near alike. Wherein, in my opinion, he does the said lord-cardinal a very great honour; for though I am one of those who have a very great esteem for his wit, eloquence, and zeal to religion and the service of his king, and think it was a happiness for the age wherein so new, so rare, and so necessary a person to the public lived, to have an ecclesiastical person, of so high birth and dignity, and so sufficient and capable of his place; yet, to confess the truth, I do not think his capacity by many degrees near to the other, nor his virtue either so pure, entire, or steady, as that of Seneca.

Now the book whereof I speak, to bring about its design, gives a very injurious description of Seneca, having borrowed his reproaches from Dion the historian, whose testimony I do not at all believe: for besides that he is inconsistent, after having called Seneca one while very wise, and, again, a mortal enemy to Nero's vices, in making him elsewhere avaricious, an usurer, ambitious, effeminate, voluptuous, and a pretender to philosophy under false colours; his virtue manifests itself so lively and vigorous in his writings, and his vindication is so clear from any of these imputations of riches and excessive expenditure, that I cannot believe any testimony to the contrary; and, besides, it is much more reasonable to believe the Roman historians in such things, than Greeks and strangers; now, Tacitus and the rest speak very honourably both of his life and death,[3] and represent him to us a very excellent and virtuous person in all things; and I will allege no other reproach against Dion's report but this, which I cannot avoid, namely, that he has so sickly a judgment in the Roman affairs that he dares to maintain Julius Cæsar's cause against Pompey, and that of Anthony against Cicero.

Let us come to Plutarch. John Bodin[4] is a good author of our time, and a writer of much greater judgment than the rout of scribblers of his age, and deserves to be carefully read and considered: I find him, though, a little bold in that passage of his method of history where he accuses Plutarch not only of ignorance (wherein I would let him alone, for that is not in my line), but *that he often writes things incredible and absolutely fabulous:* these are his own words. If he had simply said things otherwise than they are, it had been no great reproach; for what we have not seen we are forced to receive from other hands, and take upon trust; and we know that he, on purpose, sometimes variously relates the same story: as in the judgment of the three best captains that ever were, given by Hannibal; 'tis one way in the life of Flaminius, and another way in that of Pyrrhus. But to charge him with having taken incredible and impossible things for current pay, is to accuse the most judicious author in the world of want of judgment. And this is his example: "As," says he, "when he relates that a Lacedæmonian boy suffered his bowels to be torn out by a fox-cub he had stolen, and kept it still concealed under his robe till he fell down dead, rather than he would discover his theft."[5] I hold, in the first place,

[1] *Ethics*, iii. 8.
[2] Seneca, *de ird*, i. 16.
[3] Tacitus, *Annals*, xiii. 11; xiv. 53; xv. 60. Even in Tacitus, however, there are terrible imputations against Seneca. *Annal.* xiv. 7, 11. See also the controversy respecting Seneca between La Harpe and Diderot.

[4] A celebrated jurisconsult of Angers, highly commended by D'Aguesseau. His *Methodus ad facilem historiarum cognitionem*, referred to by Montaigne, was published at Paris in 1566.

[5] *Life of Lycurgus.*

this example to be ill chosen, forasmuch as it is very hard to limit the power of the faculties of the soul, where we have greater power to limit and know the bodily force; and, therefore, if I had been he, I should rather have chosen an example of this second sort; of which there are that are less credible: as, amongst others, that which he relates of Pyrrhus, "that, all wounded as he was, he struck one of his enemies, who was armed from head to foot, so great a blow with his sword that he clave him down from his crown to his seat, so that the body was divided into two parts." In his example, I find no great miracle, nor do I admit of the salvo with which he excuses Plutarch, to have added this word, *as 'tis said*, to suspend our belief; for unless it be in things received by authority, and the reverence to antiquity or religion, he would never have himself admitted, or enjoined us things incredible in themselves to believe; and that this word, *as 'tis said*, is not put into this place to that effect, is easy to be seen, because he elsewhere relates to us, upon this subject, of the patience of the Lacedæmonian children, examples happening in his time, more unlikely to prevail upon our faith: as what Cicero[1] has testified before him, as having, as he says, been at the place: that, even in his time, there were children found, who, in the trial of patience they were put to before the altar of Diana, suffered themselves to be there whipped till the blood ran down all over their bodies, not only without crying out, but without so much as a groan, and some till they there voluntarily lost their lives: and that which Plutarch, also, amongst a hundred other witnesses, relates that, at a sacrifice, a burning coal being fallen into the sleeve of a Lacedæmonian boy, as he was censing, he suffered his whole arm to be burnt, till the smell of the broiling flesh was perceived by the assistants.[2] There was nothing, according to their custom, wherein their reputation was more concerned, nor for which they were to undergo more blame and disgrace, than in being taken in theft. I am so fully satisfied of the greatness of that people's courage that his story does not only not appear to me, as to Bodin, incredible; but I do not find it so much as rare and strange. History is full of a thousand more cruel and rare examples; it is, indeed, for such things, a miracle altogether.

The patience of the Lacedæmonian children.

Marcellinus,[3] concerning theft, reports, that in his time there was no sort of torments which could compel the Egyptians, when taken in the fact, though a people very much addicted to it, so much as to tell their name.

Thievery much practised by the Egyptians.

A Spanish peasant, being put to the rack about the accomplices of the murder of the Prætor Lucius Piso, cried out in the height of the torment, "That his friends should not leave him, but look on in all assurance, and that no pain had power to force from him one word of confession:" which was all they could get the first day. The next day, as they were leading him a second time to another trial, strongly disengaging himself from the hands of his guards, he furiously ran his head against a wall, and beat out his brains![4]

Fortitude of a Spanish peasant;

Epicharis, having tired and glutted the cruelty of Nero's satellites, and undergone their fire, their beating, and their engines, a whole day together, without one syllable of confession of her conspiracy, being the next day brought again to the rack, with her limbs almost torn to pieces, conveying the lace of her robe with a running noose over one of the arms of her chair, and suddenly slipping her head into it, with the weight of her own body hanged herself.[5] Having the courage to die after that manner, it is to be presumed that she purposely lent her life to the trial of her fortitude the day before, to mock the tyrant, and encourage others to the like attempt against him.

And whoever will enquire of our soldiers of the experiences they have had in our civil wars will find effects of patience and endurance in this miserable age of ours, and amongst the soft and more than Egyptianly effeminate rabble, worthy to be compared with those we have now related of the Spartan virtue.

I know there have been simple peasants amongst us who have endured the soles of their feet to be broiled upon a gridiron, their fingers-ends to be writhed off with the cock of a pistol, and their bleeding eyes squeezed out of their heads by the force of a cord twisted about their brows, before they would so much as consent to ransom. I have seen one left stark-naked for dead in a ditch, his neck black and swollen, with a halter yet about it, with which they had dragged him all night at a horse's tail, his body wounded in a hundred places with stabs of daggers which had been given him, not to kill him, but to put him to pain and to affright him, who had endured all this, and even to being rendered speechless and insensible, resolved, as he himself told me, rather to die a thousand deaths (as, indeed, as to matter of suffering, he already had one) before he would pay a penny; and yet he was one of the richest husbandmen of all the country round. How many have been seen patiently to suffer themselves to be burnt and roasted for

and of certain peasants during the civil wars in Montaigne's time.

[1] *Tusc. Quæs.* ii. 14.

[2] Val. Max. iii. *ext.* 1, attributes this effort of endurance to a Macedonian boy, assisting at a sacrifice offered by Alexander.

[3] xxii. 16.

[4] Tacitus, *Annals*, iv. 45.

[5] Id. *ib.* xv. 57.

opinions taken upon trust from others, and by them not at all understood? I have known a hundred and a hundred women, for Gascony has a certain prerogative for obstinacy, whom you might sooner have made eat fire than forsake an opinion they had conceived in anger; they are more exasperated by blows and constraint; and he that made the story of the woman who, in defiance of all corrections, threats, and bastinadoes, ceased not to call her husband louzy knave, and that being plunged over head and ears in water yet lifted her hands above her head and made a sign of cracking lice, feigned a tale of which, in truth, we every day see a manifest image in the obstinacy of women. And obstinacy is the sister of constancy, at least in vigour and stability.

Women obstinate.

We are not to judge what is possible, and what is not, according to what is credible and incredible to our apprehension, as I have said elsewhere: and it is a great fault, and yet a fault that most men are guilty of (which, nevertheless, I do not mention with any reflection upon Bodin), to make a difficulty of believing that in another which they could not, or would not, do themselves. Every one thinks that the sovereign stamp of human nature is imprinted in him, and that from it all others must take their rule; and that all proceedings which are not like his are feigned and false. What bestial stupidity! Is anything of another's actions or faculties proposed to him? The first thing he calls to the consultation of his judgment is his own example; and as matters go with him so they must, of necessity, do with all the world besides. O dangerous and intolerable folly! For my part, I consider some men infinitely beyond me, especially amongst the ancients; and, though I clearly discern my inability to come near them by a thousand paces, I do not forbear to keep them in sight, and to judge of what elevates them so, of which I also perceive some seeds in myself; as I also do of the extreme meanness of some other minds, which I neither am astonished at nor yet disbelieve. I very well perceive the turns the former take to raise themselves to such a pitch, and admire their grandeur; and those flights that I think the bravest I seek to imitate; and, though I want wing, yet my judgment goes eagerly with them.

The other example he introduces, "of things incredible and wholly fabulous," delivered by Plutarch is "That Agesilaus was fined by the Ephori for having wholly engrossed the hearts and affections of the citizens to himself alone." I do not see what sign of falsity is to be found here; Plutarch speaks of things that must needs be better known to him than to us; and it was no new thing in Greece to see men punished and exiled for this very thing of being too acceptable to the people; witness the ostracism and petalism.[1]

There is yet in this place another accusation laid against Plutarch, which I am especially affronted at; where Bodin says that he has faithfully paralleled the Romans and the Greeks amongst themselves; but not the Romans with the Greeks; witness, says he, Demosthenes and Cicero, Cato and Aristides, Sylla and Lysander, Marcellus and Pelopidas, Pompey and Agesilaus; supposing that he has favoured the Greeks in giving them so unequal companions. This is exactly to attack what in Plutarch is most excellent, and most to be commended; for in his parallels (which is the most admirable part of all his works, and with which, in my opinion, he is himself the most pleased), the fidelity and sincerity of *his judgments* equal their depth and weight: he is a philosopher that teaches us virtue. Let us see whether we cannot defend him from this reproach of falsity and prevarication. All that I can imagine could give occasion to this censure is the great and shining lustre of the Roman names which we have ever before us: it does not seem likely to us that Demosthenes could rival the glory of a consul, proconsul, and questor of that great republic: but, to consider the truth of the thing, and the men in themselves, which is Plutarch's chiefest aim, and more to balance their manners, their natures, and parts, than their fortunes, I think, contrary to Bodin, that Cicero and the elder Cato come very far short of the men with whom they are compared. I should sooner, for his purpose, have chosen the example of the younger Cato compared with Phocion; for in this couple there would have been a more likely disparity to the Roman's advantage. As to Marcellus, Sylla, and Pompey, I very well discern that their exploits of war are more dazzling, more full of pomp and glory, than those of the Greeks whom Plutarch compares with them: but the bravest and most virtuous actions, no more in war than elsewhere, are not always the most renowned; I often see the names of captains obscured by the splendour of other names of less desert; witness Labienus, Ventidius, Telesinus, and several others: and to take it by that, were I to complain on the behalf of the Greeks, could I not say that Camillus was much less comparable to Themistocles, the Gracchi to Agis and Cleomenes, and Numa to Lycurgus? But 'tis folly to judge of things that have so many aspects at one view.

Whether Plutarch, in his parallel of the Greeks and Romans, was unjust in the preferences he gave.

When Plutarch parallels them, he does not for all that make them equal: who could more learnedly and conscientiously have marked their distinctions? Does he parallel

Plutarch did not mean an equality between those

[1] The ostracism prevailed at Athens, and was a sentence of political banishment for ten years. *Petalism*, which was in use at Syracuse, involved a banishment of five years only.

whom he compared together.

the victories, feats of arms, the power of the armies conducted by Pompey, and his triumphs, with those of Agesilaus? "I do not believe," says he, "that Xenophon himself, if he were now living, though he was allowed to write whatever pleased him to the advantage of Agesilaus, would dare to bring them into comparison." Does he speak of paralleling Lysander to Sylla? "There is," says he, "no comparison, either in the number of victories, or in the hazard of battles; for Lysander only gained two naval engagements, &c." Assuredly, this is not derogatory from the Romans; in having only simply named them with the Greeks, he can have done them no injury, what disparity soever there may be betwixt them; and Plutarch does not entirely oppose them to one another; there is no preference in general; he only compares the pieces and circumstances one after another, and gives of every one a particular and separate judgment. Wherefore, if any one would convict him of partiality, he ought to pick out some one of those particular judgments; or say, in general, that he was mistaken in comparing such a Greek to such a Roman, when there were others more fit and nigher resembling, to parallel him to.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE STORY OF SPURINA.

PHILOSOPHY thinks she has not made an ill use of her talent when she has given the sovereignty of the soul, and the authority of restraining our appetites to reason.

Whether the amorous appetites are the most violent.

Amongst which, they who judge that there are none more violent than those which spring from love have this opinion, also, that they seize both body and soul, and possess the whole man, so that even health itself depends upon them, and medicine is sometimes constrained to pimp for them: but a man might also say, on the contrary, that the mixture of the body brings an abatement and weakening; for such desires are subject to satiety, and capable of material remedies.

Many, being determined to rid their soul from the continual alarms of this appetite, have made use of incision and amputation of the rebelling members; others have subdued their force and ardour by the frequent application of cold things, as snow and vinegar: the sackcloths of our ancestors were for this purpose, which is a cloth woven of horses'-hair, of which some of them made shirts, and others girdles to torture and correct their reins.

A prince, not long ago, told me that, in his youth, upon a solemn festival in the court of King Francis the First, where every body was very finely dressed, he took a fancy to put on his father's hair shirt, which was still kept in the house; but how great soever his devotion was, he had not patience to wear it till night, and was ill from it a long time after; adding withal, that he did not think there could be any youthful heat so fierce that the use of this recipe would not mortify; and yet perhaps he never essayed the most violent; for experience shews us that such emotions are often found under rude and slovenly clothes, and that a hair shirt does not always render those chaste that wear it.

Xenocrates proceeded with greater severity in this affair; for his disciples, to make trial of his continency, having slipped Laïs, that beautiful and famous courtezan, into his bed quite naked, excepting the arms of her beauty and her wanton allurements, her philters, finding that, in spite of his reason and philosophical rules, his unruly flesh began to mutiny, he caused those members of his to be burned that he found consenting to this rebellion.[1] Whereas the passions which wholly reside in the soul, as ambition, avarice, and the rest, find the reason much more to do, because it cannot there be relieved but by its own means; neither are those appetites capable of satiety, but grow sharper and increase by fruition.

Cæsar's example, plea proof that ambition is harder to be tamed than love.

The sole example of Julius Cæsar may suffice to demonstrate to us the disparity of those appetites; for never was man more addicted to amorous delights than he. Of which the delicate care he had of his person, to that degree of effeminacy as to make use of the most lascivious means to that end then practised, as to have the hairs of his whole body plucked off, and to be larded all over with perfumes with the extremest nicety, is one testimony;[2] and he was a beautiful person in himself, of a fair complexion, tall and sprightly, full faced, with quick hazel eyes, if we may believe Suetonius; for the statues that we see at Rome do not in all points answer this description. Besides his wives, whom he four times changed, without reckoning the amours of his childhood with Nicomedes, king of Bithynia, he had the maidenhead of the renowned Cleopatra, queen of Egypt; witness the little Cæsario that he had by her:[3] he also made love to Eunoe, queen of Mauritania,[4] and at Rome to Posthumia, the wife of Servius Sulpitius; to Lollia, the wife of Gabinius; to Tertulla, the wife of Crassus; and even to Mutia, wife to the great Pompey: which was the reason, the Roman historians say, that she was repudiated by her husband, which Plutarch confesses to be more than he knew; and the Curios, father and son, afterwards reproached

[1] Laertius, *in vitâ.*
[2] Suetonius, *in vitâ.*
[3] Plutarch, *Life of Cæsar.*
[4] Suetonius, *in vitâ.*

Pompey, when he married Cæsar's daughter, that he had made himself son-in-law to a man who had made him a cuckold; and one that he himself was wont to call Ægisthus: besides all these he entertained Servilia, Cato's sister, and mother to Marcus Brutus, whence, every one believes, proceeded the great affection he had to Brutus, by reason that he was born at a time when it was likely he might be his son. So that I have reason, methinks, to take him for a man extremely given to this debauch, and of a very amorous constitution:[1] but the other passion of ambition, with which he was exceedingly infected, arising in him to contend with it, it was soon compelled to give way.

And here calling to mind Mahomet, who won Constantinople, and finally exterminated the Grecian name, I do not know where these two passions were so evenly balanced; equally an indefatigable lecher and soldier: but where they both meet in his life, and jostle one another, the quarrelling ardour always gets the better of the amorous passion; and this, though it was out of its natural season, never regained an absolute sovereignty over the other till he was arrived at an extreme old age, and unable to undergo the fatigues of war.

A notable example proving love to be stronger than ambition.

What is related, for a contrary example, of Ladislaus, king of Naples, is very remarkable; who being a great captain, valiant, and ambitious, proposed to himself, for the principal end of his ambition, the execution of his pleasure, and the enjoyment of some rare beauty. His death was of a piece: for having, by a close and tedious siege, reduced the city of Florence to so great distress that the inhabitants were compelled to capitulate about surrender, he was content to let them alone, provided they would deliver up to him a virgin of excelling beauty he had heard of in their city; they were forced to yield to it, and by a private injury to divert the public ruin. She was the daughter of a famous physician of his time, who, finding himself involved in so foul a necessity, resolved upon a high attempt. As every one was laying a hand to trick up his daughter, and to adorn her with ornaments and jewels, to render her more agreeable to this new lover, he also gave her a handkerchief most richly wrought, and of an exquisite perfume, which she was to make use of at their first approaches, an implement they never go without in those parts: this handkerchief, poisoned with his utmost art, coming to be rubbed between the chafed flesh and open pores, both of the one and the other, so suddenly infused the poison, that immediately converting their warm into a cold sweat, they presently died in one another's arms.[2]

But I return to Cæsar. His pleasures never made him steal one minute of an hour, nor step one step aside, from occasions that might conduce any way to his advancement: that passion was so sovereign in him over all the rest, and with so absolute an authority possessed his soul, that it guided him at pleasure. In truth, this troubles me, when, as to every thing else, I consider the greatness of this man, and the wonderful parts wherewith he was endued, learned to that degree in all sorts of knowledge, that there is hardly any one science of which he has not written:[3] he was so great an orator, that many have preferred his eloquence to that of Cicero; and he, I conceive, did not think himself inferior to him in that particular, for his two Anti-Catos were chiefly written to counterbalance the elocution that Cicero had expended in his Cato. As to the rest, was ever soul so vigilant, so active, and so patient of labour as his? and doubtless it was embellished with many rare seeds of virtue, innate, natural, and not put on. He was singularly sober, and so far from being delicate in his diet, that Oppius relates,[4] that having one day at table medicinal instead of common oil set before him in some sauce, he ate heartily of it, that he might not put his entertainer out of countenance; another time he caused his baker to be whipped for serving him with a finer than ordinary sort of bread. Cato himself used to say of him that he was the first sober man that ever made it his business to ruin his country. And as to the same Cato calling him one day *drunkard*, it fell out thus: being both of them one day in the senate, at a time when Cataline's conspiracy was in question, of which Cæsar was suspected, one came and brought him a letter sealed up: Cato believing that it was something the conspirators gave him notice of, called to him to deliver it into his hand; which Cæsar was constrained to do to avoid further suspicion: it was, by chance, a love-letter that Servilia, Cato's sister, had written to him; which Cato having read, he threw it back to him, saying, "There, drunkard." This, I say, was rather a word of disdain and anger than an express reproach of this vice; as we often rate those that anger us with the first injurious words that come into our mouths, though nothing due to those we are offended at: to which may be added, that the vice which Cato cast in his dish is wonderfully near a-kin to that wherein he had trapped Cæsar; for Bacchus and Venus, according to the proverb, do very willingly

Cæsar's character.

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[1] When he entered Rome on his triumphal car, the soldiers cried—"Urbani, servate uxores: mœchum calvum adducimus."—Suetonius, *in vitâ*.

[2] Colenuccio, *Hist. Neap.* v., who throws a doubt over the story.

[3] Suetonius, in his *Life of Cæsar*, speaks of his works in grammar, eloquence, history; his letters to the Senate, to Cicero, to his friends; his poems; a tragedy called *Œdipus*; a collection of apothegms, which Augustus prohibited the publication of. There has also been attributed to him a work *Upon Augurs*, and a *Cosmography*.

[4] *Apud* Suetonius. The various illustrations of Cæsar which follow are taken from the same author.

agree; but with me Venus is most sprightly when I am most sober.

The examples of his sweetness and clemency to those by whom he had been offended are infinite; I mean besides those he gave during the time of the civil wars, which, as plainly enough appears by his writings, he practised to cajole his enemies, and to make them less afraid of his future dominion and victory. But I must also say that if these examples are not sufficient proofs of his natural mildness, they at least manifest a marvellous confidence and grandeur of courage in this person. He has often been known to dismiss whole armies, after having overcome them, to his enemies, without deigning so much as to bind them by oath, either to favour him, or even not to bear arms against him. He has three or four times taken some of Pompey's captains prisoners, and as often set them at liberty. Pompey declared all those to be his enemies who did not follow him to the war; Cæsar proclaimed all those to be his friends who sat still and did not actually take arms against him. To such captains of his as ran away from him to go over to the other side, he sent moreover their arms, horses, and equipage. The cities he had taken by force he left at full liberty to take which side they pleased, imposing no other garrison upon them but the memory of his generosity and clemency. He gave strict and express charge, the day of his great battle of Pharsalia, that, without the utmost necessity, no one should lay a hand upon the citizens of Rome. These, in my opinion, were very hazardous proceedings, and 'tis no wonder if those in our civil war, who, like him, fight against the ancient state of their country, do not follow his example; they are extraordinary means, which only belong to Cæsar's fortune and his admirable foresight in the conduct of affairs. When I consider the incomparable grandeur of his soul, I excuse victory that it could not disengage itself from him, even in so unjust and so wicked a cause.

To return to his clemency: we have many excellent examples in the time of his government, when all things being reduced to his power, he had no more need to dissemble. Caius Memmius had written very severe orations against him, which he had as sharply answered: yet he did not soon after forbear to use his interest to make him consul. Caius Calvus, who had composed several injurious epigrams against him, having employed many of his friends to mediate a reconciliation with him, Cæsar voluntarily persuaded himself to write first to him. And our good Catullus, who had so rudely ruffled him under the name of Mamurra, coming to make his excuses to him, he made him the same day sit at his table. Having intelligence of some who spoke ill of him, he did no more but only in a public oration declare that he had notice of it. He feared his enemies still less than he hated them: some conspiracies and cabals that were made against his life being discovered to him, he satisfied himself in publishing, by proclamation, that they were known to him, without further prosecuting the conspirators. As to the respect he had to his friends, Caius Oppius, being with him upon a journey, and finding himself ill, he gave him up the only room he had for himself, and lay all night upon the hard ground in the open air. As to what concerns his justice: he put a beloved servant of his to death for lying with a noble Roman's wife, though there was no complaint made. Never had man more moderation in his victory, nor more resolution in his adverse fortune.

Cæsar ruined by ambition.

But all these good inclinations were stifled and spoiled by his furious ambition, by which he suffered himself to be so transported and misled that a man may easily maintain that that passion guided the rudder of all his actions; of a liberal man, it made him a public thief to supply his bounty and profusion, and made him utter this vile and unjust saying, "That if the most wicked and profligate persons in the world had been faithful in serving him towards his advancement, he would cherish and prefer them to the utmost of his power, as much as the best of men." It intoxicated him with so excessive a vanity that he dared to boast, in the presence of his fellow-citizens, "That he had made the great commonwealth of Rome a name without form, and without body;" and to say "that his answers for the future should stand for laws;" and also to receive the body of the senate coming towards him, sitting; to suffer himself to be adored, and to have divine honours paid to him in his own presence. In fine: this sole vice, in my opinion, spoiled in him the most rich and beautiful nature that ever was; and has rendered his name abominable to all good men, in that he would erect his glory upon the ruins of his country, and the subversion of the greatest and most flourishing republic the world shall ever see. There might, on the contrary, be many examples produced of great men whom pleasure has made to neglect the conduct of their affairs, as Mark Antony and others; but where love and ambition should be in equal balance, and come to jostle with equal forces, I make no doubt but the last would win the prize.

But to return to my subject. 'Tis much to bridle our appetites by the discourse of reason, or by violence to contain our members within their duty; but to lash ourselves to our neighbour's interest, and not only to divest ourselves of the charming passion that tickles us, of the pleasure we feel in being agreeable to others, and courted and beloved of every one; but also to conceive a hatred against the graces that produce that effect, and to condemn our beauty because it enflames others, of this, I confess, I have met with few examples; this is one. Spurina, a young man of Tuscany,

Qualis gemma micat, fulvum quæ dividit aurum,
Aut collo decus, aut capiti; vel quale per artem
Inclusum buxo, aut Ericia terebintho,
Lucet ebur,[1]

"As shines a gem in yellow gold enchas'd,
On neck or head, for decoration placed;
Or iv'ry, which by art doth lustre get,
Amidst a circle of Erician jet,"

being endowed with a singular beauty, and so excessive that the chastest eyes could not chastely behold its rays; not contenting himself with leaving so much flame and fever as he every where kindled without relief, entered into a furious spite against himself, and those great endowments nature had so liberally conferred upon him; as if a man were responsible to himself for the faults of others; and purposely slashed and disfigured, with many wounds and scars, the perfect symmetry and proportion that nature had so curiously imprinted in his face.

To give my opinion, I more admire at, than honour, such actions; such excesses are enemies to my rules. The design was conscientious and good, but certainly a little defective in prudence. What if his deformity served afterwards to make others guilty of the sin of hatred, or contempt, or of envy, at the glory of so commendable an action, or of calumny, interpreting this humour a mad ambition? Is there any form whence vice cannot, if it will, extract occasion to exercise itself, one way or other? It had been more just, and also more noble, to have made of these gifts of God a subject of regular and exemplary virtue.

They who secrete themselves from the common offices of society have the best bargain.

They who retire themselves from the common offices, from that infinite number of rules, tiresome in many ways, that fetter a man of exact conduct in civil life, are in my opinion very discreet, what sharpness of constraint soever they impose upon themselves in so doing. 'Tis in some sort a kind of dying to avoid the pain of living well. But though these may be entitled to credit in other respects, to that of conquering difficulty I do not think they are; the real difficulty is in keeping one's-self upright amidst the waves of the world, truly and exactly performing all the parts of one's duty. It is peradventure more easy to do without the other sex, altogether, than, having the enjoyment of a wife, to keep one's-self entirely to that one woman. Sheer poverty is for the most part a far less anxious and discomforting state than a middling fortune; to use the goods of life rationally is much more difficult than entirely to do without them; moderation is a virtue that calls for a vast deal more effort to exercise it than suffering. The well-living of the younger Scipio has a thousand shapes; that of Diogenes but one;[2] this as much excels ordinary lives in simplicity as exquisite and accomplished lives excel it in utility and force.

[1] *Æneid*, x. 134.
[2] Valerius Max. iv. 5, ext. 1.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

OBSERVATION ON THE MODE OF CARRYING ON WAR ACCORDING TO JULIUS CÆSAR.

Cæsar's Commentaries a proper lesson for every general.

'Tis said of many great leaders, that they have had certain books in particular esteem, as Alexander the Great, Homer; Scipio Africanus, Xenophon; Marcus Brutus, Polybius; Charles the Fifth, Philip de Comines; and 'tis said that, in our times, Machiavel is elsewhere in repute. But the late Marshal Strozzi, who took Cæsar for his man, doubtless made the best choice; for that book ought to be the breviary of every great soldier, as being the true and sovereign pattern of the military art; and, moreover, God knows with what grace and beauty he has embellished that rich matter with so pure, delicate, and perfect expression, that, in my opinion, there are no writings in the world comparable to his, as to that.

I will set down some rare and peculiar passages of his wars that remain in my memory.

His army being in some consternation upon the rumour that was spread of the great forces that King Juba was leading against him, instead of abating the notion which his soldiers had conceived at the news, and of lessening the forces of the enemy, having called them all together to encourage and re-assure them, he took a quite contrary way to what we are used to do, for he told them that they needed no more to trouble themselves with inquiring after the enemy's forces, for that he was certainly informed thereof; and then told them of a number much surpassing the truth, and the report that was rumoured in his army;[3] following the advice of Xenophon; forasmuch as the imposture is not of so great importance to find an enemy weaker than we expected, as to find him really strong, after having been made to believe that he was weak.

The obedience of Cæsar's soldiers.

It was also his use to accustom his soldiers simply to obey, without taking upon them to control, or so much as to speak of their captain's designs, which he never communicated to them but upon the point of execution; and took a delight, if they discovered anything of what he intended, immediately to change his orders, to deceive them; and to that purpose would often, when he had assigned his quarters in a place, pass forward and lengthen his day's march, especially if it was foul weather.

The Swiss, in the beginning of his wars in Gaul, having sent to him to demand a free passage over the Roman territories, though resolved to hinder them by force, he nevertheless

[3] Suetonius, *in vita*.

less spoke kindly to the messengers, and took some days' respite to return an answer, to make use of that time for calling his army together. These poor people did not know how good a husband he was of his time; for he often repeat, that it is the best part of a captain to know how to make use of occasions, and his diligence in his exploits are in truth unparalleled and incredible.

If he was not very conscientious in taking advantage of an enemy under colour of a treaty of agreement, he was as little in this, that he required no other virtue in a soldier, but valour only, and seldom punished any other faults but mutiny and disobedience. He would often, after his victories, turn them loose to all sorts of licence, dispensing them, for some time, from the rules of military discipline withal, for he had soldiers so well trained up that, powdered and perfumed, they would run furiously to the fight. In truth, he loved to have them richly armed, and made them wear engraved, gilded, and damask'd armour, to the end that the care of saving this might engage them to a more obstinate defence. Speaking to them, he called them by the name of fellow-soldiers, which we yet use; which his successor, Augustus, reformed, supposing he had only done it upon necessity, and to cajole those who only followed him as volunteers;

> Rheni mihi Cæsar in undis
> Dux erat: hic socius; facinus quos inquinat, æquat;[1]
>
> "Great Cæsar, who my gen'ral did appear
> Upon the banks of Rhine, 's my fellow here:
> For wickedness where it once hold does take
> All men whom it defiles does equal make;"

but that this fashion was too mean and low for the dignity of an emperor and general of an army; and therefore brought up the custom of calling them soldiers only.

With this courtesy Cæsar mixed great severity to keep them in awe: the ninth legion having mutinied near Placentia, he ignominiously cashiered them, though Pompey was then yet on foot, and received them not again to grace till after many supplications. He quieted them more by authority and boldness than by gentle ways.

In that place where he speaks of his passage over the Rhine towards Germany, he says that, thinking it unworthy of the honour of the Roman people to waft over his army in vessels, he built a bridge, that they might pass over dry-foot. There it was that he built that wonderful bridge, of which he gives a particular description; for he nowhere so willingly insists upon his own actions as in representing to us the subtlety of his inventions in such kind of things.

I have also observed this, that he set a great value upon his exhortations to the soldiers before the fight; for where he should show that he was either surprised or hurried, he always brings in this, that he had not so much as leisure to harangue his army. Before that great battle with those of Tournay, "Cæsar," he says,[2] "having given orders for every thing else, presently ran where fortune carried him, to encourage his people, and meeting with the tenth legion, had no time to say any thing to them but this, that they should remember their wonted valour; not be astonished, but bravely sustain the enemy's encounter; and the enemy being already approached within a dart's cast, he gave the signal of battle; and going suddenly thence elsewhere to encourage others, he found that they were already engaged." His tongue has indeed done him notable service upon several occasions; and his military eloquence was in his own time so highly reputed that many of his army writ down his harangues as he spoke them, by which means there were volumes of them collected, that continued a long time after him. He had so particular a grace in speaking that they who were familiarly acquainted with him, and Augustus amongst others, hearing those orations read, could distinguish even to the phrases and words that were not his.

Exhortations to soldiers before a battle of great importance.

The first time that he went out of Rome with any public command, he arrived in eight days at the river Rhone, having with him in his coach a secretary or two before him, who were continually writing, and him that carried his sword behind him. And certainly, though a man did nothing but travel on, he could hardly have arrived at that promptitude with which, having been every where victorious, he left Gaul, and following Pompey to Brundusium, in eighteen days' time he subdued all Italy, returned from Brundusium to Rome, and from Rome went through the very heart of Spain, undergoing extreme difficulties in the war against Afranius and Petreius, and in the long siege of Marseilles; thence he returned into Macedonia, beat the Roman army at Pharsalia; passed thence in pursuit of Pompey into Egypt, which he also subdued; from Egypt he went into Syria and Pontus, where he fought Pharnaces; thence into Africa, where he defeated Scipio and Juba; again returned through Italy into Spain, where he defeated Pompey's sons:

Cæsar's promptness in his expeditions.

> Ocyor et cœli flammis, et tigride fœta.[3]
>
> Ac veluti montis saxum de vertice præceps
> Cum ruit avulsum vento, seu turbidus imber
> Proluit, aut annis solvit sublapsa vetustas,
> Fertur in abruptum magno mons improbus actu,
> Exultatque solo silvas, armenta, virosque
> Involvens secum.[4]
>
> "Swifter than lightning, or the furious course
> Of the fell tigress when she is a nurse."
>
> "As when a fragment from a mountain torn
> By raging tempests, or a torrent borne;

[1] Lucan, v. 28. 9.
[2] *De Bello Gallico*, iv. 17.
[3] Lucan, v. 405.
[4] *Æneid*, xii. 684.

Or sapp'd by time, or loosen'd from the roots,
Prone through the void the rocky ruin shoots;
Rolling from crag to crag, from steep to steep,
Down sink at once the shepherds and the sheep;
Involv'd alike, they rush to nether ground,
Stunn'd with the shock they fall, and, stunn'd, from earth rebound."

Speaking of the siege of Avaricum, he says,[1] that it was his custom to be night and day with the pioneers. In all enterprizes of consequence he always reconnoitred in person, and never brought his army into quarters till he had first viewed the place; and, if we may believe Suetonius, when he passed over into England, he was the first man that sounded the shore where they landed.

He used to say that he more valued a victory obtained by counsel than by force; and in the war against Petreius and Afranius, fortune presenting him with an occasion of manifest advantage, he declined it, saying,[2] "That he hoped, with a little more time and less hazard, to overthrow his enemies." He there also played a notable part, in commanding his whole army to pass the river by swimming, without any manner of necessity:

Rapuitque ruens in prœlia miles,
Quod fugiens timuisset iter: mox uda receptis
Membra fovent armis, gelidosque à gurgite, cursu
Restituunt artus.[3]

"The soldier rushes through a pass to fight
He would have been afraid t' have ta'en in flight:
Then with his arms his wet limbs covers o'er,
And his numb'd joints by rubbing doth restore."

I find him a little more temperate and considerate in his enterprizes than Alexander; for the latter seems to seek and run headlong upon dangers, like an impetuous torrent that attacks and rushes against every thing it meets, without choice or discretion;

Sic tauriformis volvitur Aufidus,
Qui regna Dauni perfluit Appuli,
Dum sævit, horrendamque cultis
Diluviem meditatur agris;[4]

"So bounding Aufidus, who leaves
The Daunian realms, fierce rolls his waves,
When to the golden labours of the swain
He meditates his wrath, and deluges the plain;"

but then he was a general in the flower and first heat of his youth, whereas Cæsar took up the trade at a ripe and well-advanced age: to which may moreover be added that Alexander was of a more sanguine, hot, and choleric constitution, apt to push him on to such extravagances, which he also inflamed with wine, from which Cæsar was very abstinent. But where necessary occasion required, never did any man venture his person more than he: indeed, for my part, methinks, I read in many of his exploits a determined resolution to throw his life away, to avoid the shame of being overcome. In his great battle with those of Tournay, he charged up to the head of the enemies without his shield, as he was surprised, seeing the van of his own army beginning to give ground; which also several times befel him. Hearing that his people were besieged, he passed through the enemy's army in disguise, to go and encourage them with his presence. Having crossed over to Dyrrachium with very slender forces, and seeing the remainder of his army, which he left to Antony's conduct, slow in following him, he undertook alone to repass the sea in a very great storm; and privately stole away to fetch the rest of his forces, the ports on the other side being seized by Pompey, and the whole sea being in his possession. And as to what he performed by force of hand, there are very many exploits that in hazard exceed all the rules of war: for with how small means did he undertake to subdue the kingdom of Egypt; and afterwards to attack the forces of Scipio and Juba, ten times greater than his? These people have had I know not what of more than human confidence in their fortune; and his usual saying was, that men must execute and not deliberate upon, high enterprizes. After the battle of Pharsalia, when he had sent his army away before him into Asia, and was passing in one single vessel the strait of the Hellespont, he met Lucius Cassius at sea with ten great men of war, where he had the courage not only to stay his coming, but to stand up to him, and summon him to yield, which he did.

Having undertaken that furious siege of Alexia, where there were fourscore thousand men in garrison, and all Gaul being in arms to raise the siege, having set an army on foot of eight thousand horse and two hundred and forty thousand foot, what boldness and mad confidence was it in him that he would not give over his attempt and retire, in two so invincible difficulties, which nevertheless he underwent: and after having won that great battle against those without soon reduced those within to his mercy.[5] The same happened to Lucullus at the siege of Tigranocerta against King Tigranes; but the condition of the enemy was not the same, considering the effeminacy of those with whom Lucullus had to deal.

I will here set down two rare and extraordinary events concerning this siege of Alexia; one, that the Gauls having drawn their powers together to encounter Cæsar, after they had made a general muster of all their forces, resolved in their council of war to dismiss a good part of this great multitude, that they might not fall into confusion. This example of fearing being too many is new; but to take it right, it stands to reason that the body of an army should be of a moderate greatness, and regulated to certain bounds, both out of respect to the difficulty of providing for them, and the difficulty of governing them and keeping them in order. At least it is very easy to make it

[1] *De Bello Gallico*, vii. 24.
[2] *De Bello Civili*, i. 72.
[3] Lucan, iv. 131.
[4] Horace, *Od.* iv. 14. 25.
[5] *De Bello Gallico*, vii. 64.
[6] Id. *ib.*

Monstrous armies of no great effect.

appear by example, that armies so monstrous in number have seldom done any thing to purpose. According to the saying of Cyrus in Xenophon, "'Tis not the number of men, but the number of good men, that gives the advantage;" the remainder serving rather to impede than assist. And Bajazet principally grounded his resolution of giving Tamerlane battle, contrary to the opinion of all his captains, upon this, that his enemy's numberless number of men gave him assured hopes of confusion. Scanderberg, a very good and expert judge in such matters, was used to say that ten or twelve thousand faithful fighting men were sufficient to a good leader, to secure his reputation in all sorts of military occasions. The other thing I will here record, which seems to be contrary both to the custom and the rules of war, is, that Vercingentorix, who was made general of all the parts of revolted Gaul, should go shut up himself in Alexia; for he who has the command of a whole country ought never to fix himself any where, but in case of the last extremity, and that the only hope he had left is in the defence of that particular place: otherwise he ought to keep himself always at liberty, that he may have means to provide in general for all parts of his government.

To return to Cæsar. He grew in time more slow, and more considerate, as his friend Oppius bears witness; conceiving that he ought not easily to hazard the glory of so many victories, of which one blow of fortune might deprive him. 'Tis what the Italians say, when they would reproach the rashness and fool-hardiness of young people, calling them *bisognosi d'onore*, necessitous of honour; and that being in so great a want and dearth of reputation, they have reason to seek it at what price soever, which those ought not to do who have acquired enough already. There might reasonably then be some moderation, and some satiety, in his thirst and appetite of glory as well as in other things; and there are enough that practise it.

He was far remote from that religious observance of the ancient Romans, who would never prevail in their wars but by dint of true and simple valour; and yet he was more conscientious than we should be in these days, and did not approve all sorts of means to obtain a victory. In the war against Ariovistus, whilst he was parleying with him, there happened a great tumult, which was occasioned by the fault of Ariovistus's light horse; by which tumult Cæsar saw he had a very great advantage of the enemy; yet he would make no use on't, lest he should be reproached with a treacherous proceeding.

He always used to wear rich accoutrements, and of a shining colour, in battle, that he might be the more remarkable, and better observed.

He always carried a stricter hand over his soldiers, and kept them closer in, when near the enemy.

When the ancient Greeks would accuse any one of insufficiency they would say, in common proverb, "That he could neither read nor swim:" he was of the same opinion, that swimming was of great use in war, and himself found it so; for being to use diligence he commonly swam over the rivers in his way; for he loved to march on foot, as did the great Alexander. Being in Egypt forced, to save himself, to go into a little boat, and so many people leaping in with him that it was in danger of sinking, he chose rather to commit himself to the sea, and swam to his fleet, which lay two hundred paces off, holding in his left hand his tablets out of the water, and drawing his coat-armour in his teeth, that it might not fall into the enemy's hand; yet he was then at a pretty advanced age.

Never had any general so much credit with his soldiers: in the beginning of the civil wars his centurions offered him to find every one a man-at-arms at his own charge, and the foot soldiers to serve him at their own expense; those who were better off, moreover, undertaking to defray the most necessitous. The late Mons. de Chastillon[1] shewed us the like example in our civil war; for the French of his army furnished money out of their own purses to pay the strangers that were with them. There are but rarely found examples of so ardent and so ready an affection amongst the soldiers of elder times, who kept themselves strictly to their rules of war; passion has a more absolute command over us than reason; and yet it happened in the war against Hannibal that, following the example of the Romans in the city, the soldiers and captains refused their pay in the army; and in Marcellus's camp those were branded with the name of mercenaries who would receive any. Having come by the worse near Dyrrachium, his soldiers came and offered themselves to be chastised and punished, so that there was more need to comfort than reprove them. One single cohort of his withstood four of Pompey's legions above four hours together, till they were almost all killed with arrows; so that there were a hundred and thirty thousand shafts found in the trench: a soldier called Scæva, who commanded at one of the avenues, invincibly maintained his ground, having lost an eye, and with one shoulder and one thigh shot through, and his shield pierced in two hundred and thirty places. Many of his soldiers being taken prisoners, rather chose to die than promise to take the contrary side. Granius Petronius, being taken by Scipio in Africa, Scipio having put his companions to death sent him word that he gave him his life, for he was a man of quality and questor; to whom Petronius sent answer back that Cæsar's soldiers were accus-

[1] Gaspard de Coligny, the second of that name, Count de Coligny and Seigneur de Châtillon-sur-Loing, Admiral of France, assassinated 24th August, 1572 (the St. Bartholomew).

tomed to give others their lives, and not to receive it, and immediately with his own hand killed himself.

Fidelity of the garrison of Salona.

Of their fidelity there are infinite examples; amongst which that which was done by those who were besieged in Salona, a city that stood for Cæsar against Pompey, is not, for a rare accident that there happened, to be forgot. Marcus Octavius kept them close besieged; they within being reduced to the extremest necessity of all things, so that, to supply the want of men, most of them being either slain or wounded, they had manumitted all their slaves, and had been constrained to cut off all the women's hair to make strings, besides a wonderful dearth of victuals, and yet they continued resolute never to yield. After having drawn the siege to a great length, by which Octavius was grown more negligent and less attentive to his enterprise, they made choice of one day about noon; and having first placed the women and children upon the walls, to make a show, sallied upon the besiegers with such fury that, having routed the first, second, and third corps of guards, and afterwards the fourth and all the rest, and beaten them all out of their trenches, they pursued them even to their ships, and Octavius himself was fain to fly to Dyrrachium, where Pompey lay. I do not remember that I have met with any other example where the besieged ever gave the besiegers a total defeat, and won the field; nor that a sally ever arrived at the consequence of a pure and entire victory of battle.

CHAPTER XXXV.

OF THREE GOOD WOMEN.

Good women are not by dozens, as every one knows, and especially in the duties of marriage; for that is a bargain full of so many difficult circumstances that 'tis hard for a woman's will long to endure such a restraint; men, though their condition be something better under that tie, have yet enough to do. The true touch and test of a happy marriage respects the time the connection lasts, if it has been constantly mild, loyal, and commodious. In our age women commonly reserve the publication of their good offices, and their vehement affection towards their husbands, until they have lost them, or at least till then defer the testimonies of their good will. A tardy and unseasonable testimony! by which they rather manifest that they never loved them till dead; their life is nothing but trouble, their death full of love and courtesy. As fathers conceal their affections from their children, women likewise conceal theirs from their husbands, to maintain a modest respect. This mystery is not for my palate; 'tis to much purpose that they scratch themselves and tear their hair; I whisper in a waiting-woman's or a secretary's ear, "How were they? How did they live together?" I always have that good saying in my head; *Jactantius mœrent quæ minus dolent:*[1] "They make the most ado who are least concerned:" their whimpering is offensive to the living, and vain to the dead. We should willingly give them leave to laugh after we are dead, provided they will smile upon us whilst we are alive. Is it not enough to make a man revive out of spite, that she who spit in my face whilst I was, shall come to kiss my feet when I am no more? If there be any honour in lamenting a husband, it only appertains to those who smiled upon them whilst they had them: let those who wept during their lives laugh at their death, as well outwardly as within. Moreover, never regard those blubbered eyes, and that pitiful voice; but consider her port, her complexion, and the plumpness of her cheeks, under all those formal veils; 'tis there she speaks out. There are few who do not mend upon't, and health is a quality that cannot lie. That starched and ceremonious countenance looks not so much back as forward, and is rather intended to get a new husband than to lament the old. When I was a boy, a very beautiful and virtuous lady, who is yet living, and the widow of a prince, had I know not what more ornament in her dress than our laws of widowhood will well allow; which being reproached withal, as a great indecency, she made answer, "That it was because she was resolved to have no more lovers, and would never marry again."

Montaigne's opinion of the women who never declare their love for their husbands till they are dead.

I have here, not to differ from our customs, made choice of three women, who also employed the utmost of their goodness and affection about their husbands' deaths; yet are they examples of another kind than are now in use, and such as will hardly be drawn into imitation.

The younger Pliny had, near a house of his in Italy, a neighbour who was exceedingly tormented with certain ulcers in his private parts. His wife, seeing him so long to languish, entreated that he would give her leave to see, and at leisure to consider of the condition of his disease, and that she would freely tell him what she thought. This permission being obtained, and she having curiously examined the business, found it impossible he could ever be cured, and that all he was to hope for or expect was a great while to linger out a painful and miserable life, and, therefore, as the most sure and sovereign remedy, resolutely advised him to kill himself; and finding him a little tender and backward in so rough an attempt: "Do not think, my friend," said she, "that the torments I see thee endure are not as sensible to me as

[1] An adaptation from Tacitus, *Annal.* ii. 77., whose words are: *Periisse Germanicum nulli jactantius mœrent, quam qui maxime lætantur.*

thyself, and that, to deliver myself from them, I will not myself make use of the same remedy I have prescribed to thee. I will accompany thee in the cure as I have done in the disease; fear nothing, but believe that we shall have pleasure in this passage that is to free us from so many miseries: we will go happily together." Which having said, and roused up her husband's courage, she resolved that they should throw themselves headlong into the sea out of a window that looked over it. And that she might maintain to the last the loyal and vehement affection wherewith she had embraced him during his life, she would also have him die in her arms; but, for fear they should fail, and lest they should quit their hold in the fall, she tied herself fast to him by the waist, and so gave up her own life to procure her husband's repose. This was a woman of mean condition, amongst which class of people 'tis no new thing to see some examples of rare virtue:

Extrema per illos
Justitia excedens terris vestigia fecit.[1]

"And as she fled mankind;
Here justice left her last love-trace behind."

The other two were noble and rich, where examples of virtue are rarely lodged.

Arria, the wife of Cecina Pætus, a consular person, was the mother of another Arria, the wife of Trasea Pætus, he whose virtue was so renowned in the time of Nero, and, by means of this son-in-law, the grandmother of Fannia; for the resemblance of the names of these men and women, and of their fortunes, have made many mistakes. This first Arria, her husband, Cecina Pætus, having been made prisoner by some of the Emperor Claudius's people, after Scribonianus's defeat, whose party he had embraced in the war, begged of those who were to carry him prisoner to Rome that they would take her into their ship, where she should be of much less charge and trouble to them than a great many persons they must otherwise have to attend her husband, and that she alone would undertake to serve him in his chamber, his kitchen, and all other offices.

The story of the death of Arria, the wife of Cecina Pætus.

They refused her: whereupon she put herself into a fisher-boat she hired on the spot, and in that manner followed him from Sclavonia. Being come to Rome, Junia, the widow of Scribonianus, one day, for the resemblance of their fortune, accosting her in the emperor's presence, she rudely repulsed her with these words: "I speak to thee," said she, "or give ear to any thing thou sayest! to thee, in whose lap Scribonianus was slain! and thou art yet alive!" These words, with several other signs, gave her friends to understand that she would undoubtedly dispatch herself, impatient of supporting her husband's fortune. And Trasea, her son-in-law, beseeching her not to throw away herself, and saying to her, "What! if I should run the same fortune that Cecina has done, would you that your daughter, my wife, should do the same?" "Would I?" replied she, "yes, yes, I would, if she had lived as long, and in as good intelligence with thee, as I have done with my husband." These answers made them more careful of her, and to have a more watchful eye to her deportment. One day, having said to those that looked to her: "'Tis to much purpose that you take all this pains to prevent me; you may indeed make me die a worse death, but to keep me from dying is not in your power," she suddenly furiously started from a chair wherein she sat, and with all her force ran her head against the wall, by which blow being laid flat in a swoon, and very much wounded, after they had again with much ado brought her to herself: "I told you," said she, "that if you refused me some easy way of dying, I should find out another, how painful soever." The conclusion of so admirable a virtue was thus: Her husband, Pætus, not having resolution enough of his own to dispatch himself, as he was by the emperor's cruelty enjoined, one day amongst others, after having first employed all the reasons and exhortations which she thought most prevailing to persuade him to it, she snatched the poinard he wore, from his side, and holding it ready in her hand for the conclusion of her admonitions: "Do thus, Pætus," said she, in the same instant giving herself a mortal stab in the breast, and then drawing it out of the wound presented it to him, ending her life with this noble, generous, and immortal saying: *Pæte, non dolet*, "Pætus, it is not painful;" having strength only to pronounce these three never-to-be-forgotten words:[2]

Casta suo gladium cum traderet Arria Pæto,
Quem de visceribus traxerat ipsa suis:
Si qua fides, vulnus quod feci non dolet, inquit,
Sed quod tu facies, id mihi, Pæte, dolet:[3]

"When the chaste Arria gave the reeking sword,
That had new gor'd her heart, to her dear lord;
Pætus, the wound I've made hurts not, quoth she;
The wound which thou wilt make 'tis that hurts me:"

the action was much more noble in itself, and of a braver sense than the poet could express it; for she was so far from being deterred by her husband's wound and death, and her own, that she had been the promotress, and had given the advice; but, having performed this high and courageous enterprise for her husband's convenience only, she had even in the last gasp of her life no other concern but for him, and of dispossessing him of the fear of dying with her. Pætus presently struck himself to the heart with the same weapon, ashamed, I should think, to have stood in need of so dear and precious an example.

Pompeia Paulina, a young and very noble

[1] Virgil, *Georg.* ii. 473.

[2] Pliny, *Ep.* iii. 16.

[3] Mart. i. 14.

Seneca's wife.

Roman lady, had married Seneca in his extreme old age. Nero, his fine pupil, sent his guards to him to denounce the sentence of death; which was performed after this manner: when the Roman emperors of those times had condemned any man of quality, they sent to him by their officers to choose what death he would, and to execute it within such or such a time, which was limited, according to the mettle of their indignation, to a shorter or a longer respite, that they might therein have better leisure to put their affairs in order, and sometimes depriving them of the means of doing it by the shortness of the time; and if the condemned seemed unwilling to submit to the order, they had people ready at hand to execute it, either by cutting the veins of the arms and legs, or by compelling them by force to swallow a draught of poison. But persons of honour would not stay this necessity, but made use of their own physicians and surgeons for the purpose. Seneca with a calm and steady countenance heard the charge, and presently called for paper to write his will, which being by the captain denied, he turned himself towards his friends, saying to them: "Since I cannot leave you any other acknowledgment of the obligation I have to you, I leave you at least the best thing I have, namely, the image of my life and manners, which I entreat you to keep in memory of me; that so doing you may acquire the glory of sincere and real friends." And therewithal, one while appeasing the sorrow he saw them in with gentle words, and presently raising his voice to reprove them: "What," said he, "are become of all our brave philosophical precepts? what are become of all the provisions we have so many years laid up against the accidents of fortune? Was Nero's cruelty unknown to us? What could we expect from him, who murdered his mother and brother, but that he should put his tutor to death, who had taught and bred him?" After having spoken these words in general, he turned himself towards his wife, and embracing her fast in his arms, as, her heart and strength failing her, she was ready to sink down with grief, he begged of her for his sake to bear this event with a little more patience, telling her that now the hour was come wherein he was to shew, not by argument and discourse, but by effect, the fruit he had acquired by his studies; and that he really embraced his death, not only without grief, but moreover with exceeding joy: "wherefore, my dearest," said he, "do not dishonour it with thy tears, that it may not seem as if thou lovest thyself more than my reputation; moderate thy grief, and comfort thyself in the knowledge thou hast had of me and of my actions, leading the remainder of thy life in the same virtuous manner thou hast hitherto done." To which Paulina, having a little recovered her spirits, and warmed her magnanimity with the heat of a most generous affection, replied: "No, Seneca, I am not a woman to suffer you to go alone in such a necessity: I will not have you to think that the virtuous examples of your life have not yet taught me how to die; and when can I ever better, or more becomingly, do it, or more to my own desire, than with you? and therefore assure yourself I will go along with you." Then Seneca, taking this noble and generous resolution of his wife in good part, and also willing to free himself from the fear of leaving her exposed to the mercy and cruelty of his enemies after his death: "I have, Paulina," said he, "sufficiently instructed thee in what would serve thee happily to live; but thou more covetest, I see, the honour of dying: in truth, I will not grudge it thee; the constancy and resolution in our common end are the same, but the beauty and glory of thy part is much greater." Which being said, the surgeons at the same time opened the veins of both their arms; but those of Seneca being more shrunk up, as well with age as abstinence, making his blood to flow more slowly, he moreover commanded them to open the veins of his thighs; and lest the torments he endured might intimidate his wife's heart, and also to free himself from the affliction of seeing her in so sad a condition, after having taken a very affectionate leave of her, he entreated she would suffer them to carry her into her chamber, which they accordingly did. But all these incisions being not yet enough to make him die, he commanded Statius Anneus, his physician, to give him a draught of poison, which had not much better effect; for, by reason of the weakness and coldness of his limbs, it could not arrive to his heart; wherefore they were forced to superadd a very hot bath, and then feeling his end approach, whilst he had breath, he continued excellent discourses upon the subject of his present condition, which the secretaries wrote down so long as they could hear his voice; and his last words were long after in high honour and esteem among men (it was a great loss to us that they were not reserved down to our times). Then, feeling the last pangs of death, with the bloody water of the bath he sprinkled his head, saying, "This water I dedicate to Jupiter the Deliverer." Nero, being presently advertised of all this, fearing lest the death of Paulina, who was one of the best descended ladies of Rome, and against whom he had no particular unkindness, should turn to his reproach, he sent back orders in all haste to bind up her wounds, which his people did without her knowledge; she being already half dead, and without any manner of sense. Thus, though she lived, contrary to her own design, it was very honourably, and according to her own virtue, her pale complexion ever after manifesting how much life was run from her veins.[1]

These are my three very true stories, which

[1] Tacitus, *Annal.* xv. 64.

The writers of tragedy must have recourse to history for the subject of their plays.

I find as entertaining and as tragic as any of those we make of our own heads, wherewith to entertain the common people; and I wonder they who undertake such matters do not rather cull out ten thousand very fine stories, which are to be found in very good authors, that would save them the trouble of invention, and be more useful and diverting: and he who would make a collection of them would need to add nothing of his own but the connection only, as it were the solder of another metal; and by this means embody a great many true events of all sorts, disposing and diversifying them according as the beauty of the work should require, after the same manner almost as Ovid has made up his *Metamorphoses*, of the infinite number of various fables.[1]

Seneca's great affection to his wife.

In this last couple this is moreover worthy of consideration, that Paulina voluntarily offered to lose her life for the love of her husband, and that her husband had formerly also forborne to die for the love of her. According to our notions, there is no just counterpoise in this exchange; but, according to his stoical humour, I should say he thought he had done as much for her in prolonging his life upon her account as if he had died for her. In one of his letters to Lucilius,[2] after he has given him to understand that, being seized with a fever at Rome, he presently took coach to go to a house he had in the country, contrary to his wife's opinion, who would by all means persuade him to stay: and that he told her, "That the ague he was seized with was not a fever of the body, but the place," he goes on thus: "She let me go," says he, "giving me a strict charge of my health. Now I, who know that her life is involved in mine, begin to make much of myself, that I may preserve her; and I lose the privilege, my age has given me, of being more constant and resolute in many things, when I call to mind that in this old fellow there is a young girl who is interested in his health. And since I cannot persuade her to love me more couragcously, she makes me more solicitously to love myself; for we must allow something to honest affections; and sometimes, though occasions importune us to the contrary, we must call back life, even though it be with torment; we must hold the soul fast in our teeth, since the rule of living amongst good men is not so long as they please, but as long as they ought. He that loves not his wife or his friend so well as to prolong his life for them, but will obstinately die, is too delicate and too effeminate: the soul must impose this upon itself when the utility of our friends so requires; we must sometimes lend ourselves to our friends, and when we would die for ourselves must break that resolution for them. 'Tis a testimony of grandeur and courage to return to life for the consideration of another, as many excellent persons have done; and 'tis a mark of singular good nature to preserve old age (of which the greatest convenience is the indifferency as to its duration, and a more stout and disdainful use of life), when a man perceives that this office is pleasing, agreeable, and useful to some person by whom we are very much beloved. And a man reaps by it a very pleasing reward; for what can be more delightful to be so dear to his wife, as upon her account to become dear to himself. Thus has my Paulina loaded me not only with her own fears, but my own: it has not been sufficient to consider how resolutely I could die, but I have also considered how irresolutely she would bear my death. I am enforced to live, and sometimes to live is magnanimity." These are his own words, excellent as they everywhere are.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

OF THE MOST EXCELLENT MEN.

SHOULD I be asked my opinion and choice of all the men who have come to my knowledge I should make answer that, methinks, I find three more excellent than all the rest.

One of them Homer; not that Aristotle or Varro, for example, were not perhaps as learned as he; nor that possibly Virgil was not equal to him in his own art; which I leave to be determined by such as know them both, and are best able to judge. I, who for my part understand but one of them, can only say this, according to my poor talent, that I do not believe the muses themselves could go beyond the Roman:

> Tale facit carmen docta testudine, quale
> Cynthius impositis temperat articulis:[3]
>
> "Whilst, playing to his lute, he verse doth sing,
> 'Tis like Apollo's voice and fingering;"

and yet in this judgment we are not to forget that it is chiefly from Homer that Virgil derives his excellence; that he is his guide and teacher; and that one portion of the *Iliad* only has supplied him with body and matter out of which to compose his great and divine *Æneid*. I do not count that way: I mix several other circumstances that render this poet admirable to me, even as it were above human condition; and, in truth, I often wonder that he who has erected, and by his authority given, so many deities reputation in the world, was not deified himself. Being blind and poor, living before the sciences were reduced to rule and certain

[1] In the edition of 1588 Montaigne added—"or as Ariosto has arranged in succession so many different fables;" but he afterwards omitted this passage, probably because he has here in view only serious relations, whereas those of Ariosto are mostly comic.

[2] *Ep.* 104.

[3] Propert. 2. 34. 79.

observation he was so well acquainted with them that all those who have since taken upon them to establish governments, to carry on wars, and to write either of religion or philosophy, of what sect soever, or of the arts, have made use of him as of a most perfect instructor in the knowledge of all things, and of his books as of an inexhaustible treasure of all sorts of learning:

Qui, quid sit pulchrum, quid turpe, quid utile, quid non,
Plenius ac melius Chrysippo ac Crantore dicit;[1]

"Who what is base, what pure, what brave, what good,
Fuller than Crantor or Chrysippus shewed;"

and as this other says,

A quo, ceu fonte perenni,
Vatum Pieriis ora rigantur aquis;[2]

"From whose ne'er-failing spring the poet sips,
And in Pierian waters wets his lips;"

and the other,

Adde Heliconiadum comites, quorum unus Homerus,
Sceptra potitus;[3]

"Of all the muses' friends, Homer alone
Is judg'd most worthy of the poet's throne;"

and the other,

Cujusque ex ore profuso
Omnis posteritas latices in carmina duxit,
Amnemque in tenues ausa est deducere rivos,
Unius fœcunda bonis.[4]

"From whose abundant spring
Succeeding poets draw the songs they sing;
From him they take, from him adorn their themes,
And into little channels cut his streams:
Rich in his store."

'Tis contrary to the order of nature, that he has made the most excellent production that can possibly be; for the ordinary birth of things is imperfect; they usually thrive and gather strength by growing: whereas he has rendered the infancy of poetry and several other sciences mature, perfect, and accomplished at first. And for this reason he may be called the first and the last of poets, according to the noble testimony antiquity has left us of him: "That as there was none before him whom he could imitate, so there has been none since that could imitate him."[5] His words, according to Aristotle,[6] are the only words that have motion and action; the only substantial words. Alexander the Great, having found a rich cabinet amongst Darius's spoils, gave order it should be reserved for him to keep his Homer in:[7] saying, "That he was the best and most faithful counsellor he had in his military affairs."[8] For the same reason it was that Cleomenes, the son of Anaxandridas, said, "That he was the poet of the Lacedæmonians, for he was the best master in the discipline of war."[9] This singular and particular commendation is also left of him in the judgment of Plutarch:[10] "That he is the only author in the world that never glutted nor disgusted his readers, presenting himself always another thing, and always flourishing in some new grace." That wanton Alcibiades, having asked one who pretended to learning for a book of Homer, gave him a box on the ear because he had none, which he thought as scandalous as we should to take one of our priests without a breviary. Xenophanes complained one day to Hiero, the tyrant of Syracuse, that he was so poor he had not wherewithal to maintain two servants:—"What!" replied the tyrant, "Homer, who was much poorer than you are, keeps above ten thousand, though he is dead!"[11] What did Panætius leave unsaid, when he called Plato "the Homer of philosophers?"[12] Besides, what glory can be compared to his? Nothing is so frequent in men's mouths as his name and works; nothing so known and received as Troy, Helen, and the war about her, when perhaps there was really never any such thing. Our children are called by names that he feigned above three thousand years ago: who knows not Hector and Achilles? Not only some particular families, but most nations also, seek their origin in his inventions. Mahomet, the second of that name, Emperor of the Turks, writing to our Pope Pius the Second: "I am astonished," says he, "that the Italians should appear against me, considering that we have our common descent from the Trojans, and that it concerns me as well as it does them to revenge the blood of Hector upon the Greeks, whom they countenance against me."[13] Is it not a noble farce, wherein kings, republics, and emperors have so many ages played their parts, and to which the vast universe serves for a theatre? Seven Grecian cities contended for his birth, so much honour even his obscurity helped him to!

Smyrna, Rhodos, Colophon, Salamis, Chios, Argos, Athenæ.[14]

"By Smyrna, Rhodes, Colophon, Salamis,
Chios, Argos, and Athens, he claim'd is."

The other is Alexander the Great; for whoever will consider the age at which he began his enterprizes, the small means by which he effected so glorious a design; the authority he obtained at so tender an age, with the greatest

Alexander the Great.

1 Horace, *Ep.* i. 2, 3.
2 Ovid, *Amor.* iii. 9. 25.
3 Lucret. iii. 1050.
4 Manil. ii. 8.
5 Vell. Patereulus, i. 5.
6 *Poetics*, c. 24.
7 Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* vii.
8 Plutarch. *Life of Alexander.*
9 Id. *Apothegms of the Lacedæm.*
10 In his treatise, *on Speaking too much.*
11 Plutarch, *Apoteg. of the Kings.*
12 Cicero, *Tusc. Quæs.* i. 32.
13 "See," says Bayle (article *Acarnania*), "how chimerical evils, forged by poets, have served as an apology for real evils." 'This letter of Mahomet's was probably written by some renegade Greek, or, more probably still, invented by some imaginative historian.'
14 Politian, *Manto.*

and most experienced captains of the world, by whom he was followed; the extraordinary favour wherewith fortune embraced him, and favoured so many hazardous, not to say rash designs;

Impellens quicquid sibi summa petenti
Obstaret, guadensque viam fecisse ruina;[1]

"Whose high designs no hostile force could stay,
And who by ruin lov'd to clear his way;"

that grandeur, to have, at the age of three and thirty years, passed victorious through the whole habitable earth, and in half a life to have attained to the utmost of what human nature can do; so that you cannot imagine the legitimate duration of his life, and the continuation of his increase in valour and fortune, even to a due maturity of age, but that you must withal imagine something more than man; to have so many royal branches to spring from his soldiers, leaving the world at his death divided amongst four successors, simple captains of his army, whose posterity afterwards so long continued and maintained that vast possession; so many excellent virtues as he was master of, justice, temperance, liberality, truth in his word, love towards his own people, and humanity towards those he overcame; for his manners in general seem, in truth, incapable of any manner of reproach, though some particular and extraordinary actions of his may perhaps fall under censure; but it is impossible to carry on such great things as he did, altogether within the strict rules of justice; such as he are to be judged in gross, by the main end of their actions; the ruin of Thebes and Persepolis, the murder of Menander and of Hæphestion's physician, the massacre of so many Persian prisoners at once, of a troop of Indian soldiers, not without prejudice to his word, and of the Cosseians, so much as to the very children, are indeed sallies that are not well to be excused; for, as to Clitus, the fault was more than recompensed in his repentance, and that very action, as much as any other whatever, manifests the sweetness of his nature, a nature most excellently formed to goodness; and it was ingeniously said of him, "That he had his virtues by nature, and his vices by chance."[2] As to his being given a little to bragging, and a little too impatient of hearing himself ill spoken of; and as to those mangers, arms, and bits he caused to be strewed in the Indies,[3] all those little vanities methinks may very well be allowed to his youth and the prodigious prosperity of his fortune. And who will consider withal his so many military virtues, his diligence, foresight, patience, discipline, subtlety, magnanimity, resolution, and good fortune, wherein, though we had not the authority of Hannibal to assure us, he was the first of men; the admirable beauty and symmetry of his person, even to a miracle, his majestic port, and imposing deportment, in a face so young, so ruddy, and so radiant:

Qualis, ubi Oceani perfusus Lucifer unda,
Quem Venus ante alios astrorum diligit ignes,
Extulit os sacrum cœlo, tenebrasque resolvit;[4]

"So doth the morning star from Ocean rise,
Beyond all stars grateful to Venus' eyes,
Shakes from his rosy locks the pearly dews,
Dispels the darkness, and the day renews;"

The excellence of his knowledge and capacity, the duration and grandeur of his glory, pure, clean, without spot or envy, and that long after his death it was a religious belief that his very medals brought good fortune to all that carried them about them;[5] and that more kings and princes have written his acts than other historians have written the acts of any other king or prince whatever; and that to this very day the Mahometans, who despise all other histories, admit of and honour his alone, by a special privilege: whoever, I say, will seriously consider these particulars will confess that, all these things put together, I have reason to prefer him before Cæsar himself, who alone could make me doubtful in my choice; for it cannot be denied but that there was more of his own in his exploits, more of fortune in those of Alexander. They were in many things equal, and perhaps Cæsar had the advantage in some particular qualities; they were two fires, or two torrents, to over-run the world by several ways;

Et velut immissi diversis partibus ignes
Arentem in silvam, et virgulta sonantis lauro;
Aut ubi decursu rapido de montibus altis
Dant sonitum spumosi amnes, et in æquora currunt,
Quisque suum populatus iter:[6]

"And like to fires in sev'ral parts applied
To a dry grove of crackling laurel's side;
Or like the cataracts of foaming rills,
That tumble headlong from the lofty hills,
To hasten to the ocean; even so
They bear down all before them where they go:"

but though Cæsar's ambition had been more moderate, it would still be so unhappy, having the ruin of his country and the universal mischief to the world for its abominable object, that, all things collected together and put into a balance, I must needs incline to Alexander's side.

The third, and in my opinion the most excellent of all, is Epaminondas. Of glory he has not near so much as the other two (which also is but a part of the substance of the thing); of valour and resolution, not of that sort which is pushed on by ambition, but of that which wisdom and reason can raise in a regular soul, he had all that could be imagined. Of this virtue of his he has, in my thought, given as

Epaminondas.

[1] Lucan, i. 149.
[2] Quintus Curtius, v. 1.
[3] Plutarch, *in vita*.
[4] *Æneid*, viii. 589.
[5] Treb. Pollio, *Triginta Tyrann.* c. 14.
[6] *Æneid*, xii. 521.

ample proof, as either Alexander himself or Cæsar; for although his war exploits were neither so frequent nor so renowned, they were yet, if duly considered in all their circumstances, as important, and as bravely fought, and carried with them as manifest testimony of valour and military conduct as those of any whatever. The Greeks have done him the honour, without contradiction, to pronounce him the greatest man of their nation;[1] and to be the first of Greece is easily to be the first of the world. As to his knowledge, we have this ancient judgment of him, "That never any man knew so much, and spoke so little as he;"[2] for he was of the Pythagorean sect: but, when he did speak, never man spoke better; an excellent orator, and of powerful insinuation. But as to his manners and conscience, he infinitely surpassed all men that ever undertook the management of affairs; for in this one thing, which ought chiefly to be considered, which alone denotes what we are, and which alone I counter-balance with all the rest put together, he comes not short of any philosopher whatever, not even of Socrates himself: innocence in him is a quality, peculiar, sovereign, constant, uniform, incorruptible; compared to which, it appears in Alexander subject to something else, uncertain, variable, effeminate, and accidental.

Antiquity has judged that in thoroughly sifting all the other great captains, there is found in every one some peculiar quality that illustrates his name; in this man alone there is a full and equal virtue throughout, that leaves nothing to be wished for in him, whether in private or public employment, whether in peace or war, whether gloriously to live or die. I do not know any form or fortune of man that I so much honour and love.

'Tis true that I look upon his obstinate poverty, as it is set out by his best friends, as a little too scrupulous and nice: and this is the only action, though high in itself and well worthy of admiration, that I find so severe as not to desire to imitate myself, to the degree it was in him.

Scipio Æmilianus alone, could one give him as brave and magnificent an end and as profound and universal a knowledge, might be put into the other scale of the balance. Oh! what an injury has time done me, to deprive me of the sight of two of the most noble lives, which, by the common consent of all the world, one the greatest of the Greeks, and the other of the Romans, were in all Plutarch. What materials! What a workman!

Scipio Æmilianus the only one to be compared with him.

For a man that was no saint, but, as we say, a gallant man, of civil and ordinary manners, and of a moderate ambition, the richest life that I know, and full of the richest and most to be desired parts, all things considered, is, in my opinion, that of Alcibiades.

But as to what concerns Epaminondas, I will here, as the example of an excessive goodness, add some of his opinions. He declared that the greatest satisfaction he ever had in his whole life was the contentment he gave his father and mother in his victory of Leuctra;[3] wherein he says very much, preferring their pleasure before his own, so just, and so full of so glorious an action. He did not think it lawful, even to restore the liberty of his country, to kill a man without knowing a cause;[4] which made him so cold in the enterprize of his companion Pelopidas, for the relief of Thebes. He was also of opinion that men in battle ought to avoid the encounter of a friend that was on the contrary side, and to spare him.[5] And his humanity, even towards his enemies themselves, having rendered him suspected by the Boetians, for that, after he had miraculously forced the Lacedæmonians to open him the pass, which they had undertaken to defend at the entry of the Morea, near unto Corinth, he contented himself with having charged through them, without pursuing them to the utmost, he had his commission of general taken from him, very honourably upon such an account, and for the shame it was to them, soon after, upon necessity, to restore him to his command, and to acknowledge how much upon him depended their safety and honour; victory like a shadow attending him wherever he went; and indeed the prosperity of his country, as being from him derived, died with him.[6]

CHAPTER XXXVII.

OF THE RESEMBLANCE OF CHILDREN TO THEIR FATHERS.

THIS faggoting up of so many divers pieces is done in this way: I never set pen to paper but when too great idleness becomes troublesome, and never any where but at home; so that it is made up at several interruptions and intervals, occasions keeping me sometimes many months abroad.[7] As to the rest, I never correct my first by any second conceptions: perhaps I may alter a word or so; but 'tis only to vary the phrase, and not to omit my former meaning.[8] I have a mind to represent the progress of my humour, that every one may see every piece as

[1] Diod. Sic. xv. 88. Pausanias, viii. 2. &c. Cicero, also, *de Orat.* iii. 54. assigns him the same place.
[2] Plutarch, *On the Dæmon of Socrates.*
[3] Id. *Life of Cortiolanus*
[4] Id *On the Dæmon of Socrates.*
[5] Id. *ib.*
[6] Diod. Sic. xv. 88. Nepos, *in vita.* Justin, vi 8.
[7] This chapter was written by Montaigne after his return from his journey through Switzerland, Germany, and Italy, on which he had been absent seventeen months.
[8] Yet the edition of 1588 contains several passages which Montaigne afterwards greatly altered or entirely omitted, to the advantage, certainly, of his work.

it came from the forge. I could wish I had begun sooner, that I might see more the course of my mutations. A servant of mine, that I employed to transcribe for me, thought he had got a prize by stealing several pieces from me, such as he took a fancy to: but it is my comfort that he will be no greater a gainer than I shall be a loser by the theft. I am grown older by seven or eight years since I began; which has not been without some new acquisition: I have in that time become acquainted with the stone, by the liberality of years, a long conversation with which hardly wears off without some such inconvenience. I could have been glad that of other presents age has to present long-lived men, withal it had chosen one that would have been more welcome to me, for it could not possibly have laid upon me a disease, for which, even from my infancy, I have had so great a horror; and it is in truth, of all the ills of old age, that of which I have ever been most afraid. I have often thought, with myself, that I went on too far, and that in so long a voyage I should at last run myself into some disadvantage; I perceived, and often declared, that it was time to knock off, and that death was to be cut out in the sound and living part, according to the surgeons' rule in amputations; and that nature made him pay very strict usury who did not in due time pay the principal. And yet I was so far from being ready that, in eighteen months' time, or thereabout, that I have been in this uneasy condition, I have so inured myself to it as to be content to live on in it; and have found wherein to comfort myself, and to hope: so much are men enslaved to their miserable being that there is no condition so wretched that they will not accept, provided they may live! Hear Mecænas:

Montaigne's patience in the disease which he always dreaded.

> Debilem facito manu,
> Debilem pede, coxa;
> Lubricos quate dentes:
> Vita dum superest, bene est:[1]
>
> "Maim both my hands and feet, break legs and thighs,
> Knock out my teeth, and bore out both my eyes,
> Let me but live, all's well enough, he cries."

And Tamerlane, with a foolish humanity, palliated the fantastic cruelty he exercised upon lepers, when he put all he could hear of to death, to deliver them, as he pretended, from the painful life they lived; for there was not one of them who would not rather have undergone a triple leprosy than to be deprived of their being; and Antisthenes the Stoic[2] being very sick, and crying out, "Who will deliver me from these evils?" Diogenes, who was come to visit him: "This," said he, presenting him a knife, "presently, if thou wilt." "I do not mean from my life," he replied, "but from my disease."[3] The sufferings that only attack the mind I am not so sensible of as most other men; partly out of judgment, for the world looks upon several things as dreadful, or to be avoided at the expense of life, that are almost indifferent to me: partly through a stupid and insensible complexion I have, in evils which do not point-blank hit me; which insensibility I look upon as one of the best parts of my natural condition; but essential and corporeal pains, I am very sensible of. And yet having long since foreseen them, though with a sight weak and delicate, and softened with the long and happy health and quiet that God has been pleased to give me the greatest part of my time, I had in my imagination fancied them so insupportable that in truth I felt the fear of them more than I have since felt actual pain from them; by which I am still more fortified in this belief, that most of the faculties of the soul, as we employ them, more trouble the repose of life than they are any way useful to it.

I am in conflict with the worst, the most sudden, the most painful, the most mortal, and the most irremediable of all diseases; I have already had the trial of five or six very long and very painful fits, and yet I either flatter myself, or there is even in this estate what is very well to be endured by a man who has his soul free from the fear of death, and the menaces, conclusions, and consequences, which physic is ever thundering in our ears. But the effect, even of pain itself, is not so sharp and intolerable as to put a man of understanding into impatience and despair. I have at least this advantage from my stone, that what I could not hitherto wholly prevail upon myself to resolve upon, as to reconciling and acquainting myself with death, it will perfect; for the more it presses upon and importunes me, I shall be so much the less afraid to die. I had already gone so far as only to love life for life's sake, but my pain will dissolve this intelligence: and God grant that in the end, should the sharpness of it be once greater than I shall be able to bear, it does not throw me into the other less vicious extreme, to desire and wish to die!

The Stone the most painful of all diseases.

> Summum nec metuas diem, nec optes:[4]
>
> "Neither to wish nor fear to die:"

they are two passions to be feared, but the one has its remedy much nearer at hand than the other.

As to the rest, I have always found the precept that so exactly enjoins so firm a countenance, and so disdainful and indifferent a comportment in the toleration of infirmities, to be merely ceremonial. Why

Complaint may freely be indulged in the agony of pain.

[1] Mæcenas, *apud* Seneca, *Ep.* 101.

[2] Or rather the Cynic, of which sect he was the head, though, in the main, there is no great difference betwixt the two sects as to their doctrine.

[3] Diog. Laertius, in the life of Antisthenes.

[4] Mart. x. 47.

should philosophy, which only has respect to life and its effects, trouble itself about these external appearances? Let us leave that care to actors and masters of rhetoric, that set so great a value upon our gestures; let her, in God's name, allow this vocal frailty, if it be neither cordial nor stomachical, to the disease; and permit the ordinary ways of expressing grief by sighs, sobs, palpitations, and turning pale, that nature has put out of our power; provided the courage be undaunted, and the expressions not sounding of despair, let her be satisfied. What matter is it if we wring our hands, if we do not wring our thoughts? She forms us for ourselves, not for others; to be, not to seem; let her be satisfied with governing our understandings, which she has taken upon her the care of instructing; in the fury of the stone let her maintain the soul in a condition to know itself, and to follow its accustomed way, contending with, and enduring, not meanly truckling under pain; moved and heated, not subdued and conquered in the contention; capable of discourse and other things to a certain degree. In so extreme ills, 'tis cruelty to require so exact a composedness; 'tis no great matter what faces we make, if we find any ease by it; if the body find itself relieved by complaining, let it complain; if agitation eases him, let him tumble and toss at pleasure; if he finds the disease evaporate (as some physicians hold that it helps women in delivery), extremely to cry out, or, if it do but amuse his torments, let him roar. We need not command his voice to sally, let us but stop it not. Epicurus[1] not only forgives his sage for crying out in torments, but advises him to it: *Pugiles etiam, quum feriunt, in jactandis cæstibus ingemiscunt, quia profundenda voce omne corpus intenditur, venitque plaga vehementior.*[2] "When men fight with the cestus they groan out in laying on, because the whole strength of body goes along with the voice, and the blow is laid on with greater force." We have enough to do to deal with the disease, without troubling ourselves with these superfluous rules.

This I say in excuse of those whom we ordinarily see impatient in the assaults of this malady; for as to what concerns myself, I have passed it over hitherto with a little better countenance, and contented myself with grunting, without roaring out. Not, nevertheless, that I put any great constraint upon myself to maintain this exterior decency, for I make little account of such an advantage; I allow herein as much as the pain requires; but either my pains are not so excessive, or I have more than ordinary patience. I complain, I confess, and am a little impatient in a very sharp fit, but I do not arrive to such a degree of despair as he who—

Montaigne kept his temper in the height of his pain.

> Ejulatu, questu, gemitu, fremitibus
> Resonando, multum flebiles voces refert:[3]
>
> "Howling, roaring, and a thousand groans,
> Express'd his torment in most dismal tones:"

I relish myself in the midst of my dolor; and have always found that I was in a capacity to speak, think, and give a rational answer, as well as at any other time, but not so coldly and indifferently, being troubled and interrupted by the pain. When I am looked upon by my visitors to be in the greatest torment, and that they therefore forbear to trouble me, I often try my own strength, and myself set some discourse on foot, the most remote I can contrive from my present condition. I can do any thing upon a sudden endeavour, but it must not continue long. What pity 'tis I have not the faculties of that dreamer Cicero, who, dreaming he was lying with a wench, found he had discharged his stone in the sheets![4] My pains do strangely disappetite me that way. In the intervals from this excessive torment, when my ureters only languish without any great dolor, I presently feel myself in my wonted state, forasmuch as my soul takes no other alarm but what is sensible and corporeal, which I certainly owe to the care I have had of preparing myself by meditation against such mishaps:

> Laborum
> Nulla mihi nova nunc facies inopinave surgit:
> Omnia præcepi, atque animo mecum ante peregi.[5]
>
> "No face of pain or labour now can rise
> Which, by its novelty, can me surprise,
> I've been accustom'd all things to explore,
> And been inured unto them long before."

I am, however, a little roughly handled for a learner, and with a sudden and sharp alteration, being fallen in an instant from a very easy and happy condition of life into the most uneasy and painful that can be imagined; for, besides that it is a disease very much to be feared in itself, it begins with me after a more sharp and severe manner than it uses to do with other men: my fits come so thick upon me that I am scarcely ever at ease. Yet I have hitherto kept my mind so upright that, provided I can still continue it, I find myself in a much better condition of life than a thousand others who have no fever, nor other disease but what they create themselves from defect in their reason.

There is a certain sort of crafty humility that springs from presumption, as this. That we confess our ignorance in many things, and are so courteous as to acknowledge that there are in the works of nature some qualities and conditions that are imperceptible to us, and of which our understanding cannot discover the means and causes: by this honest and conscientious declaration we hope to obtain that people shall also believe us in those that we say we do understand. We need not trouble ourselves to

[1] Laertius, *in vitâ.*
[2] Cicero, *Tusc. Quæs.* ii. 23.
[3] Attius, *Philoctetes, apud* Cicero, *de Finib.* ii. 29.
[4] Cicero, *de Divin.* ii. 69.
[5] *Æneid*, vi. 103.

seek out miracles and strange difficulties; methinks there are such incomprehensible wonders amongst the things that we ordinarily see, as surpass all difficulty of miracles. What a wonderful thing it is that the drop of seed from which we are produced should carry in itself the impression, not only of the bodily form, but even of the thoughts and inclinations of our fathers? Where can that drop of fluid matter contain that infinite number of forms? And how can they carry on these resemblances, with so temerarious and irregular a progress that a son shall be like his great-grandfather, the nephew like his uncle? In the family of Lepidus, at Rome, there were three, not successively, but by intervals, that were born with the same eye covered with a cartilage.[1] At Thebes there was a race that carried from their mother's womb the form of the head of a lance, and who was not born so was looked upon as illegitimate.[2] And Aristotle says that in a certain nation, where the women were in common, they assigned the children to their fathers by their resemblance.[3]

The author's father afflicted with the [illegible]

'Tis to be believed that I derive this infirmity from my father; for he died wonderfully tormented with a great [illegible] bladder. [illegible] and con[illegible] in this disease, and died [illegible] painful lingering death. I was born above five-and-twenty years before his disease seized him, and in the time of his most flourishing and healthful state of body, his third child in order of birth. Where could his propensity to this disease lie lurking all that while? And he being so far from the infirmity, how could that small part of his substance carry away so great an impression for its share? And how so concealed that, five-and-forty years after, I began to be sensible of it, the only one to this hour, amongst so many brothers and sisters, and all of one mother, that was ever troubled with it. He that can satisfy me in this point, I will believe him in as many other miracles as he pleases; always provided that, as their manner is, he does not give me a doctrine much more intricate and fantastic than the thing itself, for current pay.

His contempt of physic.

Let the physicians a little excuse the liberty I take; for by the same infusion and fatal insinuation it is, that I have received a hatred and contempt of their doctrine; the antipathy I have against their art is hereditary. My father lived threescore and fourteen years, my grandfather sixty-nine, my great-grandfather almost fourscore years, without ever tasting any sort of physic; and with them whatever was not ordinary diet, served instead of a drug. Physic is grounded upon experience and examples; so is my opinion. And is not this an express and very advantageous experience? I do not know that they can find me, in all their records, three that were born, bred, and died under the same roof, who have lived so long under their conduct. They must here of necessity confess that if reason be not, fortune at least is, on my side; and with physicians fortune goes a great deal further than reason. Let them not take me now at a disadvantage, let them not threaten me in the subdued condition I now am in; for that were treachery. And, to say truth, I have got enough the better of them, by these domestic examples, that they should rest satisfied. Human things are not usually so constant; it has been two hundred years, save eighteen, that this trial has lasted, for the first of them was born in the year 1402; 'tis now [illegible] good reason that this [illegible] to fail us [illegible] have [illegible] [illegible] version [illegible] and natural instinct; [illegible] sight of a potion was loathsome to my father. The Seigneur de Gaviac, my uncle by the father's side, a churchman, and a valetudinarian from his birth, and who yet made that crazy life to hold out sixty-seven years, being once fallen into a furious fever, it was ordered by the physicians he should be plainly told that if he would not make use of help (for so they call that which is often quite contrary), he would infallibly be a dead man. The good man, though terrified with this dreadful sentence, yet replied, "I am then a dead man." But God soon after made the prognostic false. The youngest brother, there were four, and by many years the youngest, the Sieur de Bussaguet, was the only man of the family that made use of medicine, by reason, I suppose, of the commerce he had with the other arts, for he was a counsellor in the court of parliament; and it succeeded so ill with him, that, being in outward appearance of the strongest constitution, he yet died before any of the rest, the Sieur de St. Michel only excepted.

His reason for making so very light of physic.

'Tis possible I may have derived this natural antipathy to physic from them; but, had there been no other consideration in the case, I would have endeavoured to have overcome it; for all those conditions that spring in us without reason are vicious; and is a kind of

[1] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* vii. 12.

[2] Plutarch, *On those of whom the Gods defer the punishment*; who however says nothing about the reputed illegitimacy of those born without the lance-mark.

[3] A people of Lybia. Herodotus, iv. 180.

disease that we are to wrestle with. It may be I had this propensity naturally, but I have supported and fortified it by arguments and reasons, which have established me in the opinion I am of: for I also hate the consideration of refusing physic for the nauseous taste; I should hardly be of that humour, thinking health worth purchasing by all the most painful cauteries and incisions that can be applied: and, according to Epicurus, I conceive that pleasures are to be avoided, if greater pains be the consequence; and pains to be coveted, that will terminate in greater pleasures.[1] Health is a precious thing, and indeed the only one meriting that a man should lay out not only his time, sweat, labour, and goods, but also his life itself to obtain it; forasmuch as without it life is painful and injurious to us; pleasure, wisdom, learning, and virtue, without it wither away and vanish: and in the most quaint and solid discourses that philosophy would imprint in us to the contrary, we need no more but oppose the image of Plato being struck with an epilepsy or apoplexy, and in this supposition to defy him to call the rich faculties of his soul to his assistance. All means that conduce to health can neither be too painful nor too dear for me. But I have some other appearances that make me strongly suspect all this merchandize. I do not deny but there may be some use, and that there are, amongst so many works of nature, things proper for the conservation of health; that is most certain: I very well know that there are some simples that moisten, and others that dry; I experimentally know that radishes are windy, and senna leaves purging; and several other experiences I have, as I know that mutton nourishes, and wine warms me; and Solon said[2] that eating was like other drugs, physic against hunger; I do not disapprove the use we make of things the earth produces, nor doubt in the least of the power and fertility of nature, and its application to our necessities; I very well see that pikes and swallows live by her laws; but I mistrust the inventions of our wit, knowledge, and art; to countenance which we have abandoned nature and her rules, and wherein we keep no bounds nor moderation. As we call the mixture of the first laws that fall into our hands, Justice, and their practice and dispensation very foolish and very unjust; and as those who scoff at and accuse it, cannot, nevertheless, insult that noble virtue, but only condemn the abuse and profanation of that sacred title; so in physic I very much honour that glorious name, and the end it is studied for, and what it promises to the service of mankind; but what it foists upon us I neither honour nor esteem.

In the first place, experience makes me dread it; for amongst all my acquaintance, I see no set of people so soon sick, and so long before they are well, as those who take much physic: their very health is altered and corrupted by their frequent prescriptions. Physicians are not content to deal only with the sick, but they will moreover corrupt health, for fear men should at any time escape their authority. Do they not, from a continual and perfect health, extract suspicion of some great sickness to ensue? I have been sick often enough, and have always found my sickness easy enough to be supported (though I have made trial of almost all sorts), and as short as those of any other, without their help, or without swallowing their ill-tasting doses. My health is full and free, without other rule or discipline than my own custom and pleasure: every place serves me well enough to stay in, for I need no other conveniences when sick than what I must have when I am well. I never disturb myself that I have no physician, or apothecary, or any other assistance, which I see most other sick men more afflicted at than they are with their disease! What! do they themselves show us more felicity and duration in their own lives, that may manifest to us some apparent effect of their skill?

Physic unknown to many nations.

There is not a nation in the world that has not been many ages without physic; and the first age, that is to say, the best and most happy, knew no such thing; and the tenth part of the world knows nothing of it yet. Several nations are ignorant of it to this day, where men live more healthful and longer than we do here, and even amongst us the common people live well enough without it. The Romans were six hundred years before they received it;[3] and after having made trial of it, banished it from their city, at the instance of Cato the Censor, who made it appear how easy it was to live without it, having himself lived fourscore and five years, and kept his wife alive to an extreme old age, not without physic, but without a physician;[4] for every thing that we find to be healthful to life may be called physic. He kept his family in health, as Plutarch says, if I mistake not, with hares, as Pliny reports[5] that the Arcadians cured all manner of diseases with the milk of a cow; and Herodotus says,[6] "The Lybians generally enjoy a rare health, by a custom they have, after their children are arrived at four years of age, to burn and cauterize the veins of their head and temples, by which means they cut off all defluxions of rheums for their whole lives."[7] And the country people of our province make

[1] Cicero, *Tusc. Quæs.* v. 33. Laertius, *in vitâ.*

[2] Or rather Plutarch, who makes Solon say it, in *the Banquet of the Seven Sages.*

[3] Montaigne might very well assure us, upon the authority of Pliny, xxix. 1, that the Romans did not admit of physic till six hundred years after the foundation of Rome; and that, after they had made trial of the art, they condemned and banished the physicians from their city; but, as to his addition, that they were expelled at the instance of Cato the Censor, Pliny is so far from authorizing it that he expressly says, the Romans did not banish the physicians from their city till long after the death of Cato. Several modern writers have fallen into the same error as Montaigne, as may be seen in Bayle's *Dictionary*, under the article "Porcius," in the note H.

[4] In the *Life of Cato the Censor.*

[5] *Nat. Hist.* xxv. 8.

[6] Lib. iv. c. 187.

[7] Montaigne should have said, by which means they pro-

use of nothing, in all sorts of distempers, but the strongest wine they can get, mixed with a great deal of saffron and spice, and all with the same success.

Whether the usefulness of medicinal purges is warranted upon good grounds.

And to say the truth, of all this diversity and confusion of apothecaries' jargon what other end and effect is there after all, but to purge the belly? which a thousand ordinary simples will do as well; and I do not know whether such evacuations be so much to our advantage as they pretend, and whether nature does not require a residence of her excrements to a certain proportion, as wine does of its lees, to keep it alive; you often see healthful men fall into vomitings and fluxes of the belly, by unknown accidents, and make a great evacuation of excrements, without any preceding need, or any following benefit, but rather with hurt to their constitution. 'Tis from the great Plato[1] that I lately learned that, of three sorts of motions which are natural to us, purging is the worst; and that no man, unless he be a fool, ought to take any thing to that purpose, but in the extremest necessity. Men disturb and irritate the disease by contrary opposition; it must be the way of living that must gently dissolve and bring it to its maturity. The violent gripings and contest betwixt the drug and the disease is ever to our loss, since the combat is fought within ourselves; and that the drug is an assistant not to be trusted, being by its own nature an enemy to our health; and, but by trouble has no access into our condition. Let it alone a little; the Providence that takes care of fleas and moles, does also take care for men, if they will have the same patience fleas and moles have, to leave it to itself: 'tis to much purpose that we cry, Get on! 'Tis the way to make us hoarse, but not to hasten it. 'Tis a proud and uncompassionate order; our fears, our despair, displease and stop it from, instead of inviting it to, our relief. It owes assistance to the disease as well as to health, and will not suffer itself to be corrupted in favour of the one, to the prejudice of the other's right, for it would then fall into disorder. Let us, in God's name, follow it: it leads those that follow, and those who will not follow, it drags along, with their fury and physic together. Order a purge for your brain; it will there be much better employed than upon your stomach.

One asking a Lacedæmonian what had made him live so long, he made answer, "The ignorance of physic." And the Emperor Adrian continually exclaimed, as he was dying, that the crowd of physicians had killed him.[2] An ill wrestler turned physician: "Courage," says Diogenes to him,[3] "thou hast done well, for now thou wilt throw those who have formerly thrown thee." But they have this advantage, according to Nicocles,[4] that the sun gives light to their success, and the earth covers their failures. And, besides, they have a very advantageous way of making use of all sorts of events; for what fortune, nature, or any other causes (of which the number is infinite), produce of good and healthful in us, it is the privilege of physic to attribute to itself; all the happy success that happens to the patient must be derived thence; the occasions that have cured me, and thousands of others who make no use of medicine, physicians usurp to themselves and their own skill; and as to all mishaps, they either absolutely disown them, in laying the fault upon the patient, by such frivolous and idle reasons as they can never be to seek for; as, he lay with his arms out of bed, or he was disturbed by the rattling of a coach,

> Rhedarum transitus arcto
> Vicorum in flexu:[5]
>
> "Rumbling wheels that meet
> In every winding of the narrow street:"

or, somebody had opened the casement, or he had lain upon his left side; or had had some odd fancies in his head: in sum, a word, a dream, or a look, seem to them excuse sufficient wherewith to discharge themselves from error; or, if they so please, they yet make use of our growing worse, and do their business that way, which can never fail them; which is, by buzzing us in the ears, when the disease is more inflamed by their medicaments, that it had been much worse but for those remedies. He who, from an ordinary cold, they have thrown into a quotidian fever ague, had, but for them, been in a continuous one. They do not much care what mischief they do, since it turns to their own profit. Truly, they have reason to require a very favourable belief from their patients; and indeed it ought to be a very easy one, to swallow things so hard to be believed. Plato said very well,[6] that physicians were the only men that might lie at pleasure, since our health depends upon the vanity and falsity of their promises. Æsop, a most excellent author, and of whom few men discover all the graces, pleasantly represents to us the tyrannical authority physicians usurp over poor creatures, weakened and subdued by sickness and fear; for he tells us,[7] that a sick person, being asked

pose to cut off such defluxions, &c., for though Herodotus says they do it with this view, yet he does not presume to say that, for this cause, they enjoy such perfect health. "It is true," says he, "the Lybians are more healthy than any people that I know, but that this is the cause of it, I cannot affirm positively."

[1] In the *Timæus*.

[2] Xiphilin, *Epitome*. Dion. *Life of Adrian*. Before Adrian, however, Pliny (*Nat. Hist.* xxix. 1.) mentions a tomb with this epitaph: *Turba se medicorum perisse*.

[3] Laertius, *in vitâ*.

[4] In p. 652. chap. xlvi. of the *Collection of the Monks Antony and Maximus*, printed at the end of *Stobæus*. Barbeyrac thinks that this Nicocles, who here banters a certain quack, is the famous king of Salamina, to whom Socrates addressed one of his orations.

[5] Juvenal, iii. 236.

[6] In the *Republic*, iii.

[7] In *The Sick Man and the Physician*.

by his physician what operation he found of the potion he had given him? "I have sweated very much," says the sick man." "That's good," says the physician. Another time, having asked him how he felt himself after his physic? "I have been very cold, and have had a great shivering upon me," said he. "That is good," replied the physician. After the third potion, he asked him again how he did? "Why, I find myself swelled and puffed up," said he, "as if I had a dropsy." "That is very well," said the physician. One of his servants coming presently after to inquire how he felt himself? "Truly, friend," said he, "with being too well, I am about to die."

There was a more just law in Egypt, by which the physician for the three first days was to take charge of his patient at the patient's own peril and fortune; but those three days being past, it was to be at his own. For what should their patron Æsculapius be struck with a thunder-bolt for restoring Hyppolitus from death to life;

> Nam pater omnipotens, aliquem indignatus ab umbris
> Mortalem infernis ad lumina surgere vitæ,
> Ipse repertorem medicinæ talis et artis,
> Fulmine Phœbigenam Stygias detrusit ad undas;[1]
>
> "But Jove, who saw from high with just disdain
> The dead inspired with vital breath again,
> Struck to the centre with his flaming dart
> Th' unhappy founder of the god-like art;"

and his followers be pardoned, who send so many souls from life to death? A physician boasting to Nicocles that his art was of great authority: "It is so, indeed," said Nicocles, "that can with impunity kill so many people."[2]

As to what remains, had I been of their counsel, I would have rendered my discipline more sacred and mysterious; they began well, but they have not ended so. It was a good beginning to make gods and demons the authors of their science, and to have used a peculiar way of speaking and writing; notwithstanding that philosophy concludes it folly to persuade a man to his own good in an unintelligible way: *Ut si quis medicus imperet, ut sumat*

Mystery very necessary for physic.

> Terrigenam, herbigradam, domiportam, sanguine cassum.[2]
>
> "As if a physician should command his patient to take an animal trailing with its slime over the herbage, without blood or bones, and carrying its house upon its back."[3] It was a good rule in their art, and which accompanies all other vain, fantastic, and supernatural arts, that the patients' belief should prepossess them with good hope and assurance of their effects and operation; a rule they hold to that degree as to maintain that the most inexpert and ignorant physician is more proper for a patient that has confidence in him, than the most learned and experienced, that he is not acquainted with. Nay, even the choice of most of their drugs is in some sort mysterious and quackish. The left foot of a tortoise, the urine of a lizard, the dung of an elephant, the liver of a mole, blood drawn from under the wing of a white pigeon; and for us who have the stone (so scornfully they use us in our miseries), the excrement of rats beaten to powder, and such-like apes' tricks, which rather carry a face of magical enchantment than any solid science. I omit the odd number of their pills, the appointment of certain days and feasts of the year, the superstition of gathering their simples at certain hours, and that austere, grim countenance and haughty carriage which Pliny himself derides. But they have, as I said, failed, in that they have not added to this fine beginning, the making their meetings and consultations more religious and secret: no profane person ought to be admitted there, no more than in the secret ceremonies of Æsculapius; for by reason of this it falls out that their irresolution, the weakness of their arguments, divinations, and foundations, the sharpness of their disputes,[4] full of hatred, jealousy, and particular interests, coming to be discovered by every one, a man must be very blind not to discern that he runs a very great hazard in their hands. Whoever saw one physician use another's prescription, without taking something away or adding something to it? By which they sufficiently betray their art, and make it manifest to us that they therein more consider their own reputation, and consequently their profit, than their patients' interest. He was a much wiser man of their tribe, who of old gave it for a rule, that only one physician should undertake a sick person; for if he do nothing to purpose, one single man's default can bring no great scandal upon the profession; and, on the contrary, the glory will be great if he happen to have success; whereas, when they are many, they at every turn bring a disrepute upon their calling, forasmuch as they often do more hurt than good. They ought to be satisfied with the perpetual disagreement which is found in the opinions of the principal masters and ancient authors of this science, which is only known to men well read, without discovering to the vulgar the controversies and various judgments which they still nourish and continue amongst themselves.

Will you have one example of the ancient controversies in physic? Herophilus[5] lodges the original cause of all diseases in the humours; Erasistratus, in the blood of the arteries; Asclepiades, in the invisible atoms of the pores; Alcmeon, in the exuberance or defect of our bodily strength; Diocles

The opposite sentiments of physicians as to the cause of diseases, a proof of the uncertainty of their science.

[1] *Æneid*, vii. 770.
[2] *Collection of the Monks Antony and Maximus.*
[3] "Instead of saying, as everybody else says, a snail," adds Cicero, *de Divin.* ii. 64.
[4] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xxix. 1.
[5] Celsus, *Preface to the First Book.*

in the equality of the elements of which the body is composed, and in the quality of the air we suck in; Strato, in the abundance, crudity, and corruption of the nourishment we take; and Hippocrates lodges them in the spirits. There is a certain friend of theirs,[1] whom they know better than I, who declares upon this subject, "That the most important science in practice amongst us, as that which is entrusted with our health and conservation, is by ill luck the most uncertain, the most perplexed, and agitated with the greatest mutations." There is no great danger in being mistaken as to the height of the sun, or the fraction of some astronomical supputation; but here, where our whole being is concerned, 'tis no wisdom to abandon ourselves to the mercy of the agitation of so many contrary winds.

Physic, when and by whom brought into credit.

Before the Peloponnesian war there was no great talk of this science.[2] Hippocrates brought it into repute; whatever he established Chrysippus overthrew; after that Erasistratus, Aristotle's grandson, overthrew what Chrysippus had written; after these, the empirics started up, who took a quite contrary way to the ancients in the management of this art. When the credit of these began to decay, Herophilus set another sort of practice on foot, which Asclepiades in turn stood up against and overthrew. The opinion first of Themison, and then of Musa; and after that, those of Vectius Valens, a physician famous through the intelligence he had with Messalina, came in vogue; the empire of physic in Nero's time fell to Thessalus, who abolished and condemned all that had been held till his time; his doctrine was refuted by Crinas of Marseilles, who brought all medicinal operations under the ephemerides and motions of the stars, and reduced eating, sleeping, and drinking to hours that were most pleasing to Mercury and the moon. His authority was soon after supplanted by Charinus, a physician of the same city of Marseilles; a man that not only controverted all the ancient methods of physic, but moreover the use of hot baths, that had been generally and so many ages before in common use; he made men bathe in cold water even in winter, and plunged his sick patients in the natural waters of the stream. No Roman till Pliny's time had ever vouchsafed to practise physic; that office was only performed by Greeks and foreigners, as 'tis now amongst us in French, by those that sputter Latin; for, as a great physician says, "We do not readily receive the medicine we understand, any more than we do the drugs we ourselves gather." If the nations from which we fetch our guaicum, sarsaparilla, and china root, be conversant with medicine, how great a value must we imagine, by the same recommendation of strangeness, rarity, and dear purchase, they set upon our cabbage and parsley? For who would dare to contemn things so far fetched, and at the hazard of so long and dangerous a voyage?

Since these ancient mutations in physic, there have been infinite others down to our own times; and, for the most part, such as have been entire and universal; as those, for example, produced by Paracelsus, Fioravanti, and Argenterius; for they, as I am told, not only altered recipes, but the whole contexture and rules of the body of physic, accusing all others of ignorance and imposition that practised before them. Amongst them all, in what a condition the poor patient must be, I leave you to judge.

But if we were yet assured that when they mistake themselves, that mistake of theirs would do us no harm, though it did us no good, it were a reasonable bargain to venture making ourselves better, without danger of being made worse.[3] Æsop tells a story that one who had bought a Morisco slave, believing that his black complexion was accidental in him, and occasioned by the ill usage of his former master, caused him to enter into a course of physic, and with great care to be often bathed and purged: it happened that the Moor was nothing amended in his tawny complexion, but he wholly lost his former health. How often do we see physicians impute the death of their patients to one another? I remember that some years ago there was an epidemical disease, very dangerous, and for the most part mortal, that raged in the towns about us: the storm being over, which had swept away an infinite number of men, one of the most famous physicians of all the country, presently after published a book upon that subject, wherein, upon better thought, he confesses that the letting of blood in that disease was the principal cause of so many miscarriages. Moreover, their authors hold that there is no physic that has not something hurtful in it. And if even those of the best operation do in some measure offend us, what must those do that are totally misapplied? For my own part, though there were nothing else in the case, I am of opinion that to those that loathe the taste of physic it must needs be a dangerous and prejudicial endeavour, to force it down at so incommodious a time and with so much aversion; and believe that it marvellously distempers a sick person, at a time when he has so much need of repose.

And besides this, if we but consider the occa-

[1] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xxxi. 1.

[2] *Id. ib.* xxix. whence the following details respecting ancient medicine are taken.

[3] Paracelsus has already been mentioned. Leonard Fioravanti was a physician, alchemist, and charlatan, born at Bologna, who, after flourishing in great repute in Italy for some time, died in 1588. Jean Argentier, a man of a higher character, was born at Quiers in Piedmont, in 1513, and died at Turin, in 1572. He distinguished himself more especially by his attacks on Galen's principles.

Physicians very subject to mistakes, and their pernicious consequences.

sions upon which they usually ground the cause of our diseases, they are so nice, that I thence conclude a very little error in the dispensation of their drugs, may do a great deal of mischief. Now, if the mistake of a physician be so dangerous, we are but in a scurvy condition; for it is almost impossible but he must often fall into those mistakes; he had need of too many parts, considerations, and circumstances, rightly to adjust his design; he must know the sick person's complexion, his temperature, his humours, inclination, actions, nay, his very thoughts and imaginations; he must be assured of the external circumstances, of the nature of the place, the quality of the air and season, the situation of the planets, and their influences; he must know, in the disease, the causes, prognostics, affections, and critical days; in the drugs, the weight, the power of working, the country, figure, age, and dispensation; and he must know how rightly to proportion and mix all these together, to beget a just and perfect symmetry; wherein, if there be the least error, if amongst so many springs there be but any one out of order, 'tis enough to destroy us. God knows of how great difficulty most of these things are to be understood. For, for example, how shall a physician find out the true sign of the disease, every disease being capable of an infinite number of indications? How many doubts and controversies have they amongst themselves upon the interpretation of urines! Otherwise, whence should the continual debates we see amongst them about the knowledge of the disease proceed? How would we excuse the error they so often fall into, of taking one thing for another? In the maladies I have had, were there never so little difficulty in the case, I never found three of one opinion: which I instance, because I love to introduce examples wherein I am myself concerned.

A gentleman at Paris was lately cut for the stone, by order of the physicians, in whose bladder there was found no more stone than in the palm of his hand; and in the same place, a bishop, who was my particular good friend, was earnestly pressed by the major part of the physicians he consulted, to suffer himself to be cut, to which also, upon their credit, I used my interest to persuade him: when he was dead, and opened, it appeared that he had no stone, but only a disorder in the kidneys. They are least excusable for an error in this disease, by reason that it is in some sort palpable; and 'tis by that that I take surgery to be much more certain, by reason that it sees and feels what it does, and so goes less upon conjecture; whereas the physicians have no *speculum matricis*, by which to discover our brains, lungs, and liver.

Even the very promises of physic are incredible in themselves; for, being to provide against divers and contrary accidents, that often afflict us at one and the same time, and that have almost a necessary relation, as the heat of the liver and the coldness of the stomach, they will needs persuade us that, of their ingredients, one will heat the stomach, and the other cool the liver; one has its commission to go directly to the reins, nay, even to the bladder, without scattering its operations by the way, and is to retain its power and virtue, through all the stops and meanders, to the very place for the service of which it is designed, by its own occult property; another will dry the brain; another moisten the lungs. All these things being mixed in one potion, it is a kind of madness to imagine or hope that these differing virtues should separate themselves from one another in this mixture and confusion, to perform so many various errands; I should very much fear that they would either lose or change their tickets, and trouble one another's quarters. And who can imagine but that, in this liquid confusion, these faculties must corrupt, confound, and spoil one another? Besides that the making up of this medicine is entrusted to the skill and fidelity of another, to whose mercy we again abandon our lives?

The promises of the physicians generally incredible.

As we have doublet and breeches makers, distinct trades, to clothe us, and are so much the better fitted, being that each of them meddles only with his own business, and has less to trouble his head withal than a tailor, that undertakes all; and as in matter of diet great persons, for their convenience, and to the end they may be better served, have cooks of distinct offices, some for soups and pottages, and others for roasting, which one cook, that should undertake the whole service, could not so well perform; so for our cures, the Egyptians had reason to reject this general trade of a physician, and to divide the profession; to each peculiar disease, to every part of the body, a particular operator; for that part was more properly and with less confusion provided for, being they especially regarded only that. Ours are not aware that he who provides for all provides for nothing; and that the entire government of this microcosm is more than they are able to undertake. Whilst they were afraid of stopping a looseness, lest they should put him into a fever, they killed me a friend that was worth more than the whole pack of them put together.[1] They counterpoise their own divinations with the present evils, and because they will not cure the brain to the prejudice of the stomach, they offend both with their discordant and tumultuary drugs.

As to the variety and weakness of the reasons of this art, it is more manifest in this than in any other. Aperitive medicines are proper for a man subject to the stone, by reason that opening and dilating the passages, they help forward the

Weakness and uncertainty of the reasons on which the art of physic is grounded.

[1] The author here again refers to Stephen de la Boëtie, who died of a dysentery in 1563.

slimy matter whereof gravel and the stone are engendered, and convey that downward which begins to harden and gather in the reins: aperitive things are dangerous for a man subject to the stone, by reason that opening and dilating the passage, they help forward toward the reins the matter proper to create the stone, which, by their own propension that way, being apt to seize it, 'tis not to be imagined but that a great deal of what has been so conveyed thither must remain behind; moreover, if the medicine happen to meet any thing too large to be carried through all those narrow passages it must pass to be expelled, that obstruction, whatever it is, being stirred by these aperitive things, and thrown into those narrow passages, coming to stop them, will occasion a most certain and most painful death. They have the like consistency in the advices they give us for the regimen of life: it is good to make water often, for we experimentally see that, in letting it lie long in the bladder, we give it time to settle the sediment, which will concrete into a stone: it is not good to make water often, for the heavy excrements it carries along with it will not be voided without violence, as we see, by experience, that a torrent that runs with force washes the ground it rolls over, much clearer than the course of a slow and tardy stream. Likewise it is good to have often to do with women, for that opens the passages, and helps to evacuate gravel: it is not good to have often to do with women, because it heats, tires, and weakens the reins. It is good to bathe frequently in hot waters, forasmuch as that refreshes and mollifies the place where the gravel and stone lie; and it is also ill, by reason that this application of external heat helps the reins to bake, harden, and petrify the matter so disposed. For those who are at the bath, it is most healthful to eat little at night, to the end that the waters they are to drink the next morning may have the better operation upon an empty stomach: on the contrary, it is better to eat little at dinner, that it hinder not the operation of the waters, which is not yet perfect, and not to oppress the stomach so soon after the other labour, but leave the office of digestion to the night, which will much better perform it than the day, where the body and soul are in perpetual motion and action. Thus do they juggle and cant in all their discourses at our expense, and cannot give one proposition against which I cannot erect a contrary of equal force. Let them, then, no longer exclaim against those who in this trouble of sickness suffer themselves to be gently guided by their own appetite and the advice of nature, and commit themselves to the common fortune.

The usefulness of baths.

I have seen, in my travels, almost all the famous baths of Christendom, and for some years past have begun to make use of them myself, for I look upon bathing as generally wholesome, and believe that we suffer no little inconveniences in our health, by having left off the custom that was generally observed in former times, almost by all nations, and is yet in many, of bathing every day; and I cannot imagine but that we are much the worse by having our limbs crusted and our pores stopped with dirt. And as to the drinking of them, fortune has, in the first place, rendered them not at all unacceptable to my taste; and, secondly, they are natural and simple, which at least carry no danger with them, though they do us no good; of which, the infinite crowd of people of all sorts of complexions that repair thither, I take to be a sufficient guarantee: and although I have not there observed any extraordinary and miraculous effects; but, on the contrary, having more narrowly than ordinary inquired into it, I have found all the reports of such operations that have been spread abroad in those places, ill grounded and false, and those that believe them (as people are willing to be gulled in what they desire) deceived in them; yet I have seldom known any that have been made worse by those waters, and a man cannot honestly deny but that they beget a better appetite, help digestion, and do in some sort revive us, if we do not go too late, and in too weak a condition, which I would dissuade every one from doing; they have not the virtue to raise men from desperate and inveterate diseases, but they may help some light indisposition or prevent some threatening alteration. He who does not bring along with him so much cheerfulness as to enjoy the pleasure of the company he will there meet, and of the walks and exercises to which the beauty of the places in which baths for the most part are situated invites us, will doubtless lose the best and surest part of their effect. For this reason I have hitherto chosen to go to those of the most pleasant situation, where there was the most convenience of lodging, provision, and company; as the baths of Banieres in France; those of Plombieres in the frontiers of Germany and Lorrain; those of Baden in Switzerland; those of Lucca in Tuscany; and especially those of Della Villa, which I have the most, and at several seasons, frequented.

Every nation makes a particular use of baths.

Every nation has particular opinions touching their use, and several rules and methods in using them, and all of them, according to what I have seen, almost of like effect. Drinking them is not at all received in Germany: for all diseases they bathe only, and will lie dabbling in the water almost from sun to sun. In Italy, where they drink nine days, they bathe at least thirty, and commonly drink the water mixed with some other drugs, to make it work the better: we are here ordered to walk to digest it; there they are kept in bed after taking it till it be wrought off, their stomachs and feet have continually hot cloths applied to them all the while: and as the Germans have a particular practice, generally to use cupping and scarifica-

tion in the bath, so the Italians have their *doccie*, which are certain little streams of this hot water brought through pipes, with which they bathe an hour in the morning and as much in the afternoon, for a month together, either the head, stomach, or any other part where the malady lies. There are infinite other varieties of customs in every country, or rather there is hardly any manner of resemblance to one another. By which you may see that this part of physic, to which alone I have submitted, though the least depending upon art of all others, has yet a great share of the confusion and uncertainty everywhere else manifest in the profession.

The poets say whatever they please with greater emphasis and grace; witness these two epigrams:

Alcon hesterno signum Jovis attigit: ille
Quamvis marmoreus, vim patitur medici.
Ecce hodie, jussus transferri ex æde vetusta,
Effertur, quamvis sit deus atque lapis.[1]

Alcon[2] did yesterday Jove's statue touch,
Which, although marble, suffer'd by 't so much
That now to-day 'tis order'd that it shou'd
Be taken from th' old temple where it stood;
Which, as was need, without delay was done,
Although he was a god, and made of stone."

And the other,

Lotus nobiscum est, hilaris cænavit; et idem
Inventus mane est mortuus Andragoras.
Tam subitæ mortis causam, Faustine, requiris?
In somnis medicum viderat Hermocratem.[3]

Andragoras bath'd, supp'd, and went well to bed
Last night, but in the morning was found dead;
Would'st know, Faustinus, what was his disease?
He dreaming saw the quack, Hermocrates?

Upon which I will relate two stories:—

Two pleasant stories against the practice of lawyers and physicians.

The Baron of Caupene in Chalosse and I have betwixt us the advowson of a benefice of great extent, at the foot of our mountains, called Lahontan. It is with the inhabitants of this nook as 'tis said of those of the vale of Angrougne: they lived a life apart, their fashions, clothes, and manners distinct from other people; were ruled and governed by certain particular laws and customs received from father to son, to which they submitted, without other constraint than the reverence to custom. This little state had continued from all antiquity in so happy a condition that no neighbouring judge was ever put to the trouble of enquiring into their doings, no advocate ever retained to give them counsel, nor stranger ever called in to compose their differences, nor was ever any of them seen to beg. They avoided all alliances and traffic with the other world, that they might not corrupt the purity of their own government; till, as they say, one of them, in the memory of their fathers, having a mind spurred on with noble ambition, contrived, in order to bring his name into credit and reputation, to make one of his sons something more than ordinary; and having put him to learn to write, made him at last a village notary. This fellow, being thus puffed up, began to disdain their ancient customs, and to put into the people's ears the pomp of the other parts of the nation: the first prank he played was to advise a friend of his, whom somebody had offended by sawing off the horns of one of his goats, to make his complaint to the king's judges thereabout; and so he went on in this practice, till he spoiled all. In the tail of this corruption, they say, there happened another, and of worse consequence, by means of a physician, who took it into his head to marry one of their daughters, and to live amongst them. This man first of all began to teach them the name of fevers, rheums, and imposthumes, the seat of the heart, liver, and intestines, a science till then utterly unknown to them: and instead of garlic, with which they were wont to cure all manner of diseases, how painful or extreme soever, he taught them, though it were but for a cough, or any little cold, to take strange mixtures, and began to make a trade not only of their healths, but of their lives. They swear that till then they never perceived the evening air to be offensive to the head, that to drink when they were hot was hurtful, or that the winds of autumn were more unwholesome than those of the spring; that since this use of physic they find themselves oppressed with a legion of unaccustomed diseases, and that they perceive a general decay in their wonted vigour, and their lives cut shorter by the half. This is the first of my stories.

The other is, that before I was afflicted with the stone, hearing that the blood of a he-goat was with many in very great esteem, and looked upon as a celestial manna, rained down upon these latter ages for the good and preservation of the lives of men, and having heard it spoken of by men of understanding for an admirable drug, and of infallible operation: I, who have ever thought myself subject to all the accidents that can befal other men, had a mind, in my perfect health, to furnish myself with this admirable medicine, and therefore gave order to have a goat fed at home, according to the receipt; for he must be taken in the hottest month of all summer, and must only have aperitive herbs given to eat, and white wine to drink. I came home by chance the very day he was to be killed; and one came and told me that the cook had found two or three great balls in his paunch, that rattled against one another amongst what he had eaten: I was curious to have all his entrails brought before me, where, having caused the skin that enclosed them to be cut, there tumbled out three great lumps, as light as sponges, so that they appeared to be hollow;

[1] *Ausonius, Epig.* lxxiv.
[2] A celebrated physician.
[3] Martial, vi. 53.

but as to the rest, hard and firm without, spotted and mixed all over with various colours; one was perfectly round, and of the bigness of an ordinary bowl; and the other two something less, of an imperfect roundness, as seeming not to be arrived at their full growth. I find, by enquiry of people accustomed to open these animals, that it is a rare and unusual accident. 'Tis likely these are stones of the same nature with ours; and if so, it must needs be a very vain hope in those who have the stone, to extract their cure from the blood of a beast who was himself to die of the same disease. For to say that the blood does not participate of this contagion, and does not alter its wonted virtue, it is rather to be believed that nothing is engendered in a body but by the conspiracy and communion of all the parts; the whole mass works together, though one part contributes more than another, according to the diversity of operations: wherefore it is very likely that there was some petrifying quality in all the parts of this goat. It was not so much for fear of the future, and for fear of myself, that I was curious of this experiment, but because it falls out in mine, as it does in many other families, that the women store up such little trumpery drugs for the service of the people, using the same receipt in fifty several diseases, such a receipt as they will not take themselves, and yet triumph in their successes.

Physicians worthy of esteem, and why.

For the rest, I honour physicians, not, according to the precept,[1] for necessity (for to this passage may be opposed another of the prophet, reproving King Asa for having recourse to a physician[2]), but for themselves, having known many very good men of that profession, and most worthy to be beloved. I do not attack them; 'tis their art I inveigh against, and do not much blame them for making their advantage of our folly, for most men do the same. Many callings, both of greater and less dignity than theirs, have nō other foundation or support than public abuse. When I am sick I send for them, if they be near, only to have their company, and fee them as others do. I give them leave to command me to keep myself warm, because I naturally love to do it; to appoint lecks or lettuce for my broth, and to order me white wine or claret, and so all other things at their own pleasure, which are indifferent to my palate and custom. I know very well that I do nothing for them in so doing, because sharpness and ill-pleasing tastes are incidents of the very essence of physic. Lycurgus ordered wine for the sick Spartans; why? Because they abominated the drinking of it when they were well: as a gentleman, a neighbour of mine, takes it for a rare medicine in his fever, because that naturally he mortally hates the taste. How many do we see amongst them of my humour, that despise taking of physic themselves, are men of liberal diet, and live a quite contrary sort of life to what they prescribe others? What is this, but flatly to abuse our simplicity? For their own lives and healths are no less dear to them than ours are to us, and consequently they would accommodate their effects to their own rules, if they did not themselves know how false they are.

Physicians seldom use medicinal drugs themselves.

'Tis the fear of death and pain, an impatience of the disease, and a violent and indiscreet desire of a present cure, that so blinds us; 'tis pure cowardice that makes our belief so pliable and easy to be imposed upon. And yet most men do not so much believe as they acquiesce and permit, for I hear them find fault and complain as well as we; but they resolve at last, "What should I do then?" As if impatience were of itself a better remedy than patience. Is there any one of those who have suffered themselves to be persuaded into this miserable subjection, that does not equally surrender himself to all sorts of impostures; who does not give up himself to the mercy of whoever has the impudence to promise him a cure? The Babylonians carried their sick into the public place, the physician was the people; every one that passed by being, in humanity and civility, obliged to inquire of their condition, and give some advice according to his own experience.[3] We do little better, there being no so silly a woman whose charms and quackeries we do not make use of, and according to my humour, if I were to take physic, I would sooner choose to take theirs than any other, because at least, if it does no good, it will do no harm. What Homer[4] and Plato said of the Egyptians, that they were all physicians, may be said of all nations; there is no person that does not boast of some rare recipe, and who will not venture it upon his neighbour, if he will permit him. I was the other day in company, where some one of my fraternity[5] told us of a new sort of pills, made up of a hundred and odd ingredients. It made us very merry, and was a singular consolation, for what rock could withstand so great a battery? And yet I hear, by those who made trial of it, that the least atom of gravel will not stir for it.

The sick persons of Babylon exposed in the market-place.

I cannot take my hand from the paper before I have added a word or two more concerning the assurance they give us of the infallibility of their drugs, and the experiments they have made. The greatest part, I think above two-thirds, of the medicinal virtues, consist in the quint-

Upon what the physicians found their pretended knowledge of the virtue of their drugs.

[1] *Honora medicum propter necessitatem.*—*Eccl.* xxxviii. 1.
[2] *Nec in infirmitate sua quæsivit Dominum, sed magis in medicorum arte confisus est.*—Paralipomen, ii. 16. 12.
[3] Herod. i. 197. Strabo, xvi.
[4] *Odyssey*, iv. 231.
[5] Meaning that were troubled with the stone.

essence or occult property of simples, of which we can have no other instruction than use; for quintessence is no other than a quality of which we cannot, by our reason, find out the cause. In such proofs, those they pretend to have acquired by the inspiration of some demon, I am content to receive (for I meddle not with miracles); as also the proofs which are drawn from things that, upon some other account, often fall into use amongst us; as if in wool, wherewith we are wont to clothe ourselves, there have accidentally some occult desiccative property been found out of curing kibed heels, or as if in the radish we eat for food there have been found out some aperitive operation. Galen reports that a man happened to be cured of a leprosy by drinking wine out of a vessel into which a viper had crept by chance. In this example we find the means and a very likely guide and conduct to this experience, as we also do in those the physicians say they have been directed to by the example of some beasts: but in most of their other experiments, wherein they declare themselves to have been conducted by fortune, and to have had no other guide than chance, I find the progress of this information incredible. I take a man looking round about him upon the infinite number of things, plants, animals, and metals, and I do not know where he would begin his trial; and though his first fancy should fix him upon an elk's horn, wherein he must give a very gentle and easy belief, he will yet find himself perplexed in his second operation; there are so many maladies, and so many circumstances laid before him, that before he can arrive at the certainty of the point to which the perfection of his experience should arrive, human sense will be at the end of its lesson; and before he can, amongst this infinity of things, find out what this horn is; amongst so many diseases, what is epilepsy; the many complexions in a melancholic person, the many seasons in winter, the many nations in the French, the many ages in age, the many celestial mutations in the conjunction of Venus and Saturn, and the many parts in man's body, nay, in a finger: being in all this directed neither by argument, conjectures, example, nor divine inspirations, but merely by the sole motion of fortune; it must be by a perfectly artificial, regular, and methodical fortune. And after the cure is performed, how can he assure himself that it was not because the disease was arrived at its period? or an effect of chance? or the operation of something the patient had eaten, drunk, or touched that day? or by virtue of his grandmother's prayers? And, moreover, had this experiment been perfect, how many times was it reiterated, and this long beadroll of fortunes and encounters strung anew from chance, to conclude a certain rule? And when the rule is concluded, by whom, I pray you? Of so many millions, there are but three men who take upon them to record their experiments. And must chance needs just meet one of these? What if another, and a hundred others, have made contrary experiments? We might, perhaps, have some light in this, were all the judgments and arguments of men known to us: but that three witnesses, three doctors, should lord it over all mankind is against all reason: it were fit that human nature should have deputed and culled them out, and that they were declared our controllers by express letters patent.

[1] Margaret de Grammont, widow of Jean de Durfort, Seigneur de Duras, from whose brother, James, is descended the family of the Dukes of Lorges.

To Madame de Duras.[1]

"Madam,—The last time you came to see me you found me at work upon this chapter, and as these trifles may some time or other happen to fall into your ladyship's hands, I would have them bear witness of the great honour which the author will feel in any favour you shall please to show them. You will here find the same air and manner you have observed in his conversation. And though I could have borrowed some better and more favourable dress than my own, I would not have done it, for I require nothing more of these writings but to present me to your memory such as I naturally am. The same conditions and faculties your ladyship has been pleased to frequent and receive with much more honour and courtesy than they deserve, I will put together, but without alteration, in one solid body, that may perhaps continue some years, or some days, after I am gone; where you may find them again when you shall please to refresh your memory, without putting you to any greater trouble; neither are they worth it: I desire that you should continue the favour of your friendship to me by the same qualities by which it was acquired. I am not ambitious that any one should love and esteem me more dead than living. The humour of Tiberius[2] is ridiculous, but yet common, who was more solicitous to extend his renown to posterity, than to render himself acceptable to men of his own time. If I was one of those to whom the world could owe commendation, I would acquit the one half to have the other in hand, that their praises might come quick and crowding about me, more thick than long, more full than durable; and let them cease, in God's name, with my knowledge, and when the sweet sound can no longer pierce my ears. It would be an idle humour to go about, now that I am going to forsake the commerce of men, to offer myself to them by a new recommendation. I make no account of the goods I could not employ in the service of my life. And such as I am, I will be it elsewhere than on paper: my art and industry have been ever directed to render me good for something; and

Montaigne preferred present esteem to that which is posthumous.

[2] *Quippe illi nota perinde curæ gratia præsentium, quam in posteros ambitio.* Tacitus, *Annal.* vi. 46.

my studies to teach me to do, and not to write. I have made it my whole business to frame my life; this has been my trade and my work: I am less a writer of books than any thing else. I have coveted understanding for the service of my present and real conveniences, and not to lay up a stock for my posterity. He that has any thing of value in him, let him make it appear in his manners, in his ordinary discourses, in his courtships and his quarrels, in play, in bed, at table, in the management of his affairs, in his domestic economy; those that I see make good books in ill breeches should first have mended their breeches, if they would have been ruled by me. Ask a Spartan whether he had rather be a good orator or a good soldier? And if I was asked the same question, I would rather choose to be a good cook, had I not one already to serve me. Good God! madam, how should I hate the reputation of being a pretty fellow at writing, and an ass and a sot in every thing else. Yet I had rather be a fool in any thing than to have made so ill a choice wherein to employ my talent. And I am so far from expecting to gain any new reputation by these follies, that I shall think I come off pretty well, if I lose nothing by them of that little I had before; for besides that this mute and dead painting will take from my natural being, it has no resemblance to my better condition, but is much lapsed from my former vigour and cheerfulness, and looks faded and withered. I am towards the bottom of the barrel, which begins to taste of the lees.

"And for the rest, madam, I should not have dared to make so bold with the mysteries of physic, considering the esteem that you and so many others have of it, had I not had encouragement from their own authors. I believe they have only two ancient Latin writers, Pliny and Celsus: if these ever fall into your hands, you will find that they speak much more rudely of their art than I do; I but pinch it, they cut its throat. Pliny,[1] amongst other things, twits them with this, that when they are at the end of the rope, that is, when they have done the utmost of what they are able to do, they have a pretty device to save themselves, of recommending their patients, whom they teased and tormented with drugs and diets to no purpose, some to vows and miracles, and others to hot baths. (Be not angry, madam; he speaks not of the baths in these parts which are under the protection of your house, and are altogether Gramontin). They have, besides, another way of saving their credit, of ridding their hands of us, and securing themselves from the reproaches we might cast in their teeth of our little amendment, when they have had us so long in their hands, that they have not one more invention left wherewith to amuse us; which is, to send us to the better air of some other country. This, madam, is enough; you will give me leave to return to my former discourse, from which I so far digressed, to have a little chat with you."

In what a condition he would be, if ever he put himself into the hands of the physicians.

It was, I think, Pericles, who being asked how he did? "You may judge," says he, "by these," shewing some little amulets he had tied about his neck and arms.[2] By which he would infer that he must needs be very sick when he was reduced to having recourse to such idle and vain fopperies, and to suffering himself to be so furnished. I do not say I may not one day be so much a fool as to commit my life and health to the mercy and government of physicians. I may fall into such frenzy. I cannot answer for my future constancy: but then, if any one ask me how I do? I may also answer as Pericles did, "You may judge by this," shewing my hand laden with six drams of opiate. It will be a very evident sign of a violent sickness; and my judgment will be very much out of order: if once fear and impatience get such an advantage over me, it may very well be concluded that there is a dreadful fever in my mind.

I have taken the pains to plead this cause, which I little enough understand, a little to back and support the natural aversion to drug and the practice of physic, I have derived from my ancestors; to the end it may not be a mere stupid and temerarious aversion, but have a little more form; and also that they who shall see me so obstinate in my resolution against all exhortation and menaces that shall be given me, when my infirmity shall press hardest upon me, may not think 'tis mere obstinacy in me: or any one so ill-natured as to judge it to be any motive of glory; for it would be a strange ambition to seek to gain honour by an action my gardener or my groom can perform as well as I. Certainly I have not a heart so tumorous and windy that I should exchange so solid a pleasure as health for an airy and imaginary pleasure. Glory, even that of the four sons of Aymon, is too dear bought to a man of my humour, if it cost him three swinging fits of the stone. Give me health, in God's name! Such as love physic may also have great and convincing considerations; I do not hate opinions contrary to my own: I am so far from being angry to see a disagreement betwixt mine and other men's judgments, and from rendering myself unfit for the society of men, by being of another sense and party than mine, that on the contrary (the most general way that nature has followed being variety, and more in souls than bodies, forasmuch as they are of a more supple substance, and more susceptible of forms), I find it much more rare to see our humours and designs jump and agree. And there never was in the world two opinions alike, no more than two hairs or two grains: the most universal quality is diversity.

[1] Pliny, xxix. 1.

[2] Plutarch, *in vitâ*.

THE THIRD BOOK.

CHAPTER I.

OF PROFIT AND HONESTY.

No man is free from saying silly things; but the misfortune is when we endeavour to give them an air of importance:

Næ iste magno conatu magnas nugas dixerit.[1]

"The man, in troth, with much ado,
Has proved that one and one make two."

This no way regards me: mine escape me with as much indifference as they are little worth: and so much the better: I would immediately part with them for what they cost me, and neither buy nor sell them but according to their weight; I write as I speak in common conversation; and that this is true, I here give you an example.

To whom ought not perfidy to be hateful, when even Tiberius himself refused it in an affair of the greatest importance to him? Advice was sent him from Germany that, if he thought fit, they would rid him of Arminius by poison:[2] Arminius, the greatest and most powerful enemy the Romans had to deal with, who had destroyed their legions under the conduct of Varus, and was the only obstacle to the enlargement of their dominions in that country. But Tiberius made answer, "That the Romans were used to take vengeance on their enemies by open and honourable means, with their swords in their hands, and not by fraud and deceit." Here utility and policy gave place to honesty. You will tell me that he was an impudent deceiver himself, and spoke contrary to his sentiments: I believe he did: it is no great miracle in men of his profession. But the acknowledgment due to virtue is not the less valid for being found in the mouth of a bad man; inasmuch as truth wrings it from him, and though he will not receive it in his heart, he at least wears it as a useful disguise.

Treachery rejected by Tiberius.

Our outward and inward frame is full of imperfection; but there is nothing useless in nature, not even inutility itself: nothing having slipped into this universe that does not possess some proper place in it. Our being is cemented with sickly qualities; ambition, jealousy, envy, revenge, superstition, and despair, have so natural a possession in us, that the image is discerned in beasts; even that unnatural vice cruelty itself; for, though ever so compassionate, we feel within I know not what tart, sweet, malicious pleasure in seeing others suffer: children themselves feel it:

Suave mari magno, turbantibus æquora ventis,
E terra magnum alterius spectare laborem;[3]

"Tis sweet from land to see a storm at sea,
And others sinking, whilst ourselves are free:"

whoever should divest man of the seeds of these qualities would destroy the fundamental conditions of human life. So in all governments there are necessary offices, which are not only vile, but vicious too: vices have there a place, and help to make up the seam in our piecing, as poisons are useful for the preservation of health. If they become excusable because they are of use to us, and that the common necessity covers their true qualities, we are to resign this part to the most robust and least fearful of the people, who sacrifice their honour and conscience, as others of old sacrificed their lives for the good of their country; we who are weaker take upon us the parts that are both more easy and less hazardous. The public good requires that men should betray, and lie, and murder; but let us leave this commission to those that are more pliable and obedient.

Vices necessary in all governments.

Certes, I have often been vexed to see judges impudently making use of fraud and false hopes of pardon and favour to cozen a poor criminal into a confession of the fact alleged against him. It would become justice, and Plato himself, who countenances this manner of proceeding, to furnish me with other means more worthy of my approbation: this is a malicious justice, and I look upon it as no less violated by itself, than by others. I replied to one, not long since, that I who should hardly be drawn in to betray my prince for any private man, should be very much ashamed to betray any private man for my prince: and I do not only hate being a deceiver myself, but that any one should deceive me or others by my means; I will neither afford matter nor occasion to any such thing.

In the little I have had to negociate betwixt our princes,[4] in the divisions and sub-divisions by which we are at this time torn to pieces, I have been very careful that they should neither be deceived in me, nor deceive others by me. People of that sort of trade are very reserved, and pretend to be the most moderate imaginable, and to chime in as much as possible with the opinion of those with whom they have to do; but, for my part, I shew myself in my true opinion, and in a form as much my own as I can: a novice and raw negociator, I had rather fail in the affair I am about, than be wanting to myself. And yet

Montaigne a very tender conscienced negociator.

[1] Terent. *Heaut.* iii. 5, 8.
[2] Tacitus, *Annal.* ii. 88.
[3] Lucret. ii. 1.

[4] Between the King of Navarre, afterwards Henry IV. of France, and the Duke of Guise, Henry of Lorraine. See De Thou, *de Vitâ Sua.*

I have hitherto had the good luck (for fortune has doubtless the best share in it), that little has passed from hand to hand with less suspicion, or with more favour and secresy. I have a free and open way that easily insinuates itself, and obtains belief with those with whom I am to deal, at the first meeting. Sincerity, and pure truth, in what age soever, find their opportunity and advantage; and besides, the liberty and freedom of a man, who treats without any interest of his own, is never hateful or suspected; and he may very well make use of the answer of Hyperides to the Athenians, who complained of his harsh way of speaking to them: "Gentlemen, do not consider whether or no I am free-spoken, but whether I am so without a bribe, and without any advantage to my own affairs."[1] My freedom of speech has also easily acquitted me from all suspicion of dissembling; my vehemency leaving nothing unsaid, how home and bitter soever (so that I could not have said worse behind their backs), and carrying along with it a manifest shew of simplicity and indifference. I pretend to no other fruit by acting than to act, and add to it no long windings-up, nor proposals; every action plays its own game; win if it can.

As to the rest, I am not biassed by any passion, either of love or hatred towards the great, nor have my will fettered either by particular injury or obligation. I look upon our kings with an affection simply loyal and respectful, neither prompted on, nor restrained by, any private interest, and I love myself for it. Neither does the general or just cause attract me otherwise than with moderation, and without animosity. I am not subject to all-in-all, thorough-going engagements. Anger and hatred are beyond the duty of justice; and are passions only useful to those who do not keep themselves strictly to their duty by simple reason: *Utatur motu animi qui uti ratione non potest.*[2] "He only employs his passion that can make no use of his reason." All lawful and equitable intentions are moderate and equable of themselves; if otherwise, they degenerate into seditious and unlawful: this is it which makes me walk every where with my head erect, my face and heart open. To confess the truth, and I am not afraid to confess it, I should easily, in case of need, light up one candle to St. Michael, and another to his dragon, like the old woman; I will follow the right cause even to the fire; but without the fire if I can. Let Montaigne be overwhelmed in the public ruin if need be; but if there be no need, I should think myself obliged to fortune that saves him; and I will make use of all the length of line my duty allows for his preservation. Was it not Atticus who, being of the just but losing side, preserved himself by his moderation in that universal shipwreck of the world, amongst so many changes and revolutions?[3] In private men, such as he, it is much easier; and, in such sort of business, I find a man may justly be ambitious not to be meddling.

That it is neither honourable nor honest to stand neuter in a civil war.

For a man, indeed, to be wavering and irresolute, to keep his affections unmoved and without inclination, in the troubles of his country, and a public division, I neither think handsome nor honest:— *Ea non media, sed nulla via est, velut eventum expectantium, quo fortunæ consilia sua applicent.*[4] "That is not a middle way, but no way, to expect events and refer their resolutions to fortune." This may be allowed in our neighbours' affairs; and Gelo, tyrant of Syracuse, suspended his inclination in this way, betwixt the Greeks and barbarians, keeping an ambassador residing with presents at Delphos, to lie and watch to see which way fortune would incline, and then take immediate opportunity to fall in with the victors.[5] It would be a kind of treason to proceed after this manner in our own domestic affairs, wherein we must of necessity be of the one side or the other; though I hold it more excusable for a man to sit still, when he has no office or command to call him out to action, except in foreign expeditions; to which, however, according to our laws, no man is pressed against his will: and yet I don't excuse myself upon these terms. Even those who wholly engage themselves in such a war may behave themselves with so much moderation and temper that the storm may fly over their heads without doing them any harm. Had we not reason to expect such an issue in the person of the Sieur de Morvilliers, late Bishop of Orleans?[6] And I know several who, though they behave themselves with the greatest courage and vigour in the present war, whose manners are yet so gentle, obliging, and just, that they will certainly stand firm, whatever event heaven is preparing for us. I am of opinion that it properly belongs to kings only to quarrel with kings; and laugh at those bully-rooks that, out of wantonness of courage, put themselves forward in so disproportioned disputes: for a man has never the more particular quarrel with a prince for marching openly and boldly against him, for his own honour and according to his duty: if the latter does not love such a person he does better, he has an esteem for him; and the cause of defending the laws, and the ancient government of a kingdom, has this always especially annexed to it, that even those who, for their

[1] Plutarch, *On the Difference between a Flatterer and a Friend.*
[2] Cicero, *Tusc. Quæs.* iv. 25.
[3] Nepos, *in vitâ.*
[4] Livy, xxxii. 21. The words in the text are somewhat different.
[5] Herod. vii. 163.
[6] Jean de Morvilliers, Bishop of Orleans and Keeper of the Seals of France, born at Blois in 1506, died at Tours in 1577. He took an active part in the treaty of Cambray and the Council of Trent. He was a warm friend of the Guise, or Anti-reform party, but was never guilty of persecution.

own private interest, invade them, excuse, if they do not honour the defenders.

Vices disguised under the name of virtues.

But we ought not, as the fashion is at present, to honour with the name of duty, that peevishness and inward discontent which spring from private interest and passion; nor call treacherous and malicious conduct courage. People give the name of zeal to their propensity to mischief and violence, though it is not the cause, but their interest, that inflames them; they kindle and begin a war, not because it is just, but because it is war.

Nothing hinders a man from behaving himself discreetly, without any breach of his loyalty, amongst the adverse party; carry yourself then, if not with the same equal affection (for that is capable of different measures), at least with an affection moderate, well tempered, and such as shall not so engage you to one party that it may claim all you are able to do for it, and content yourself also with a moderate proportion of their favour, and swim in troubled waters, without fishing in them.

The other way of offering a man's self, and the utmost service he is able to do, both to one party and the other, has yet in it less of prudence than conscience. Does not he to whom you betray another, by whom you were as welcomed as by himself, know that you will at another time do as much for him? He holds you for a villain; and in the mean time hears what you will say, gathers intelligence from you, and works his own ends out of your disloyalty; for double-dealing men are useful in bringing in, but we must have a care they carry out as little as possible.

I say nothing to one party which I may not upon occasion say to the other, with perhaps a little alteration of accent; and report nothing but things either indifferent or known, or what is of common consequence. I cannot suffer myself, for any consideration, to tell them a lie. What is entrusted to my secrecy I religiously conceal; but I take as few trusts of that nature upon me as I can; the secrets of princes are a troublesome burden to such as are not interested in them. I very willingly capitulate that they trust me with little, but that they confidently rely upon what I tell them. I have ever known more than I desired. One open way of speaking opens another open way of speaking, and draws out discoveries, like wine and love. Philippides, in my opinion, answered King Lysimachus very discreetly, who asking him what part of his estate he should bestow upon him,—"What you will," said he, "provided it be none of your secrets."[1] I see every one mutters, and is displeased, if the bottom of the affair be concealed from him wherein he is employed, or that there be any reservation in the case; for my part, I am content to know no more of the business than what they desire I should employ myself in, nor desire that my knowledge should exceed or constrain my word. If I must serve for an instrument of deceit, let it be at least with a safe conscience; I would not be reputed a servant so affectionate or so loyal, as to be fit to betray any one; he who is unfaithful to himself is excusably so to his master. But there are princes who do not accept men by halves, and despise limited and conditional services. I cannot help it; I truly tell them how far I can go; for a slave I would not be, but upon very good reason; and not even then. And they also are to blame to require from a freeman the same subjection and obligation to their service, that they do from one whom they have made and bought, or whose fortune particularly and expressly depends upon theirs. The laws have delivered me from a great anxiety; they have chosen a master for me; all other superiority and obligation ought to be relative to that, and cut off from everything else. Yet is not this to say that, if my affection should otherwise sway and incline me, my hand would presently obey it: the will and desire are a law to themselves; but actions must receive commission from the public appointment.

All this proceeding of mine is a little dissonant from the ordinary forms; it would produce no great effects, nor be of any long duration; innocence itself could not, in this age of ours, either negociate without dissimulation, or traffic without lying; and public employments are by no means to my palate; what my profession requires I perform after the most private manner that I can. Being young, I was engaged up to the ears in business, and it succeeded well; but I disengaged myself as soon as I could. I have often since avoided meddling in it, seldom accepted, and never asked it; keeping my back still turned to ambition, but, if not like rowers, who advance backward, yet so nevertheless that I am less obliged to my resolution than to my good fortune, that I was not wholly embarked in it. For there are ways, less displeasing to my taste, and more suitable to my ability, by which, if she had formerly called me to the public service, and my own advancement towards the world's opinion, I know I should, in spite of all my own arguments to the contrary, have pursued them. Such as commonly say, in opposition to what I profess, that what I call freedom, simplicity, and plainness, in my manners, is art and subtlety, and rather prudence than goodness, industry than nature, good sense than good luck, do me more honour than disgrace; but assuredly they make my subtlety too subtle; and whoever has followed me close, and pryed narrowly into me, I will give him the victory if he does not confess that there is no rule in their school that could answer to this natural motion, and maintain an appearance of liberty and licence so equal and inflexible, through so many various and crooked paths, and through which all their wit and

[1] Plutarch, *on Curiosity*.

endeavours could never have led them. The way of truth is one, and simple; that of particular profit, and the commodity of affairs with which a man is entrusted, is double, unequal, and casual. I have seen these counterfeit and artificial liberties practised, but for the most part without success. They relish of Æsop's ass, who, in emulation of the dog, sportively clapped his two fore-feet upon his master's shoulders; but as many caresses as the dog had for such an expression of kindness, twice so many blows with a cudgel had the poor ass for his compliment: *Id maximè quemque decet quod est cujusque suum maximè.*[1] "That best becomes every man that he is best at." I will not deprive deceit of its due; that would be to understand the world but very ill; I know it has often been of great use, and that it maintains and supplies the greatest part of men's affairs. There are vices that are lawful, as there are many actions either good, or at least excusable, that are not lawful in themselves.

Universal justice much more perfect than particular and national justice.

That justice which in itself is natural and universal, is otherwise and more nobly ordered than that other justice, which is peculiar, national, and wrested to the ends of governments: *Veri juris germanæque justitiæ solidam et expressam effigiem nullam tenemus, umbra et imaginibus utimur*;[2] "We retain no solid and express effigies of true right and justice; we have only the shadow and notion of it;" insomuch that the sage Dandamis,[3] hearing the lives of Socrates, Pythagoras, and Diogenes cited, judged them to be great men every way, excepting that they were too much subjected to the reverence of the laws; which, to second and authorise, true virtue must abate very much of its original vigour; and many vicious actions are introduced, not only by their permission, but advice: *Ex senatusconsultis plebisque scitis scelera exercentur.*[4] "Vicious actions are committed by the consent of the magistrates and the common laws." I follow the common phrase that distinguishes betwixt profitable and honest things; so as to call some natural actions that are not only profitable and necessary, dishonest and foul.

But let us proceed in our examples of treachery. Two pretenders to the kingdom of Thrace[5] were fallen into dispute about their title; the emperor[6] hindered them from proceeding to blows; but one of them, under colour of bringing things to a friendly issue by an interview, having invited his competitor to an entertainment in his own house, took and killed him. Justice required that the Romans should have satisfaction for this offence; but there was a difficulty in obtaining it by ordinary ways. What, therefore, they could not do by due forms of law without a war, and without danger, they resolved to do by treachery; what they could not honestly do, they did profitably; for which end one Pomponius Flaccus was found to be a fit instrument. This man, by dissembled words and assurances, having drawn the other into his snare, instead of the honour and favour he had promised him, sent him bound hand and foot to Rome. Here one traitor betrayed another, contrary to common custom; for they are full of mistrust, and 'tis hard to overreach them in their own art: witness the sad experience we have lately had.[7]

Let who will be Pomponius Flaccus, and there are enough that would be; for my part, both my word and my faith are, like all the rest, parts of this common body; their best effect is the public service; this I take for presupposed. But as, should one command me to take charge of the palace and the records there, I should make answer that I understood it not; or the command of a conductor of pioneers, I would say that I was called to a more honourable employment; so, likewise, he that would employ me to lie, betray, and forswear myself, though not to assassinate, or to poison, for some notable service, I should say, "If I have robbed or stolen any thing from any man, send me rather to the galleys." For it is lawful for a man of honour to say, as the Lacedæmonians did, having been defeated by Antipater when just upon the point of concluding an agreement: "You may impose as heavy and ruinous taxes upon us as you please; but to command us to do shameful and dishonest things, you will lose your time, for it is to no purpose."[8] Every one ought to take the same oath to himself that the kings of Egypt made their judges solemnly swear, "That they would not do any thing contrary to their consciences, though ever so much commanded to it by the kings themselves."[9] In such commissions there is an evident mark of ignominy and condemnation, and he who gives it does at the same time accuse you; and gives it, if you understand it right, for a burden and a punishment. As much as the public affairs are bettered by your exploit, so much are your own the worse; and the better you behave yourself in it, 'tis so much the worse for yourself; and it will be no new thing, nor perhaps without some colour of justice, if the same person ruin you who set you at work.

If treachery can be in any case excusable, it must be only so when it is practised to chastise and betray treachery. There are examples

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[1] Cicero, *de Offic.* i. 31.

[2] Id. *ib.* iii. 17.

[3] He was an Indian sage who lived in the time of Alexander. What Montaigne here says of him is reported by Plutarch, *Life of Alexander.* In Strabo, xv., this Indian philosopher is called Mandanis.

[4] Seneca, *Ep.* 95.

[5] *Rhescuporis* and *Cotys*; the first, brother of Remetalces, the last king of Thrace; the second, his son.

[6] *Tiberius.* Tacitus, *Annal.* ii. 65.

[7] Montaigne alludes to the feigned reconciliation, in 1588, between Catherine de Medicis and Henry, duke of Guise, who were deceiving each the other.

[8] Plutarch, *How to distinguish a Flatterer.*

[9] Id. *Apothegms of the Kings.*

Wherein treachery is alone to be excused.

enough of treacheries, not only rejected, but chastised and punished by those in favour of whom they were undertaken. Who is ignorant of Fabricius's sentence against Pyrrhus's physician?

Instances of treachery punished by those who instigated it.

But this we also find recorded, that some persons have commanded a thing, who afterwards have severely revenged the execution of it upon him they had employed, rejecting the reputation of so unbridled an authority, and disowning so abandoned and so base an obedience. Jaropelus, duke of Russia, tampered with a gentleman of Hungary to betray Boleslaus, king of Poland, either by killing him, or by giving the Russians opportunity to do him some notable mischief. This gallant goes presently in hand with it; was more assiduous in the service of that king than before; so that he obtained the honour to be of his council, and one of the chiefest in his trust. With these advantages, and taking an opportunity of his master's absence, he betrayed Visilicia,[1] a great and rich city, to the Russians, which was entirely sacked and burnt, and not only all the inhabitants of both sexes, young and old, put to the sword, but moreover a great number of neighbouring gentry that he had drawn thither to that wicked end. Jaropelus's revenge being thus satisfied, and his anger appeased, which was not however without pretence (for Boleslaus had highly offended him, and after the same manner), and sated with the effect of this treachery, coming to consider the foul and naked ugliness of it, and to regard it with a sound judgment and clear from passion, looked upon what had been done with so much horror and remorse, that he caused the eyes to be bored out, and the tongue and privy parts to be cut off, of him that had performed it.[2]

Antigonus persuaded the Argyraspidian soldiers to betray Eumenes, their general, his adversary, into his hands; but after he had caused him so delivered to be slain, he would himself be the commissioner of the divine justice for the punishment of so detestable a crime, and committed them into the hands of the governor of the province, with express command by all means to destroy, and bring them all to an evil end, so that, of all that great number of men, not so much as one ever returned again into Macedonia.[3] The more effectually he had been served by them, the greater wickedness he looked upon it to be, and the more deserving a severe punishment.

The slave that betrayed the place where his master P. Sulpicius lay concealed, was, according to the promise of Sylla's proscription, manumitted for his pains; but, according to the promise of the public justice, he was, when a freed-man, thrown headlong from the Tarpeian rock.

And our King Clovis,[4] instead of the armour of gold he had promised them, caused three of Canacre's[5] servants to be hanged after they had betrayed their master to him, though he had debauched them to it.

They hanged them with the purse of their reward about their necks: having satisfied their second and special faith, they satisfy the general and first.

Mahomet the Second, being resolved to rid himself of his brother, out of state jealousy, according to the practice of the Ottoman family, employed one of his officers in the execution, who, pouring a quantity of water too fast into him, choked him. This being done, to expiate the murder, he delivered the murderer into the hands of the mother of him he had so caused to be put to death (for they were only brothers by the father's side), who, in his presence, ripped up the murderer's bosom, and with her own hands rifled his breast for his heart, tore it out, and threw it to the dogs. And, even to the vilest dispositions, it is the sweetest thing imaginable, having once got their ends in a vicious action, immediately to tag to it, with all imaginable security, some shew of virtue and justice, by way of compensation and conscientious remorse. To this may be added, that they look upon the ministers of such horrid crimes as people that reproach them with them; and think by their deaths to raze out the memory and testimony of such proceedings.

Or if perhaps you are rewarded, not to frustrate the public necessity of that extreme and desperate remedy, he that does it cannot, for all that, if he be not such himself, but look upon you as a cursed and execrable man; and conclude you a greater traitor than he does him against whom you are so; for he tries the vice of your disposition by your own hands, where he cannot possibly be deceived, you having no object of preceding hatred to move you to such an act: but he employs you as condemned malefactors are employed in executions of justice, an office as necessary as discreditable. Besides the baseness of such commissions, there is moreover a prostitution of conscience. As the daughter of Sejanus could not be put to death by the law of Rome,[6] because she was a virgin, she was, *to make it* lawful, first ravished by the hangman, and then strangled; not only his hand, but his soul is slave to the public convenience.

Virgins could not be put to death at Rome.

When Amurath the First, the more grievously to punish his subjects who had taken part with the parricidical rebellion of his son against him, ordained that the nearest kindred should assist in the execution, I find it very noble in

[1] *Visliczа*, a town in the palatinate of Sandomir.
[2] Martin Cromer, *De Rebus Polon.* v.
[3] Plutarch, *Life of Eumenes.*
[4] Val. Max. vi. 5, 7.
[5] Or rather *Cauric*. Gregory of Tours, ii. 41.
[6] Tacitus, *Annal.* v. 9.

some of them to have rather chosen to be unjustly thought guilty of the parricide of another, than to serve justice by a parricide of their own: where I have seen, at the taking of some little fort by assault in my time, some rascals who, to save their own lives, would consent to hang their friends and companions, I have looked upon them to be in a worse condition than those that were hanged. 'Tis said that Witold, prince of Lithuania, introduced a law into his country, that when a criminal was condemned to death, he should execute the sentence on himself; for he thought it strange that a third person, innocent of the fault, should be made guilty of a homicide.[1]

Criminals condemned to execute themselves.

A prince that, by some urgent circumstance, or some impetuous and unforeseen accident that very much concerns his state, is compelled to forfeit his word, or break his faith, or otherwise forced from his ordinary duty, ought to attribute this necessity to a lash of the divine rod: vice it is not, for he has given up his own reason to a more universal and more powerful reason; but, certainly, 'tis a misfortune; so that if any one should ask me what remedy? "None," say I, "if he were really racked betwixt these two extremes; *sed videat, ne quæratur latebra perjurio*;[2] 'Though let him guard against seeking a pretext for perjury;' he must do it; but if he did it without regret, if it did not grieve him to do it, 'tis a sign his conscience is in a scurvy condition." If there be a person to be found of so tender a conscience as to think no cure whatever worth so important a remedy, I shall like him never the worse: he could not more excusably, or more decently, perish. We cannot do all we would: so that we must often, as the last anchorage, commit the protection of our vessel to the conduct of heaven. To what more just necessity does he reserve himself? What is less possible for him to do, than what he cannot do but at the expense of his faith and honour? things that perhaps ought to be dearer to him than his own safety, or even the safety of his people. Though he should, with folded arms, only call God to his assistance, may he not hope that the divine bounty will not refuse the favour of an extraordinary arm to just and pure hands? These are dangerous examples, rare and sickly exceptions to our natural rules; we must yield to them, but with great moderation and circumspection: no private advantage is of such importance that we should, upon that account, strain our consciences to such a degree; the public may, when very manifest, and of very great concern.

Timoleon made an expiation for his strange exploit, by the tears he shed, calling to mind that it was with a fraternal hand that he had slain the tyrant; and it justly pricked his conscience that he had been necessitated to purchase the public utility at so great a price as the violation of his own goodness. Even the Senate itself, by his means delivered from slavery, durst not positively determine of so high a fact, and divided into two so important and contrary aspects; but the Syracusans having opportunely, at the same time,[3] sent to the Corinthians to solicit their protection, and to require of them a captain fit to re-establish their city in its former dignity, and to cleanse Sicily of several little tyrants by whom it was oppressed, they deputed Timoleon for that service, with this evasive declaration: "That, according as he should behave himself, well or ill in his employment, their sentence should incline either to favour the deliverer of his country, or to disfavour the murderer of his brother." This fantastic conclusion carries along with it some excuse, by reason of the danger of the example, and the importance of so strange an action; and they did well to discharge their own judgment of it, and refer it to other considerations and contingencies. But Timoleon's conduct and behaviour in this expedition soon made his cause more clear; so worthily and virtuously did he carry himself upon all occasions. And the good fortune that accompanied him in the difficulties he had to overcome in this noble employment seemed to be strewed in his way by the gods, as favourably conspiring for his justification.

This man's aim was excusable, if any can be so: but the profit of the augmentation of the public revenue, that served the Roman Senate for a pretence to the foul conclusion I am going to relate, is not sufficient to warrant any such injustice.

Certain cities had for money redeemed themselves and their liberties out of the hands of L. Sylla, and that, too, by order and consent of the Senate; but the affair coming again in question, the Senate condemned them to be taxable as they were before, and that the money they had disbursed for their redemption should be confiscated.[4] Civil wars often produce such vile examples, that we punish private men for confiding in us when we were public ministers; and the self-same magistrate makes another man pay the penalty of his change, that cannot help it; the pedagogue whips his scholar for his docility; and the guide beats the blind man that he leads: a horrid image of justice.

There are rules in philosophy that are both false and weak. The example that is proposed to us, preferring private utility before faith given, receives not weight enough by the circumstance they put to it. Robbers have seized you, and after having made you swear to pay them a certain sum of money, dismiss you. 'Tis not well to say that

Private utility not to be preferred before faith given.

[1] Cromer, *de Reb. Pol.* xvi.
[2] Cicero, *de Off.* iii. 29.
[3] Diod. Sicul. xvi. Plutarch, on the other hand, says (*Life of Timoleon*) it was twenty years afterwards. Nepos does not clear up the point at all.
[4] Cicero, *de Offic.* iii. 22.

an honest man may be quit from his oath without payment, being out of their hands. 'Tis no such thing: what fear has once made me willing to do, I am bound to do when I am no more in fear; and though that fear only prevailed with my tongue, without forcing my will, yet am I bound to keep my word. For my part, when my tongue has inconsiderately said something that I did not think, I have made a conscience of not disowning it. Otherwise, by degrees we shall abolish all the right another pretends to from our promise and word: *Quasi vero forti viro vis possit adhiberi.*[1] "As though a man truly valiant could be compelled." 'Tis only lawful, upon the account of private interest, to excuse breach of promise, when we have promised something that is unlawful and wicked in itself; for the right of virtue ought to supersede the right of any obligation of ours.

I have formerly placed Epaminondas in the first rank of excellent men, and do not recal it. How far did he stretch the consideration of his own particular duty? who never killed a man that he had overcome; who, though for the inestimable benefit of restoring the liberty of his country, made conscience of killing a tyrant, or his accomplices, without due form of justice;[2] and who concluded him to be a wicked man, how good a citizen soever otherwise, who amongst his enemies spared not his friend and former guest or host in battle? This was a soul of a rich composition: he conjoined goodness and humanity, nay, even the tenderest and most refined in the whole school of philosophy, to the rudest and most violent of all human actions. That great courage, so high, so constant, so obstinate against poverty, pain, and death, was it nature or art that had softened it to so extreme a degree of sweetness and compassion? Terrible in arms, covered with the blood of foes, behold him, on the hotly-contested plain, overwhelming and destroying a nation invincible to all others but to him alone, yet, in the fury of an engagement, turning aside from encountering his host and friend. Truly, he was most fit to command in war who could restrain it, with the curb of a benign nature, in the height and heat of his fury, a fury enflamed and foaming with blood and slaughter. 'Tis almost a miracle to be able to mix any image of justice with such actions; and it was only possible for such a stedfastness of mind as that of Epaminondas to mix with it the sweetness and easiness of the gentlest manner and purest innocence: and whereas one[3] told the Mamertines "that statutes were of no resistance against armed men;" and another[4] told the tribune of the people "that the time of justice and that of war were distinct things;" and a third[5] said "that the noise of arms deafened the voice of the law:" this man in all this rattle was not deaf to that even of civility and courtesy. Did he not borrow from his enemies[6] the custom of sacrificing to the muses when he went to war, that they might, by their sweetness and gaiety, soften martial and unrelenting fury! Let us not fear, by the example of so great a master, to believe that there is something unlawful, even against an enemy; and that the common concern ought not to require all things of all, against private interest: *Manente memoria, etiam in dissidio publicorum fœderum, privati juris;*[7] "The memory of private rights is not extinguished even amongst public dissensions."

> Et nulla potentia vires
> Præstandi, ne quid peccet amicus, habet;[8]
>
> "No power can sanction treachery to a friend;"

and that all things are not lawful to an honest man, for the service of his prince, the laws, or the general quarrel: *Non enim patria præstat omnibus officiis - - - et ipsi conducit pios habere cives in parentes.*[9] "Our country does not absorb all our duties: it is conducive to its own interest to have its citizens duteous and affectionate towards their relations." 'Tis an instruction proper for the time wherein we live; we need not harden our courages with these arms of steel, 'tis enough that our shoulders are inured to them. 'Tis enough to dip our pens in ink, without dipping them in blood: if it be grandeur of courage, and the effect of a singular and uncommon virtue, to contemn friendship, private obligations, a man's word, and relationship, for the common good and obedience to the magistrate, 'tis certainly sufficient to excuse us, that 'tis a grandeur that had no place in the grandeur of Epaminondas's courage.

I abominate those mad exhortations of this other disturbed soul:[10]

> - - - Dum tela micant, non vos pietatis imago
> Ulla, nec adversa conspecti fronte parentes
> Commoveant; vultus gladio turbate verendos.
>
> "When swords are drawn, let no remains of love,
> Friendship, or kindred, your compassion move;
> But boldly wound the venerable face
> Of your own father if oppos'd in place."

Let us deprive wicked, bloody, and treacherous natures of such a pretence of reason. Let us set aside this insane and enormous justice, and stick to more humane imitations. How much can time and example do! In an encounter, in the civil war against Cinna, one of Pompey's soldiers having unawares killed his brother, who was of the opposite party,

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[1] Cicero, *de Offic.* iii. 30.
[2] Plutarch, *On the Dæmon of Socrates.*
[3] *Pompey.* Plutarch *in vitâ.*
[4] *Cæsar.* Id. *in vitâ.*
[5] *Marius.* Id. *in vitâ.*
[6] *The Lacedæmonians.*
[7] Livy, xxv. 18.
[8] Ovid, *De Ponto*, i. 7. 37.
[9] Cicero, *de Off.* iii. 23.
[10] Julius Cæsar, who, when in an open war against his country, with a design to subvert its liberty, cries out, "*Dum tela micant, &c.*" Lucan, vii. 320.

immediately, through shame and sorrow, killed himself:[1] and some years after, in another civil war among the same people, one demanded a reward from his captain for having killed his brother.[2]

The utility of an action does not render it honourable.

A man brings but a very bad proof of the honour and beauty of an action, by pleading the usefulness of it; and such as say that every one is obliged to do it, and that it is honest to do it, if it is useful, draw but a very false conclusion:

Omnia non pariter rerum sunt omnibus apta.[3]

"All things are not alike for all men fit."

Take the most necessary and profitable thing for human society; it is marriage: and yet the counsel of the saints find the contrary much better, excluding therefrom the most venerable profession of men; as we design those horses for stallions of which we make the least account.

CHAPTER II.

OF REPENTANCE.

Others form man; I only report him; and represent a particular one ill made enough; and whom, if I had him to model anew, I should certainly make something very different from what he is: but that's past recalling. Now, though the features of my picture alter and change, 'tis still like. The world eternally turns round, all things therein are incessantly moving; the earth, the rocks of Caucasus, and the pyramids of Egypt, both by the public motion and their own; even constancy itself is no other but a slower and a more languishing motion. I cannot fix my object, 'tis always tottering and reeling by a natural drunkenness: I take it as it is at the instant I consider it: I do not paint its being, I paint its passage; not a passage from one age to another, or, as the people say, from seven to seven years, but from day to day, from minute to minute: I must accommodate my history to the hour; I may presently change, not only by fortune, but also by intention. 'Tis an observation of various and changeable accidents, and irresolute imaginations, and, as it falls out, sometimes contrary. Whether it be that I am then another myself, or that I take subjects by other circumstances and considerations, so it is that I may perhaps contradict truth; but, as Demades[4] said, never myself. Could my soul once take footing, I would not essay, but resolve; but it is always learning and making trial.

The world subject to continual changes.

I propose a life mean, and without lustre, but 'tis all one; all moral philosophy is applied as well to a private life as to one of the greatest employment. Every man carries the entire form of human condition. Authors have hitherto communicated themselves to the people by some particular and foreign mark; I, the first of any, by my universal being; as Michael de Montaigne, not as a grammarian, a poet, or a lawyer. If the world find fault that I speak too much of myself, I find fault that they do not so much as think of themselves. But why, being so private in my way of life, should I seek to make myself publicly known? And why should I introduce into the world, where art and mode have so much credit and authority, crude and simple effects of nature, and of a weak nature to boot? Is it not to build a wall without stone or brick, or some such thing, to write books without learning? The fancies of music are carried on by art, mine by chance. I have this, at least, according to rule, that never any man treated of a subject he better understood and knew, than I what I have undertaken, in which I am the most understanding man alive. Secondly, that never any man penetrated farther into his matter, nor better and more distinctly sifted the parts and consequences of it, nor ever more exactly and fully arrived at the end he proposed to himself. To finish it, I need bring nothing but fidelity to the work; and that is there the most pure and sincere that is anywhere to be found. I speak truth, not so much as I would, but as much as I dare, and I dare a little the more as I grow older; for it would seem that custom allows to age more liberty of prating, and more indiscretion of talking of a man's self. That cannot fall out here which I often see elsewhere, that the work and the artificer contradict one another: has a man of so sober conversation written so foolish a treatise? or do so learned writings proceed from a man of so weak conversation? He who talks in an ordinary and writes in an otherwise than ordinary way, 'tis to say that his capacity is borrowed, and not his own. A learned man is not learned in all things; but a sufficient man is sufficient throughout, even to ignorance itself: here my book and I go hand and hand together. Elsewhere men may recommend or condemn a work without involving the workman; here they cannot: who touches the one, attacks the other. He that shall judge it without knowing *him*, will more wrong himself than me; who does know him, will give me all the satisfaction I desire. I shall be happy beyond my desert, if I can obtain only thus much from the public approbation, as to make men of understanding perceive that I was capable of making my

Why and in what manner Montaigne undertakes to speak of himself in this work.

[1] Tacitus, *Hist.* iii. 51.

[2] Id. *ib.*

[3] Propert. iii. 9. 7.

[4] Demades, however (Plutarch, *Life of Demosthenes*), says this, not of truth, but of the interest of the commonwealth.

advantage of knowledge, had I had it, and that I deserved to be assisted by a better memory.

Be pleased here to excuse what I often repeat, that I very seldom repent, and that my conscience is satisfied with itself, not like the conscience of an angel, or that of a horse, but like the conscience of a man; always adding this clause, not one of ceremony, but a true and real submissive one: "That I speak, enquiring and ignorant, purely and simply referring myself to the common and accepted beliefs for the resolution." I do not teach, I only repeat.

The sorrow which attends vice.

There is no vice that is really such which does not offend, and which a sound judgment does not accuse; for there is in it so manifest a deformity and inconvenience that perhaps they are in the right who say that it is chiefly begot by stupidity and ignorance; so hard it is to imagine that a man can know without abhorring it. Malice sucks up the greatest part of her own venom, and poisons herself.[1] Vice leaves, like an ulcer in the flesh, repentance in the soul, which is always scratching and lacerating itself; for reason effaces all other griefs and sorrows, but it begets that of repentance, which is so much the more grievous by reason it springs within, as the cold and heat of fevers are more sharp than those that only strike upon the outward skin. I hold for vices (but every one according to its proportion) not only those which reason and nature condemn, but those also which the opinion of men, though false and erroneous, has made such, if authorized by law and custom.

The satisfaction that is connected with a good conscience.

There is likewise no virtue which does not rejoice a well-descended nature; there is a kind of I know not what congratulation in well-doing that gives us an inward satisfaction, and a certain generous exaltation that accompanies a good conscience; a soul daringly vicious may perhaps arm itself with security; but it cannot supply itself with this complacency and satisfaction. It is no small satisfaction to a man to see himself preserved from the contagion of so depraved an age, and to say to himself, "Whoever could penetrate into my soul would not there find me guilty either of the affliction or the ruin of any one; or of revenge, or envy, or any offence against the public laws, or of innovation, or trouble, or failure of my word; and though the libertinage of the time permits and teaches it to every one, yet have I not plundered any Frenchman's goods, or taken his money, and have lived in war as well as in peace, upon what is my own; neither have I set any man to work without paying him his hire." These testimonies of a good conscience please, and this natural rejoicing is very beneficial to us, and the only reward that we can never fail of.

To ground the recompense of virtuous actions upon the approbation of others is too uncertain and unsafe a foundation, especially in so corrupt and ignorant an age as this; the good opinion of the vulgar is injurious; upon whom do you rely to show you what is commendable? God defend me from being an honest man, according to the description I daily see every one make in honour of himself: *Quæ fuerant vitia mores sunt.*[2] "What before were vices are now become manners." Some of my friends have sometimes schooled and tutored me with great sincerity and plainness, either of their own accord, or by my entreaty, as an office which in a well-disposed soul, surpasses all other acts of friendship not only in utility, but kindness; I have always received them with the most open arms of courtesy and acknowledgment; but, to say the truth, I have often found so much false measure, both in their reproaches and praises, that I had not done much amiss rather to have erred than to have done well, according to their method. We chiefly, who live private lives, not exposed to any other view than our own, ought to have settled a pattern within ourselves, by which to try our actions; and according to that, sometimes to encourage, and sometimes to correct ourselves. I have my own laws and judicature to judge of myself, and apply myself more to these than any other rules. I do indeed restrain my actions according to others, but judge them not by any other rule than my own. You yourself only know if you are cowardly and cruel, or loyal and devout; others see you not, and only guess at you by uncertain conjectures; they do not so much see your nature as your art; rely not therefore upon their opinions, but stick to your own: *Tuo tibi judicio est utendum - - virtutis et vitiorum grave ipsius conscientiæ pondus est; qua sublata, jacent omnia.*[3] "Thou must spend thy own judgment upon thyself; great is the weight of thy own conscience in the discovery of thy own virtues and vices; that being taken away, all things are lost."

Every man ought to sit in judgment upon himself.

What repentance is.

But the saying that repentance immediately follows sin seems not to have respect to sin in its high estate, which is lodged in us as in its own proper habitation;[4] we may disown and retract the vices that surprise us, and to which we are hurried by passions; but those which, by a long habit, are rooted in a strong and vigorous will, are not subject to contradiction. Repentance is no other than a recanting of the will, and an opposition to our fancies, which lead us which way they please. It makes

[1] Seneca, *Ep.* 81.

[2] Id. *ib.* 59.

[3] Cicero, *Tusc. Quæs.* i. 25.

[4] Id. *de Nat. Deor.* iii. 35.

this person disown his former virtue and continence:

> Quæ mens est hodie, cur eadem non puero fuit?
> Vel cur his animis incolumes non redeunt genæ?[1]
>
> "Why, when a boy, was not my mind,
> As now it is, to love inclin'd?
> Or why does not youth's rosy hue
> Return, my beauty to renew?"

The excellence of a private life which is regular.

'Tis an exact and exquisite life that contains itself in due order in private. Every one may take a part in the farce, and assume the character of an honest man, upon the stage; but within, and in his own bosom, where all things are lawful to us, all things concealed,—to be regular, that is the point. The next degree is to be so in one's house, in one's ordinary actions, for which one is accountable to none, and where there is no study or artifice; and therefore Bias, in setting forth the excellent state of a private family, says, "Of which the master is the same within, by his own virtue and temper, that he is abroad, for fear of the laws and report of men;"[2] and it was a worthy saying of Julius Drusus,[3] to the masons who offered him, for three thousand crowns, to put his house in such a posture that his neighbours should no longer have the opportunity of seeing into it as before; "I will give you," said he, "six thousand to make it so that everybody may see into every room."[4] 'Tis honourably recorded of Agesilaus,[5] that he used in his journeys always to take up his lodgings in the temples, to the end that the people, and the gods themselves, might pry into his most private actions. Such a one has been a miracle to the world, in whom neither his wife nor his servant have ever seen any thing so much as remarkable; few men have been admired by their own domestics.[6] No one has been a prophet, not merely in his own house, but in his own country, says the experience of histories. 'Tis the same in things of no consequence; and in this insignificant example the image of a greater is to be seen. In my country of Gascony they look upon it as very droll to see me in print. The farther off I am read from my own home, the better I am esteemed; I am fain to purchase printers in Guienne, elsewhere they purchase me. Upon this it is that they lay their foundation who conceal themselves while present and living, to obtain a name when they are absent and dead.

No man a prophet in his own country.

I had rather have a great deal less in hand, and do not go into the world upon any other account than my present share; when I leave it, I'll cry quit. The people re-conduct Mr. Such-a-one, with public wonder and applause, to his very door; he puts off his pageantry with his robe, and falls so much the lower by how much he was higher exalted. In himself within all is tumult and disorder. And though all should be regular there, it requires a quick and well chosen judgment to perceive it in these low and private actions. To which may be added that order is a heavy melancholic virtue. To enter a breach, conduct an embassy, and govern a people, are actions of eclat; to reprehend, laugh, sell, pay, hate, and genteelly and justly converse with a man's own family and with himself; not to relent, not to give a man's self the lie, is more rare and hard, and less remarkable. By which means retired lives, whatever is said to the contrary, undergo offices of as great or greater difficulty than others do; and private men, says Aristotle,[7] serve virtue more painfully and assiduously than those in authority; we prepare ourselves for eminent occasions, more out of glory than conscience. The shortest way to arrive at glory should be to do that for conscience which we do for glory; and the virtue of Alexander appears to me with much less vigour, in his great theatre, than that of Socrates in his mean and obscure employment. I can easily conceive Socrates in the place of Alexander; but Alexander in that of Socrates I cannot. Who shall ask the one, what he can do, he will answer, "Subdue the world;" who shall put the same question to the other, he will say, "Carry on human life conformably to its natural condition;" a much more general, weighty, and legitimate knowledge than the other.

The virtue of the soul does not consist in flying high, but walking orderly; its grandeur does not exercise itself in grandeur, but in mediocrity. As they who judge and try us within make no great account of the lustre of public actions, and see they are only streaks and rays of clear water springing from a slimy and muddy bottom; so likewise they who judge of us by this gallant outward appearance, in like manner conclude of our internal constitution; and cannot couple common faculties, such as their own, with the other faculties that astonish them, and are so far out of their sight. Therefore it is that we give such savage forms to demons; and who does not give Tamerlane great eye-brows, wide nostrils, a dreadful face, and a prodigious

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[1] Horace here represents Ligurinus, who he says, will repent when he comes to be an old man, that he had not made an ill use of his beauty while he had it. Hor. ode iv. 10. 7.

[2] Plutarch, *Banquet of the Wise Men.*

[3] Or rather Marcus Livius Drusus, the famous tribune of the people, who died anno 662 at Rome, after having, by his ambition, fomented a dangerous war in Italy, of which Florus treats, lib. iii. 17. As to what Montaigne says here of Livius Drusus, he took it from Plutarch, *Instructions to those who manage State Affairs*, where this Drusus is called Julius Drusus a tribune of the people. If Montaigne had consulted Paterculus on this article he might have perceived this small mistake of Plutarch.

[4] It is Plutarch that makes him speak thus; but, according to Paterculus, Drusus being about to build a house, and having an offer made him by the architect to contrive it after such a model that none of his neighbours might look into it, Drusus said, "If you know how, make me such a house rather, that what I do in it may be seen by every body."

[5] Plutarch, *Life of Agesilaus.*

[6] "No man is a hero to his valet-de-chambre," said Marshal Catinat.

[7] *Ethics*, x. 7.

stature, according to the imagination he has conceived in us by the report of his name? Had any one formerly brought me to Erasmus, I should hardly have believed but that all was adage and apophthegm he spoke to his man or his hostess. We much more aptly imagine an artisan upon his close-stool, or upon his wife, than a great president, venerable by his port and sufficiency: we fancy that they will not abase themselves so much from their high tribunals as to live. As vicious souls are often incited by some strange impulse to do well, so are virtuous souls to do ill; they are therefore to be judged by their settled state, when they are at home, if ever they be so, or at least when they are most near repose, and in their native station.

Natural inclinations fortified by education, but not changed and extirpated.

Natural inclinations are much assisted and fortified by education, but they seldom alter and overcome their institution: a thousand natures in my time have escaped towards virtue or vice, through a quite contrary discipline:

> Sic ubi desuetæ silvis in carcere clausæ
> Mansuevere feræ, et vultus posuere minaces,
> Atque hominem didicere pati, si torrida parvus
> Venit in ora cruor, redeunt rabiesque furorque,
> Admoniteque tument gustato sanguine fauces;
> Fervet, et a trepido vix abstinet ira magistro:[1]
>
> "So beasts of prey, imprison'd in a cage,
> Grow tame, abandoning their native rage
> And threat'ning looks, and do themselves inure
> The government of mankind to endure.
> But if again a little blood they taste,
> Their savage fury seizes them in haste;
> They thirst for more, grow fierce, and wildly stare,
> As if their trembling keepers they would tear:"

these original qualities are not to be rooted out, though they may be covered and concealed. The Latin tongue is, as it were, natural to me; I understand it better than French, but I have not used to speak it, nor hardly to write it, these forty years; and yet, upon an extreme and sudden emotion, which I have fallen into twice or thrice in my life, and once on seeing my father in perfect health, fall upon me in a swoon, I have always uttered my first outcries and ejaculations in Latin: nature starting up and forcibly expressing itself, in spite of so long a discontinuation; and this example is said of many others.

The reformations of mankind only relate to externals.

They who in my time have attempted to correct the manners of the world by new opinions, have indeed reformed seeming vices, but the real and essential vices they leave as they were, if they do not augment them: and augmentation is therein to be feared; we defer all other well-doing of less cost and greater merit, upon the account of these external and arbitrary reforms, and thereby expiate at an easy rate for the other natural, con-substantial, and intestine vices. Look a little into our experience: there is no man, if he listens to himself, who does not in himself discover a particular and governing form of his own, that justles his education, and wrestles with the tempest of passions that are contrary to him. For my part, I seldom find myself agitated with surprises; I almost always find myself in my place, as heavy and unwieldy bodies do: if I am not at home, I am always near at hand. My debauchs do not transport me far, there is nothing strange or extreme in the case: and yet I have sound and vigorous raptures and delights.

The repentance of men commonly very corrupt.

The true condemnation, and which touches the common practice of men, is, that their very retreat from vice is full of filth and corruption; the idea of their reformation blotted; their repentance sick and faulty, very near as much as their sin. Some, either from having been linked to vice by a natural propensity, or long practice, cannot see the deformity of it: others (of which constitution I am) do indeed weigh vice, but they counter-balance it with the pleasure or some other reason, and suffer and lend themselves to it for a certain price, but viciously and basely still. Yet there might perhaps be imagined so vast a disproportion of measure, where, with justice, the pleasure might excuse the sin, as we say of profit; not only if accidental, and out of sin, as in thefts; but in the very exercise of it; as in the enjoyment of women, wherein the temptation is violent, and, 'tis said, not to be overcome. Being the other day at an estate in Armagnac, belonging to a kinsman of mine, I there saw a country fellow, that was by every one nicknamed "The Thief," who thus related the story of his own life: that being born a beggar, and finding that he should not be able to get his living by the labour of his hands, he resolved to turn thief; and by his strength of body had exercised this trade all the time of his youth in great security; for he got in his harvest or vintage upon other men's grounds, but a great way off, and in so great quantities, that it was not to be imagined one man could have carried away so much in one night upon his shoulders; and, moreover, was so careful equally to divide and distribute the mischief he did, that the loss was of less importance to each individual. He is now grown old and rich, for a man of his condition, thanks be to his trade, which he openly confesses to every one. And to make his peace with God, he says he is daily, by good offices, making satisfaction to the successors of those he robbed; and if he do not finish (for to do it all at once he is not able), he will then leave it in charge to his heirs to perform the rest, proportionably to the wrong he himself only knows he has done to every one. By this description, whether true or false, this man looks upon theft as a dishonest action, and hates it, but less than poverty; he repents simply, but for as much as is thus recompensed, he repents not. This is not that habit that

[1] Lucan, iv. 237.

incorporates us into vice, and conforms even our understanding itself to it; nor is it that impetuous whirlwind that, by sudden gusts, troubles and blinds our souls, and for the time precipitates us, judgment and all, into the power of vice.

Montaigne's judgment was the common guide of his actions.

What I do I do thoroughly, by custom, and proceed all of a piece; I have seldom any movement that steals away, or, hides itself from my reason, and that is not conducted by the consent of all my faculties, without division or intestine sedition; my judgment, therefore, has either all the blame or all the praise of it; and the blame it once has it ever keeps; for almost from its birth it has always had the same inclination, the same course, and the same force; and as to universal opinions, I fixed myself, from my childhood, in the place where I resolved to stick. There are some sins that are impetuous, prompt, and sudden; let us set them aside; but in these other sins so often repeated, deliberated, and contrived, whether sins of complexion or sins of profession and vocation, I cannot conceive that they can have so long been settled in the same resolution, unless the reason and conscience of him who has them be constant to have them so, and the repentance he boasts to be inspired with on a sudden is very hard for me to imagine. I follow not the opinion of the Pythagorean sect, "that men take up a new soul when they repair to the images of the gods, to receive oracles," unless they mean that it is new, and lent for the time, our own showing so small signs of purification and cleanness, fit for such an office.

They act quite contrary to the precepts of the stoics who strictly command us to correct the imperfections which we know ourselves guilty of, but forbid us to alter the repose of our souls: these make us believe that they have great grief and remorse within, but of amendment, correction, or interruption, they make nothing appear. It cannot certainly be a perfect cure, if the evil humours are not wholly discharged; if repentance were heavier in the scale, it would weigh down sin. I find no quality so easy for a man to counterfeit as devotion, though his life and manners are not conformable to it: the essence of it is abstruse and occult, but the appearances easy and showy.

Devotion easy to counterfeit.

For my own part, I may desire in general to be other than I am; I may condemn and dislike my whole frame, and beg of God for an entire reformation, and that he will please to pardon my natural infirmity; but methinks I ought not to call this repentance, any more than my not being satisfied that I am not an angel or Cato. My actions are conformable to what I am, and to my condition; I can do no better: and repentance is not properly concerned in things that are not in our power; sorrow is. I imagine an infinite number of natures more elevated and regular than mine; and yet I do not, for all that, improve my faculties; neither my mind nor my arm becomes more vigorous for conceiving that of another to be so. If to imagine and wish a nobler way of acting than that we have should produce a repentance of our own, we must then repent us of our most innocent actions, forasmuch, as we may well suppose that in a more excellent nature they would have been carried on with greater dignity and perfection; and would that ours were so. When I reflect upon the behaviour of my youth, and compare it with that of my old age, I find that I have acquitted myself with order in both, according to my capacity; this is all that my resistance can do. I do not flatter myself; in the same circumstances I should always be the same: it is not a spot, but rather a universal blot, with which I am stained. I know no lukewarm, superficial, ceremonious repentance: it must sting me to the quick, it must pierce into my bowels as deep, and seize me as universally, as God sees into me, before I can call it repentance.

Repentance, whence produced.

As to employment, many good opportunities have escaped me for want of management; and yet my deliberations were sound enough, according to the occurrences presented to me; 'tis their way to choose always the easiest and the safest course. I find that in my former deliberations, I have proceeded with discretion, according to my own rule, and according to the state of the subject proposed, and should do the same for a thousand years to come on the like occasions; I do not consider what it is now, but what it was then, when I deliberated on it: the force of all counsel consists in the time; occasions and things eternally shift and change. I have in my life committed some great and important errors, not for want of good understanding, but for want of good luck. There are secret and not to be foreseen parts in matters we handle, especially in the nature of men; mute conditions, that make no show, unknown sometimes even to the possessors themselves, that spring and start up by accidental occasions: if my prudence could not penetrate into or foresee them, I blame it not; 'tis commissioned no farther than its own limits: if the event be too hard for me, and take the side I have refused, there is no remedy, I do not blame myself, I accuse my fortune, and not my work; this cannot be called repentance.

Phocion, having given the Athenians an advice that was not followed, and the affair nevertheless succeeding contrary to his opinion, some one said to him, "Well, Phocion, art thou content that matters go so well?" "I am very well pleased," replied he, "that this has happened so well; but I do not repent that I counselled the other."[1] When

Counsel is independent of events.

[1] Plutarch, *Apothegms.*

any of my friends address themselves to me for advice, I give it candidly and clearly, without sticking, as almost all other men do, at the hazard of the thing, that it may fall out contrary to my opinion, by which means I may be reproached for my counsel; I am very indifferent as to that, for the fault will be theirs in having consulted me; I could not refuse them my advice.

I, for my own part, can rarely blame any one but myself for my oversights and misfortunes: for, indeed, I seldom consult the advice of another, if not as a mere ceremony, or excepting where I stand in need of information as to matter of fact. But in things wherein I stand in need of nothing but judgment, other men's reasons may serve to fortify my own, but have little power to dissuade me: I hear them all with civility and patience; but, to my knowledge, I never made use of any but my own. With me they are but flies and atoms, that confound and distract my will: I lay no great stress upon my own opinions, but I lay as little upon those of others, and fortune rewards me accordingly. If I receive but little advice, I also give but little. I seldom consult others, and am seldom attended to; and know no concern, either public or private, that has been mended or bettered by my advice. Even they whom fortune had in some sort tied to my direction, have more willingly suffered themselves to be governed by any other counsels than mine. And, as a man who is as jealous of my repose as of my authority, I am better pleased that it should be so: leaving me there, they act according to my profession, which is to settle and wholly contain myself within myself. I take a pleasure in being uninterested in other men's affairs, and disengaged from being their guarantee, and responsible for what they do.

In all affairs that are past, be it how it will, I have very little regret; for this imagination puts me out of my pain, that they ought to fall out so; they are in the great revolution of the world, and in the chain of stoical causes. Your fancy cannot, by wish and imagination, remove one tittle that the great current of things will not reverse, both the past and the future.

As to the rest, I abominate that accidental repentance which old age brings along with it. He[1] who said of old that he was obliged to his age for having weaned him from pleasure, was of an opinion very different from mine; I can never think myself beholden to impotency for any good it can ever do me: *Nec tam aversa unquam videbitur ab opere suo providentia, ut debilitas inter optima inventa sit.*[2] "Nor can providence ever be seen so averse to her own work, that debility should be ranked amongst the best things." Our appetites are rare in old age; a profound satiety seizes us after the act; I see nothing of conscience in this; heaviness and weakness imprint in us a drowsy and rheumatic virtue. We must not suffer ourselves to be so wholly carried away by natural alterations as to suffer them to adulterate our judgment. Youth and pleasure have not formerly so far prevailed upon me that I did not well enough discern the face of vice in pleasure; neither does that distaste, that years have brought me, so far prevail with me now that I cannot discern pleasure in vice; now that I am no more in my flourishing age, I judge as well of these things as if I were. I, who narrowly and strictly examine it, find my reason the very same that it was in my most licentious age, though perhaps a little weaker, and more decayed by being grown old; and I find that the pleasure she refuses me, upon the account of my bodily health, she would no more refuse now, in consideration of the health of my soul, than at any time heretofore. I do not repute her more valiant for being *hors de combat:* my temptations are so broken and mortified that they are not worth her opposition; holding but out my hands I repel them. Should one present her the old concupiscence, I fear she would have less power to resist it than heretofore; I do not discern that reason in herself judges any thing otherwise now than she formerly did, nor that she has acquired any new light: wherefore, if there be convalescence, 'tis from defect. Miserable kind of remedy, to owe a man's health to his disease! 'Tis not our misfortune that can perform this office, but the good fortune of our judgment. I am not to be made to do any thing by persecutions and afflictions, but to curse them; that is for people that are not to be roused but by a whip. My reason is much more active in prosperity, and much more distracted, and harder put to it to digest pains than pleasures; I see best in a clear sky. Health admonishes me more cheerfully, and consequently to a better purpose than sickness. I did all that in me lay to reform and regulate myself from pleasures at all times, when I had health and vigour to enjoy them. I should be troubled and ashamed that the misery and misfortune of my age should be preferred before my good, healthful, sprightly, and vigorous years; and that men should esteem me, not for what I have been, but by that miserable part of myself where I have, as it were, ceased to be.

In my opinion 'tis "the happy living," and not, as Antisthenes said,[3] "the happy dying," in which human felicity consists. I have not made it my business to make a monstrous addition of a philosopher's tail to the head and body of a mere man; nor would I have this wretched remainder give the lie to the pleasant, sound, and long part of my life; I

Wherein human felicity consists.

[1] This was Sophocles; who being asked if he still enjoyed the pleasures of love, made answer—"The gods have done better for me; and glad I am that I have lived to escape from the wild and furious tyranny of love." Cic. *de Senect.* cap. 14.

[2] Quint. *Inst. Orat.* v. 12.

[3] Laertius, *in vitâ.*

will present myself uniformly throughout. Were I to live my life over again, I should live it just as I have done. I neither complain of the past, nor do I fear the future; and, if I am not much deceived, I am the same within that I am without.

'Tis one main obligation I have to fortune, that the course of my bodily state has been carried on according to the natural seasons: I have seen the leaves, the blossoms, and the fruit, and now see the tree withered; happily, however, because naturally. I bear the infirmities I have the better, because they came not till I had reason to expect them; and also because they make me with greater pleasure remember that long felicity of my past life. In like manner, my wisdom perhaps may have been the same in both stages of life; but it was more active, and of a better grace whilst young, flourishing, sprightly, and ingenuous, than when broken, peevish, and uneasy, as it is at present. I renounce, then, these casual and painful reformations. God must touch our hearts; our consciences must amend of themselves, by the force of our reason, and not by the decay of our appetites; pleasure is in itself neither pale nor discoloured, because discerned by dim and decayed eyes.

We ought to love temperance for itself, and in obedience to God who has commanded it, and chastity; but what I am forced to by catarrhs, or owe to the stone, is neither chastity nor temperance. A man cannot boast that he despises and resists pleasure, if he cannot see it, if he knows not what it is, its graces, its force, its most alluring beauties; I know both the one and the other, and may therefore the better say it. But, methinks, our souls in old age are subject to more troublesome maladies and imperfections than in youth; I said the same when young, when I was reproached with the want of a beard; and I say so now, when my grey hairs give me some authority. We call the difficulty of our humours, and the disrelish of present things, wisdom; but, in truth, we do not so much forsake vices as we change them, and, in my opinion, for worse; besides a foolish and feeble pride, an impertinent prating, froward and unsociable humours, superstition, and a ridiculous desire of riches when we have lost the use of them, I find therein more envy, injustice, and malice; age imprints more wrinkles in the mind than it does on the face; and souls are never, or very rarely seen, that, in growing old, do not smell sour and musty. Man moves altogether, both towards his perfection and decay. In observing the wisdom of Socrates, and many circumstances of his condemnation I should dare to believe that he himself, by collusion, in some measure purposely contributed to it; fearing by a longer life, he having then reached his seventieth year, to see his lofty mind and universal knowledge cramped and stupified by old age.[1] What strange metamorphoses do I see age make every day in many of my acquaintances! It is a powerful distemper, which naturally and imperceptibly steals in upon us: and therefore a vast provision of study and great precaution are absolutely necessary to avoid the imperfections it loads us with, or at least to weaken their progress. Notwithstanding all my retrenchments and redoubts, I find age gaining upon me inch by inch; I make as stout a defence as I can, but I am entirely ignorant whither it will drive me at last. At all events, I am satisfied that when I fall, the world may know whence I fell.

What is the wisdom of old men.

CHAPTER III.

OF THREE COMMERCES.

We must not rivet ourselves so close to our humours and complexions; our chiefest sufficiency is to know how to apply ourselves to divers customs. 'Tis to be, but not to live, to keep a man's self tied and bound by necessity to one only course; those are the bravest souls that have in them the most variety, and that are most flexible and pliant. Of which here is an honourable testimony of the elder Cato: *Huic versatile ingenium sic pariter ad omnia fuit, ut natum ad id unum diceres quodcumque ageret.*[2] "This man's parts were so convertible to all uses, that a man would think he was born only for what he was about." Might I have the liberty to dress myself after my own mode, there is no fashion so graceful to which I would be so fixed as not to be able to disengage myself from it; life is an unequal, irregular, and multiform motion. 'Tis not to be a friend to a man's self, much less his own master; 'tis to be his slave, so incessantly to be led by the nose by one's own inclinations, that a man cannot turn aside or wring his neck out of the collar. I speak it now in this part of my life, wherein I find I cannot disengage myself from the importunity of my soul, by reason that it cannot commonly amuse itself but on things wherein it is perplexed, nor employ itself but entirely, and with all its force; the lightest subject that can be offered, it makes infinitely greater, and stretches it to that degree as therein to employ its utmost power; wherefore its idleness is to me a very painful

That our inclinations are not always to be followed.

[1] If this be a conjecture, only founded on Montaigne's sagacity, it does him very great honour; for Xenophon tells us expressly that, in truth, Socrates defended himself with so much haughtiness before his judges, only from a consideration that, at his age, death would be better for him than life. This is the subject of the entire preface to "Defence made by Socrates before his Judges."

[2] Livy, xxxix. 40.

labour, and very prejudicial to my health. Most men's minds require foreign matter to exercise and enliven them; mine rather needs it to quiet and repose itself: *vitia otii negotia discutienda sunt*;[1] "the vices of sloth are to be shaken off by business;" for its chiefest and most painful study is to study itself. Books are to it a sort of employment that debauches it from its study; upon the first thoughts that possess it, it begins to bustle and make trial of its vigour in every way; exercises its power of handling, sometimes making trial of its force, and then fortifying, moderating, and ranging itself in the way of grace and order. It has of its own wherewith to rouse its faculties: nature has given to it, as to all others, matter enough of its own to make advantage of, and subjects proper enough, where it may either invent or judge.

Meditation an important employment.

Meditation is a powerful and full study to such as can effectually employ themselves; I had rather fashion my soul than furnish it. There is no weaker or stronger occupation than that of entertaining a man's own thoughts according as the soul is; the greatest men make it their whole business, *quibus vivere est cogitare*:[2] "to whom to live is to think:" nature has also favoured it with this privilege, that there is nothing we can do so long, nor any action to which we more frequently, and with greater facility, addict ourselves. 'Tis the business of the gods, says Aristotle,[3] whence both their beatitude and ours proceed.

The principal use of reading to me is that, by various objects, it rouses my reason; it employs my judgment, not my memory. Few entertainments then detain me without force or violence; it is true that the beauty and neatness of a work takes as much, or more, with me than the weight and depth of the subject; and forasmuch as I slumber in all other communication, and give but a negligent attention, it often falls out that in such mean and pitiful discourses I either make strange and ridiculous answers, unbecoming a child, or, more indiscreetly and rudely, maintain an obstinate silence. I have a pensive way, that withdraws me into myself, and added to that a stupid and childish ignorance of many very ordinary things; by which two qualities it is come to pass that men may truly report five or six as ridiculous tales of me as of any other whatever.

But to proceed in my subject: this difficult complexion of mine renders me unfit for common matters, and very nice in my conversation with men, whom I must cull and pick out for my purpose. We live and negociate with the people: if their conversation

Montaigne was inattentive to frivolous conversation.

be troublesome to us, if we disdain to apply ourselves to mean and vulgar understandings (and the mean and vulgar are often as regular as those of the finest thread; and all wisdom is folly, that does not accommodate itself to the common ignorance), we must no more intermeddle either with other men's affairs or our own; and all business, both public and private, must be managed apart from such people. The least forced and most natural motions of the soul are the most beautiful; the best employments, those that are least constrained. Great God! how good an office does wisdom perform to those whose desires it limits to their power! That is the most useful knowledge. "According to what a man can," was the sentence which Socrates was so much in love withal,[4] a motto of great substance. We should moderate and adapt our desires to the nearest and easiest to be acquired things. Is it not a foolish humour of mine to separate myself from a thousand to whom my fortune has attached me, and without whom I cannot live, to cleave to one or two that are out of my commerce, or rather to a fantastic desire of a thing I cannot obtain? My soft, indolent manners, enemies of all sourness in conversation, may easily enough have secured me from the envy and animosities of men; I do not say to be beloved, but never any man gave less occasion to be hated; but the coldness of my conversation has reasonably enough deprived me of the goodwill of many, who are to be excused if they interpret it in another and worse sense.

Montaigne passionately fond of exquisite friendships, but not qualified to cultivate common friendships.

I am very capable of contracting and preserving uncommon and exquisite friendships; and the more so, because I greedily seize upon such acquaintance as fit my liking: I throw myself with such violence upon them that I hardly fail to stick, and generally make an impression where I aim, of which I have made often happy proof. In common friendships I am cold and shy; for my motion is not natural if not with full sail: besides, my fortune having trained me up from my youth in, and given me a relish of, one sole and perfect friendship, it has in truth given me a kind of disgust to others, and too much imprinted in my mind that it is a beast of company, as the ancient[5] said, but not of the herd. Besides that, I have a natural difficulty in communicating myself by halves, and with that reserved, and servile, and jealous prudence dictated to us in the conversation of numerous and imperfect friendships: and we are principally enjoined to these in this age of ours, when we cannot talk of the world but either with danger or falsehood.

Yet do I very well discern that he who has

[1] Senec. Ep. 56.
[2] Cicero, Tusc. Quæs. v. 38.
[3] Ethics, x. 8.
[4] Xenophon, *Mem. of Socrates*, i. 2. 3.
[5] Plutarch, *on the Plurality of Friends*.

How useful it is to know how to treat all manner of persons with familiarity.

the conveniences (I mean the essential conveniences) of life for his end, as I have, ought to fly this difficulty and refinement of humour, as much as the plague. I should commend a mind of various stages, that knows both how to extend and to slacken itself; that finds itself at ease in all conditions of fortune; that can discourse with a neighbour about building, hunting, or any little contest betwixt him and another; and that can chat with a carpenter or a gardener with pleasure. I envy those who can make themselves familiar with the meanest of their followers, and converse among their own attendants; and I dislike the advice of Plato,[1] that men should always speak in a magisterial tone to their domestics, whether men or women, without ever being facetious and familiar. For besides my former reason, it is inhuman and unjust, to set so great a value upon this pitiful prerogative of fortune; and the governments, wherein less disparity is permitted betwixt masters and servants, seem to me the most equitable. Others study how to raise and elevate their minds; I, how to humble mine and to bring it low; 'tis only vicious in extension:

Magisterial language to servants reproved.

> Narras et genus Æaci,
> Et pugnata sacro bella sub Ilio:
> Quo Chium pretio cadum
> Mercemur, quis aquam temperet ignibus,
> Quo prœbente domum, et quota,
> Pelignis caream frigoribus, taces.[2]
>
> "And Æacus's glorious race,
> And the fam'd siege of sacred Troy relate.
>
> But when a cheerful fire shall blaze,
> Or how a Chian cask will sell,
> Who treats to-night, or merits praise,
> For tempering th' bath, you spare to tell."

Thus, as the Lacedæmonians' valour stood in need of moderation, and of the sweet and harmonious sound of flutes to soften it in battle, lest it should precipitate itself into temerity and fury, whereas all other nations commonly make use of harsh and shrill sounds, and of loud and impetuous voices, to incite and heat the soldiers' courage to the last degree: so, methinks, that contrary to the usual method, in the practice of our minds, we have for the most part more need of lead than wings; of temperance and composedness than ardour and agitation. But above all things, 'tis, in my opinion, egregiously to play the fool, to put on the gravity of a man of understanding amongst those that know nothing: to speak in print, *favellar in punta di forchetta*. You must descend to those with whom you converse, and sometimes affect ignorance: lay aside strength and subtlety in common conversation; 'tis enough there to preserve order; as to the rest, flag as low as the earth, if they desire it.

The learned often stumble at this stone; they will be always showing off and parading their books. They have in these days so filled the cabinets and the ears of the ladies with them, that if they have lost the substance, they at least retain the words: so that in discourse upon all sorts of subjects, how mean and common soever they speak and write after a new and learned way,

Whether women ought to be learned.

> Hoc sermone pavent, hoc iram, gaudia, curas,
> Hoc cuncta effundant animi secreta; quid ultra?
> Concumbunt docte;[3]
>
> "*All now is Greek*: in Greek their souls they pour,
> In Greek their fears, hopes, joys; what would you more?
> In Greek they clasp their lovers;"

and quote Plato and Aquinas in things which the first they meet could determine as well. The learning that cannot penetrate their souls, hangs still upon the tongue. If the ladies will be persuaded by me, they will content themselves with setting out their proper and natural wealth; they conceal and cover their beauties under others that are none of theirs: 'tis a great folly to put out their own light, to shine by a borrowed one: they are interred and buried under art, *de capsula totæ*.[4] It is because they do not sufficiently know themselves; the world has nothing fairer; 'tis for them to honour the arts, and to paint painting. What need they but to live beloved and honoured? They have and know but too much for that; they need do no more, but rouse and heat a little the faculties they have of their own. When I see them tampering with rhetoric, law, logic, and the like drugs, so improper and unnecessary for their business, I begin to suspect that the men who advise them to such things, do it that they may govern them upon that account: for what other excuse can I contrive? It is enough that they can, without our instruction, govern the graces of their eyes to gaiety, severity, and sweetness, and season a denial either with anger, suspense, or favour, and that they need not another to interpret what we speak for their service: with this knowledge they command the switch, and rule both the teachers and the schools. But if, nevertheless, they think it too much to give place to us in any thing whatever, and will out of curiosity have their share in books, poetry is a diversion proper for them; 'tis a wanton and subtle, a dissembling and prating art, all pleasure and all show, like themselves. They may also extract several advantages from history. In philosophy, out of the moral part of it, they may select such

Poesy allowed to women.

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[1] *On Laws*, vi.

[2] Horace, *Od.* iii. 19. 3.

[3] Juvenal, vi. 189.

[4] This is an expression of Seneca, which he applies to the petits maîtres of his time: "Nosti compliures juvenes barbâ et comâ nitidos de capsulâ totos."—*Epist.* 95. He tells us elsewhere of one of these fops who, being carried by his slaves from the bath in a chair, thought fit to ask them whether or no he was seated? as if it was a thing beneath his honour to know what he did himself without asking.—Seneca, *de Brevit. Vitæ*, cap. 12. I have not yet heard that any of our petits maîtres have come up to this Roman fop.

What kind of philosophy is proper for women.

instructions as will teach them to judge of our humours and conditions, to defend themselves from our treacheries, to regulate the ardour of their own desires, to manage their liberty, lengthen the pleasures of life, and mildly to bear the inconstancy of a servant, the rudeness of a husband, and the assaults of years, wrinkles, and the like. This is the utmost of what I would allow them in the sciences.

The good use of retirement.

There are some particular natures that are private and retired; my natural form is proper for communication, and apt to lay me open; I am all without and in sight, born for society and friendship. The solitude that I love myself, and recommend to others, is chiefly no other than to withdraw my thoughts and affections into myself; to restrain and check, not my steps, but my own cares and desires; resigning all extrinsic solicitude, and mortally avoiding servitude and obligations; and not so much the crowd of men as the crowd of business. Local solitude, to say the truth, rather gives me more room, and sets me more at large: I more willingly throw myself upon affairs of state and the world when I am alone: at the Louvre, and in the bustle of the court, I fold myself within my own skin; the crowd thrusts me upon myself, and I never entertain myself so wantonly, so unrestrainedly, or so particularly, as in places of respect and ceremonious prudence; our follies do not make me laugh, but our wisdom. I am naturally no enemy to a court-life, I have therein passed a good part of my own, and am of a humour to be cheerful in great companies, provided it be by intervals, and at my own time; but this softness of judgment whereof I speak ties me by force to solitude. Even in my own house, in the middle of a numerous family, and a house sufficiently frequented, I see people enough, but rarely such with whom I delight to converse; and I there reserve, both for myself and others, an unusual liberty; there is there no ceremony, no ushering or waiting upon people to their coach, and such other troublesome forms as our courtesy enjoins: *O* servile and tiresome custom! Every one there governs himself according to his own method; let who will speak his thoughts, I sit mute, meditating and shut up in myself, without any offence to my guests.

Character of the men whose familiarity is worth seeking.

The men whose society and familiarity I covet, are those they call honest, sensible men, and the image of these makes me disrelish the rest. It is, if rightly taken, the most uncommon of our forms, yet a form chiefly owing to nature. The end of this commerce is simply privacy, frequentation, and conference, the exercise of souls, without other fruit. In our discourse, all subjects are alike to me; let there be neither weight nor depth, 'tis all one, there is yet grace and pertinency; all there is tinctured with a mature and constant judgment, and mixed with freedom, gaiety, goodness, and friendship. 'Tis not only in talking of the affairs of kings and states, that our minds discover their force and beauty, but every jot as much in private affairs: I understand my men even by their silence and smiles; and better discover them perhaps at table than in the council: Hippomachus[1] said, very well, that he could know the good wrestlers by only seeing them walk in the street. If learning will please to take a share in our talk, it shall not be rejected, not magisterial, imperious, and importunate, as it commonly is, but suffragan and docile itself; we there only seek to amuse ourselves, and to pass away our time agreeably; when we have a mind to be instructed and preached to, we will go seek it in its throne; let it abase itself to us for once, if it so please; for, useful and profitable as it is, I take it that, even in the greatest need, we may do well enough without it, and perform our business though we have not its assistance. A man well born and practised in the conversation of men will, by the strength of his own genius, render himself agreeable to all. Art is nothing but the observation and register of what such noble minds produce.

The conversation also of beautiful and well-bred women is also for me an agreeable commerce: *Nam nos quoque oculos eruditos habemus.*[2] "For we too have eyes that can see." If the soul has not therein so much to enjoy as in the first, the bodily senses, which participate so much the more of this, bring it to a proportion near to, though, in my opinion, not equal to the other. But 'tis a commerce wherein a man must stand a little upon his guard, especially those of an excitable constitution, as I am. I burned myself that way in my youth, and suffered all the torments that poets say are inflicted on those who precipitate themselves into love without order or judgment; it is true that this lash of the whip has since been a good monitor to me;

> Quicumque Argolica de classe Capharea fugit,
> Semper ab Euboicis vela retorquet aquis.[3]
>
> "The Grecian ship that could Caphareus flee
> Will always steer from the Euboic sea."

'Tis folly to fix all a man's thoughts upon it, and madness to engage in it with a furious and indiscreet affection. But, on the other hand, to engage in it without love and without inclination, like comedians, to play a common part, without putting anything to it of his own but words, is indeed to provide for his safety, but withal after as base and cowardly a manner as he who should abandon his honour, profit, or pleasure, for fear of danger; for it is most

[1] Plutarch, *Life of Dion.*
[2] Cicero, *Paradox.* v. 2.
[3] Ovid, *Trist.* i. 1. 83.

certain that from such a practice they who set it on foot can expect no fruit that can please and satisfy a noble soul. A man must have in good earnest desired that which he, in good earnest, expects to have a pleasure in enjoying; I say, though fortune should unjustly favour their dissimulation, which often happens, because there is none of the sex, let her be as ugly as the devil, who does not think herself well worthy to be beloved, and that does not recommend herself either by her youth, her fine hair, or her graceful motion (for women totally ugly there are none, any more than women perfectly beautiful); and the Brachman virgins, who have no other recommendation, the people being assembled by the common crier to that effect, come out into the market-place to expose their matrimonial parts to public view, to try if these at least will not suffice to get them husbands; consequently there is not one who does not easily suffer herself to be persuaded by the first vow that is made to serve her. Now from this common treachery of men, that must fall out, which we already experimentally see, either that women rally together and separate themselves by themselves to avoid us; or else form their discipline by the example we give them, play their part in the farce as we do ours, and give themselves up to the sport, without passion, care, or love: *Neque affectui suo, aut alieno, obnoxiæ*;[1] "Unswayed by passion, whether their own or another's;" believing, according to the persuasion of Lysias in Plato,[2] that they may with more utility and convenience surrender themselves up to us the less we love them: where it will fall out, as in comedies, that the people will have as much pleasure, or more, than the comedians. For my part, I no more acknowledge Venus without Cupid than a mother without issue: they are things that mutually lend and owe their essence to one another. This cheat rebounds back upon him who is guilty of it; it does not cost him much, indeed, but he also gets little or nothing by it. They who have made Venus a goddess have taken notice that her principal beauty was incorporeal and spiritual; but the Venus which these people hunt after is not so much as human, nor indeed brutal. The very beasts will not accept one so gross and so earthly; we see that imagination and desire often heat and incite them before the body does; we see, in both the one sex and the other, that they have in the herd a choice and particular election in their affections, and that they have amongst themselves a long commerce of good will; even those to whom old age denies the practice of their desire, do yet tremble, neigh, and show ecstasies of love; we see them before the act full of hope and ardour; and when the body has played its part, yet please themselves with the sweet remembrance of the pleasure past; some that swell with pride after they have performed, and others who, tired and sated, do yet by various joyous sounds express a triumphing joy. The man that has nothing to do, but only to discharge his body of a natural necessity, need not trouble others with such curious preparations; it is not meat for a gross and coarse appetite.

As one who does not desire that men should think me better than I am, I will here freely discover the errors of my youth. Not only for the danger of impairing my health (and yet I could not be so careful but that I had two light mischances), but moreover, upon the account of contempt, I have seldom given myself up to common and mercenary embraces: I having tried to heighten the pleasure by the difficulty, by desire, and a certain kind of glory; and was of Tiberius's mind, who in his amours was as much taken with modesty and birth as any other quality;[3] and of the courtesan Flora's humour, who never prostituted herself to less than a dictator, a consul, or a censor, and solaced herself in the dignity of her lovers.[4] Doubtless pearls and brocade, titles and attendants, add something to it.

Montaigne's taste in his amours.

As to the rest, I had a great esteem for wit, provided the person was without bodily exception; for, to confess the truth, if the one or the other of these two perfections must of necessity be wanting, I should rather have quitted that of the understanding, that has its use in better things; but in the matter of love, a matter principally relating to the senses of seeing and touching, something may be done without the graces of the mind, without the graces of the body, nothing. Beauty is the true prerogative of women; and so peculiarly their own, that ours, though naturally requiring another sort of feature, is never in its lustre but when puerile and beardless, confused and mixed with theirs. 'Tis said that such youths as are preferred by the grand signior upon the account of beauty, which are an infinite number, are at the farthest dismissed at two and twenty years of age. Reason, prudence, and offices of friendship, are better found amongst men, and therefore it is that they govern the affairs of the world.

Personal beauties preferable in amours to those of the mind.

These two commerces are fortuitous, and depending upon others; the one is troublesome by its rarity, the other withers by age; so that they could never have been sufficient for the business of my life. That of

Of reading, or the third sort of conversation.

[1] Tacitus, *Annal.* xii. 45.

[2] In the *Phædra*.

[3] Tacitus, *Annal.* vi. 1.

[4] Montaigne got this from Anton. de Guevara. It is also borrowed by Brantome, who in his *Vies des Femmes Galantes*, tom. i., says that the courtesan Flora was of a good family and lineage; and that whereas Lais was a common prostitute to all mankind, Flora only obliged the great, insomuch that she had this inscription over her door: "Ye kings, princes, dictators, consuls, pontiffs, questors, ambassadors, and other great men, enter, and welcome; but no others."

books, which is the third, is much more certain, and much more our own; it yields all other advantages to the other two; but has the constancy and facility of its service for its own share. It goes side by side with me in my whole course, and everywhere is assisting to me; it comforts me in my age and solitude; it eases me of a troublesome weight of idleness, and delivers me at all hours from company that I dislike; and it blunts the point of griefs if they are not extreme, and have not got an entire possession of my soul. To divert myself from a troublesome fancy 'tis but to run to my books; they presently fix me to them, and drive the other out of my thoughts; and do not mutiny, at seeing I have only recourse to them for want of other more real, natural, and lively conveniences; they always receive me with the same kindness. "He may well go a-foot," say they, "who leads his horse in his hand;" and our James, King of Naples and Sicily, who, handsome, young, and healthy, caused himself to be carried up and down on a hand-barrow, reclining on a pitiful feather pillow, and clad in a robe of coarse grey cloth, with a cap of the same, but attended nevertheless by a royal train of litters, led horses of all sorts, gentlemen and officers, therein showed but a weak and unsteady austerity; the sick man is not to be pitied who has his cure in his sleeve. *In the experience* and practice of this sentence, which is a very true one, all the benefit I reap from books consists; and yet I make as little use of it almost as those who know it not; I enjoy it as a miser does his money, in knowing that I may enjoy it when I please; my mind is satisfied with this right of possession. I never travel without books, either in peace or war; and yet sometimes I pass over several days, and sometimes months, without looking at them; I will read by and by, say I *to myself, or* to-morrow, or when I please, and time meanwhile steals away without any inconvenience; for it is not to be imagined to what degree I please myself, and rest content in this consideration, that I have them by me, to divert myself with them when I am so disposed, and call to mind what an ease and assistance they are to my life. 'Tis the best viaticum I have yet found out for this human journey, and I very much pity those men of understanding who are unprovided with it. I rather accept of any sort of diversion, how light soever, in the feeling that this can never fail me.

The situation of Montaigne's library.

When at home, I a little more frequent my library, from whence I at once survey all the whole concerns of my family. As I enter it, I thence see under me my garden, court, and base-court, and into all the parts of the building. There I turn over now one book, and then another, of various subjects, without method or design. One while I meditate; another I record, and dictate as I walk to and fro, such whimsies as these with which I here present you. 'Tis in the third story of a tower, of which the ground-room is my chapel, the second story an apartment with a withdrawing-room and closet, where I often lie to be more retired; above it is this great wardrobe, which formerly was the most useless part of the house. In that room I pass away most of the days of my life, and most of the hours of the day; in the night I am never there. There is within it a cabinet handsome and neat enough, with a very convenient fire-place for the winter, and windows that afford a great deal of light, and very pleasant prospects; and were I not afraid, less of the expense than of the trouble, that frights me from all business, I could very easily adjoin on either side, and on the same floor, a gallery of an hundred paces long, and twelve broad, having sound walls already raised for some other design, to the requisite height. Every place of retirement requires a walk; my thoughts sleep if I sit still; my fancy does not go by itself, my legs must move it; and all those who study without a book are in the same condition. The figure of my study is round, and has no more bare wall than what is taken up by my table and chair; so that the remaining parts of the circle present me a view of all my books at once, set upon five rows of shelves round about me. It has three noble and wide prospects, and is sixteen paces in diameter. I am not so continually there in winter; for my house is built upon an eminence, as its name imports, and no part of it is so much exposed to the wind and weather as that, which pleases me the better for being of troublesome access and a little remote, as well upon the account of exercise, as being also there more retired from the crowd. 'Tis there that I am in my kingdom, and there I endeavour to make myself an absolute monarch, and to sequester this one corner from all society, whether conjugal, filial, or social; elsewhere I have but verbal authority only, and of a confused essence. That man, in my opinion, is very miserable, who has not at home where to be by himself, where to entertain himself alone, or to conceal himself from others. Ambition sufficiently plagues her votaries by keeping them always in shew, like the statue in a market-place: *Magna servitus est magna fortuna*:[1] "A great fortune is a great slavery:" they have not so much as a retreat for the necessities of nature. I have thought nothing so severe in the austerity of life that our religions affect, as what I have observed in some of their orders; namely, to have a perpetual society of place by rule, and numerous assistants among them, in every action whatever; and think it much more supportable to be always alone, than never to be so.

If any one shall tell me that it is to degrade the muses to make use of them only for sport,

[1] Seneca, *Consol. ad. Polyb.* c. 26.

and to pass away the time, I shall tell him that he does not know the value of that sport and pastime so well as I do: I can hardly forbear to add further, that all other end is ridiculous. I live from hand to mouth, and, with reverence be it spoken, only live for myself; to that all my designs tend, and in that terminate. I studied when young for ostentation; since, to make myself wise; and now for my diversion; never for gain. A vain and prodigal humour that I had after this sort of furniture, not only for supplying my own need, but moreover for ornament and outward show, I have long ago quite abandoned.[1]

Books have many charming qualities to such as know how to choose them; but every good has its ill; 'tis a pleasure that is not pure and unmixed any more than others; it has its inconveniences, and great ones too; the mind, indeed, is exercised by it, but the body, the care of which I have not forgotten, remains in the mean time without action, grows heavy and melancholy. I know no excess more prejudicial to me, nor more to be avoided in this my declining age.

The inconveniences attached to the pleasure which books give.

These are my three favourite and particular occupations; I speak not of those which I owe to the world by civil obligation.

CHAPTER IV.

OF DIVERSION.[2]

I WAS formerly employed to console a lady under a real affliction; for most of their mournings are merely artificial and a matter of ceremony.

What women's mournings commonly are.

> Uberibus semper lacrymis, semperque paratis
> In statione sua, atque expectantibus illam,
> Quo jubeat manare modo.[3]
>
> "And bids
> Th' impassioned showers fall copious from her lids,
> For at their posts like marshall'd troops they stand,
> Prepar'd to flow, to pour, at her command."

A man goes the wrong way to work when he opposes this passion; for opposition does but irritate and make them more obstinate in sorrow; the evil is exasperated by being contended with. We see, in common discourse, that the same thing that I have let fall from me with indifference, if a man controverts what I have said, I insist upon it earnestly, and with the best arguments I can find; and much more a thing wherein I have a real interest. And besides, in so doing, you enter rudely upon your operation; whereas the first addresses of a physician to his patient should be gracious, gay, and pleasing; never did any ill-looking, morose physician do any thing to the purpose. On the contrary, then, a man should at the first approaches favour their grief, and express some approbation of their sorrow. By this intelligence you obtain credit to proceed farther, and after an easy and insensible manner fall into discourses more solid and proper for their cure. I, whose aim it was principally to gull those present, who had their eyes fixed upon me, desired only to plaster up the disease. And indeed I have found out by experience that I have an unlucky hand at persuading; my arguments are either too sharp or too flat, and either press too roughly, or not home enough. After I had some time applied myself to her grief, I did not attempt to cure her by strong and lively reasons, either because I wanted them, or because I thought to do my business better another way; neither did I insist upon a choice of any of those methods of consolation which philosophy describes; "that what we pity is no evil," according to Cleanthes;[3] "that it is a light evil," according to the Peripatetics; "that to bemoan one's-self is an action neither commendable nor just," according to Chrysippus; nor this of Epicurus, more suitable to my way, of shifting the thoughts from afflicting things to those that are pleasing; nor making a bundle of all these together, to dispense upon occasion, according to Cicero; but gently bending my discourse, and by little and little digressing, sometimes to subjects nearer, and sometimes more remote from the purpose, she was more intent on what I said, and I insensibly led her from her sorrow, and kept her calm and in good humour whilst I continued there. I herein made use of diversion. They who succeeded me in the same service did not for all that find any amendment in her, for I had not applied the axe to the root.

How consolation ought to be practised.

Perhaps I have touched elsewhere upon some sort of public diversions: and the practice of military ones, which Pericles made use[4] of in the Peloponnesian war, with a thousand others in different places, to withdraw the adverse forces from their own countries, is too frequent in history. It was an ingenious evasion, by which[5] the Sieur d'Himbercourt saved himself and others in the city of Liege, into which the Duke of Burgundy, who kept it besieged, had sent him, to execute the articles of their promised surrender. The people, being assembled at night to consider the matter, began to mutiny against the past agreement, and to that degree that several of them resolved to fall upon the commissioners, whom they had in their power. He feeling the first blast of this first storm of the people, who

The method of diverting the enemy, employed successfully in war and in negociations.

[1] Or turning aside
[2] Juvenal, vi. 272.
[3] Cicero, *Tusc. Quæs.* iii. 31.
[4] Plutarch, *in vitâ.*
[5] Mem. of Philip de Comines, book ii. c. 3.

were coming to rush into his lodgings, on the sudden sent out to them two of the inhabitants of the city (of whom he had some with him), with new and milder terms, to be proposed in their council, which he had forged on the spot for his occasion. These two diverted the first tempest, carrying back the enraged rabble to the town-hall, to hear and consider of what they had to say. The deliberation was short: a second storm arose, as impetuous as the other; whereupon he dispatched four new mediators of the same quality to meet them, protesting that they had now better conditions to present them with, and such as would give them absolute satisfaction; by which means the tumult was once more appeased, and the people again turned back to the conclave. In fine, by thus ordering these amusements, one after another, diverting their fury, and dissipating it in frivolous consultations, he laid it at last asleep till the day appeared, which was his principal end.

This other story is also in the same category: Atalanta, a virgin of excelling beauty and of wonderful disposition of body, to disengage herself from the crowd of a thousand suitors, who sought her in marriage, made this proposition, "that she would accept of him for a husband who should equal her in running, upon condition that they who failed should lose their lives."[1] There were enough who thought the prize worth the hazard, and who suffered the penalty of the bloody contract. Hippomenes, being to try his fortune after the rest, makes his address to the Goddess of Love, imploring her assistance, who, granted his request, gave him three golden apples, and instructed him how to use them. The ground they ran upon being an even plain, as Hippomenes perceived his mistress to press hard upon him, he, as it were by chance, let fall one of these apples; the maid, taken with the beauty of it, failed not to step out of her way to take it up:

> Obstupuit virgo, nitidique cupidine pomi
> Declinat cursus, aurumque volubile tollit.[2]
>
> "Th' astonished maiden saw the shining gold,
> And stopped her course to seize it as it rolled;"

He did the same, when he saw his time, by the second and third, till, by so diverting her, and making her lose so much ground, he won the race. When physicians cannot purge a catarrh, they divert and turn it into some other less dangerous part. And I find also that this is the most ordinary practice for the diseases of the mind; *Abducendus etiam nonnunquam animus est ad alia studia, sollicitudines, curas, negotia; loci denique mutatione, tanquam ægroti non convalescentes sæpe curandas est*;[3] "The mind is sometimes to be diverted to other studies, thoughts, cares, and business, and lastly, by change of place; as sick persons that do not else recover are cured by change of air." 'Tis to little effect directly to justle a man's infirmities, we neither make him sustain nor repel the attack; but only to decline and evade it.

This other lesson is too high and too difficult: 'tis for men of the first class purely to insist upon the thing, to consider and judge of it: it belongs to a Socrates only to entertain death with an indifferent countenance, to grow acquainted with it, and to sport with it; he seeks no consolation out of the thing itself; dying appears to him a natural and indifferent proceeding; 'tis there that he fixes his sight and resolution, without looking elsewhere. The disciples of Hegesias starved themselves to death,[4] inflamed with a desire of dying, by his fine lectures, and this was so frequent a thing that King Ptolemy ordered he should be forbidden to entertain his followers with such homicidal doctrines; such people do not consider death itself, neither do they judge of it: it is not there that they fix their thoughts; they run forwards, and aim at a new being.

The poor wretches that we see brought to the place of execution, full of ardent devotion, and therein, as much as in them lies, employing all their senses, their ears in hearing the instructions that are given them, their eyes and hands lifted up towards heaven, their voices in loud prayers, with a vehement and continual emotion, do doubtless things very commendable and proper for such a necessity: we ought to commend them for their devotion, but not properly for their constancy; they shun the encounter, they divert their thoughts from the consideration of death, as children are amused with some toy or other, when the surgeon is going to give them a prick with his lancet. I have seen some who, casting sometimes their eyes upon the dreadful instruments of death round about, have fainted, and furiously turned their thoughts elsewhere: such as are to pass a formidable precipice are advised either to shut their eyes or look another way.

Whether it owing to firmness of soul that those who are going to die on a scaffold give way to violent fits of devotion.

Subrius Flavius being, by Nero's command, to be put to death, and by the hand of Niger, both of them captains, when they led him to the place appointed for his execution, seeing the hole that Niger had caused to be hollowed to put him into, badly made: "Neither is this," said he, turning to the soldiers who guarded him, "according to military discipline." And to Niger, who exhorted him to keep his head firm: "Do but thou strike as firmly," said he: and he very well foresaw what would follow, when he said so; for Niger's arm so trembled that he had several blows at his head before he could cut it off.[5] This man seems to have had his thoughts rightly fixed upon the subject.

He that dies in a battle, with his sword in his hand, does not then think of death; he

[1] Ovid, *Met.* x. 571.
[2] Id. *ib.*
[3] Cicero, 666, *Tusc. Ques.* iv. 35.
[4] Cicero, *Tusc. Quæs.* i. 34. Val. Max. viii. 9. *Ext.* 3.
[5] Tacitus, *Annal.* xv. 67.

Whether men think much of death in battle or a duel.

neither feels nor considers it; the ardour of the fight diverts his thoughts another way. A gentleman of my acquaintance, falling as he was fighting a duel at single rapier, and feeling himself nailed to the earth by nine or ten thrusts of his enemy, after he was on the ground, the seconds called to him to think of his conscience; but he has since told me that, though he heard what they said, it nothing moved him, and that he never thought of any thing but how to disengage and revenge himself: he afterwards killed his man in that very duel. He who brought L. Silvanus the sentence of death did him a very great kindness, in that, having received his answer, "that he was well prepared to die, but not by scoundrel hands," he ran upon him with his soldiers, to force him; and as he, naked as he was, obstinately defended himself with his fists and feet, it made him lose his life in the dispute; by that means dissipating and diverting, in a sudden and furious rage, the painful idea of a lingering death, to which he was designed.

The different considerations which hinder us from thinking directly of death.

We always think of something else; either the hope of a better life comforts and supports us, or the hope of our children's worth, or the future glory of our name, or the leaving behind the evils of this life, or the vengeance that threatens those who are the causes of our death, administers consolation to us:

Spero equidem mediis, si quid pia numina possunt,
Supplicia hausurum scopulis, et nomine Dido
Sæpe vocaturum.....
Audiam; et hæc manes veniet mihi fama sub imos.[1]

"And if the gods have any power at all,
Thrown on a rock thou shalt on Dido call:
At least my shade thy punishment shall know,
And fame shall spread the pleasing news below."

Xenophon was sacrificing with a crown upon his head, when one came to bring him news of the death of his son Gryllus, slain in the battle of Mantinea; at the first surprise of the news he threw his crown to the ground; but understanding, by the sequel of the narrative, that his son died in a most brave and valiant manner, he took it up and replaced it upon his head.[2] Even Epicurus at his death comforts himself with reflections of the usefulness and eternity of his writings:[3] *omnes clari et nobilitati labores fiunt tolerabiles:*[4] "all labours that are illustrious and renowned are supportable:" and the same wound, the same fatigue, is not, says Xenophon, so intolerable to a general of an army as to a common soldier:[5] Epaminondas died much more cheerful, having been informed that the victory remained to him: *hæc sunt solatia, hæc fomenta summorum dolorum:*[6] "these are lenitives, and fomentations to the greatest pains:" and other such circumstances amuse, divert, and turn our thoughts from the consideration of the thing in itself. Even the arguments of philosophy are always diverting, and putting by the matter, so as scarce to rub upon the sore: the greatest man of the first philosophical school, and superintendent over all the rest, the great Zeno, against death, forms this syllogism: "No evil is honourable; but death is honourable: therefore death is not evil:"[7] against drunkenness this: "No one commits his secrets to a drunkard, but every one commits his secrets to a wise man: therefore a wise man is no drunkard."[8] Is this to hit the mark? I love to see that these great and leading souls cannot rid themselves of our company; as perfect men as they may be, they are yet but men.

The way to dissipate a violent longing for revenge.

Revenge is a sweet passion, of great and natural impression; I discern this well enough, though I have no manner of experience of it. From which, not long ago, to divert a young prince, I did not tell him that if a man struck him on one cheek he must turn the other to him, to fulfil the duties of charity; nor did I go about to represent the tragical events which poetry attributes to that passion: I left those strings untouched, and occupied myself with making him relish the beauty of a contrary image; by representing to him what honour, esteem, and good-will he would acquire by clemency and good-nature, I diverted him to that ambition. Thus a man is to deal in such cases.

If your passion of love be too violent, disperse it, say they; and they say well; for I have oft tried it with advantage: break it into several desires, of which let one be regent, if you will, over the rest; but, lest it should tyrannise and domineer over you, weaken and protract, in dividing and diverting it:

Cum morosa vago singultiet inguine vena;[9]

Conjicito humorem collectum in corpora quæque;[10]

and look to't in time, lest it prove too troublesome to deal with, when it has once seized you;

Si non prima novis conturbes vulnera plagis,
Volgivagaque vagus venere ante recentia cures.[11]

"Unless you fancy every one you view
Revel in love, and cure old wounds by new."

I once was wounded with a vehement displeasure, according to my complexion; and withal, more just than vehement; I might perhaps have lost myself in it, if I had merely trusted to my own strength. Having need of

[1] *Æneid*, iv. 382.
[2] Val. Max. iv. 10. *Ext.* 2. Diog. Laertius, *in vita*. Ælian, *Hist. Var.* iii. 9.
[3] In his *Letter to Hermachus*. Cicero, *de Finib.* ii. 30. Laertius, *in vit.*
[4] Cicero, *Tusc. Quæs.* ii. 24.
[5] Id. *ib.*
[6] Cicero, *Tusc. Quæs.* ii. 23.
[7] Seneca, *Epist.* 82.
[8] Id. *ib.* 83.
[9] Pers. vi. 73.
[10] Lucret. iv. 1062.
[11] Id. *ib.*

a powerful diversion to disengage me, I made it my business, by art and study, to fall in love, in which I was assisted by my youth: love relieved and rescued me from the evil wherein friendship had engaged me. 'Tis in everything else the same; a violent imagination hath seized me; I find it a nearer way to change than to subdue it; I depute, if not one contrary, yet another at least in its place: variation always relieves, dissolves, and dissipates. If I am not able to contend with it, I escape from it; and in avoiding it, slip out of the way and cheat it: shifting place, business, and company, I secure myself in the crowd of other thoughts and fancies, where it loses my trace, and I escape.

Time the physician of our passions.

After the same manner does nature proceed, by the benefit of inconstancy; for time, which she has given us as the sovereign physician of our passions, principally gains its effect by this means: by supplying our imaginations with other and new affairs, it unties and dissolves the first apprehension, how strong soever. A wise man sees his friend little less dying at the end of five and twenty years, than in the first year; and, according to Epicurus, not less at all; for he did not attribute any alleviation of afflictions either to our foresight, or to the antiquity of the evils themselves: but so many other thoughts traverse the first, that it languishes and tires at last.

Alcibiades, to divert the inclination of common rumours, cut off the ears and tail of his beautiful dog, and turned him out into the public place, to the end that, giving the people this occasion to prate, they might let his other actions alone.[1] I have also seen, for this same end of diverting the opinions and conjectures of the people, and to stop their mouths, some women conceal their real affections by others that were only counterfeit; but I have likewise seen one who, in counterfeiting, has suffered herself to be caught indeed, and has quitted the true and original affection for the feigned; by which I have learned that they who find their affections well placed are fools to consent to this disguise: the favourable and public reception being only reserved for this apposted servant, a man may conclude him a fellow of very little address, if he does not in the end put himself into your place, and you into his; this is properly to cut out and make up a shoe for another to draw on.

A small matter either engages or disengages the mind.

A little thing will turn and divert us, because a little thing holds us. We do not much consider subjects in gross and in themselves; but there are little and superficial circumstances that strike us, the vain, useless husks that fall off from those subjects,

> Folliculos ut nunc teretes æstate cicadæ
> Linquunt:[2]
>
> "Such as the hollow husks or shells we find
> In summer grasshoppers do leave behind."

Even Plutarch himself laments his daughter for the little apish tricks of her infancy.[3] The remembrance of a farewell, of a particular action or grace, of a last recommendation, afflicts us. The sight of Cæsar's robe troubled all Rome, which was more than his death had done. Even the sound of names ringing in our ears, as "My poor master!" or "My valued friend!" "Alas! my dear father!" or "My sweet daughter!" makes us melancholy and sad. When these repetitions torment me, and that I examine them a little nearer, I find them but a grammatical and verbal complaint; I am wounded with the word and tone; as the exclamations of preachers very often work more upon their auditory than their [illegible] and as the mournful eyes and [illegible] for our service; [illegible] trating at the [illegible] essence [illegible]

"[illegible]

these a[illegible]

The ot[illegible] thrown m[illegible] for three [illegible] death, tha[illegible] evade it; a[illegible] desired, cons[illegible] those cruel fits [illegible] art of hangma[illegible] who caused cri[illegible] ner, that they [illegible] water! Findin[illegible] considered by h[illegible] jects imaginatio[illegible] of life; and of [illegible] difficulty of this [illegible] my soul; and to h[illegible] thoughts we give w[illegible] dog, a horse, a boo[illegible] were considered in n[illegible] ambitious hopes, their [illegible] not less foolish consid[illegible] than mine. I look upon [illegible] I look upon it universa[illegible] I insult over it in gross; [illegible] neers over me; the te[illegible] disposing of my clothes, [illegible] hand, an ordinary phrase [illegible] courages and melts me. Thu[illegible] in poetry infect our souls w[illegible] sorrows of Dido and Ariadne t[illegible] sion even those that don't be[illegible] Virgil and Catullus. It is an [illegible] obstinate and obdurate nature [illegible]

[1] Plutarch, *in vitâ.*
[2] Lucret. v. 801.
[3] In his *Consolation to his Wife.*
[4] Lucret. ii. 42.
[5] *Tiberius.* Suetonius, *in vitâ.*

no emotion; as 'tis reported for a miracle of Polemon; but then he did not so much as alter his countenance at the biting of a mad dog, that tore away the calf of his own leg.[1] And no wisdom proceeds so far as to conceive so lively and entire a cause of sorrow by judgment, that it suffers no increase by presence, where the eyes and ears have their share; parts that are not to be moved but by vain accidents.

The orator and the comedian touched to the quick by acting their parts, though in fiction.

Is it reason that even the arts themselves should make an advantage of our natural imbecility and weakness? The orator, says rhetoric, in the farce of his pleading, shall be moved with the sound of his own voice and feigned emotions, and suffer himself to be imposed upon by the passion he represents; he will imprint in himself a true and real grief by means of the part he plays, to transmit it to the judges, who are yet less concerned than he: as they do who are hired at funerals to assist in the ceremony of sorrow, who sell their tears and mourning by weight and measure. For although they act in a borrowed form, nevertheless by habituating themselves, and applying their countenances to the occasion, 'tis most certain they are often really affected with a true and real sorrow. I was one, among several other of his friends, who conveyed the body of Monsieur de Grammont[2] to Soissons, from the siege of la Fere, where he was slain; I observed that in all places we passed through we filled the people with tears and lamentations, by the mere solemn pomp of our convoy, for there the name of the deceased was not so much known. Quintilian reports[3] to have seen players so deeply engaged in a mourning part, that they could not give over weeping when they came home; and of himself, that having undertaken to stir up that passion in another, he himself espoused it to that degree as to find himself surprised not only into tears, but even with paleness, and the port of a man really overwhelmed with grief.

A pleasant method of diverting one's grief.

In a place near our mountains the women play Priest Martin;[4] for as they augment the regret of the deceased husband, by the remembrance of the good and agreeable qualities he was master of, they also at the same time make a register of and publish his imperfections; as if of themselves to enter into some compensation, and so divert themselves from compassion to disdain; and yet with much better grace than we do, who, when we lose an old acquaintance, strive to give him new and false praises, and to make him quite another thing when we have lost sight of him, than he seemed to be when we had him; as if regret was an instructive thing, or as if tears enlightened our understanding by washing it. For my part I renounce all favourable testimonies men would hereafter give of me, not because I shall be worthy of them, but because I shall be dead.

Vain objects of mere imaginations, without reality, strike and determine the human mind.

Whoever shall ask a man, "What interest have you in this siege?" "The interest of example," he will say, "and of common obedience to my prince: I pretend to no profit by it: and for glory, I know how small a part can reflect upon such a private man as I am: I have here neither passion nor quarrel in it." And yet you shall see him the next day, quite another man, chafing and red with fury, ranged in battle for the assault: 'tis the glittering of so much steel, the fire and noise of our cannons and drums, that have infused this new rancour and fury into his veins. A frivolous cause, you will say: how a cause? There needs none to agitate the soul; a mere whimsy, without body and without subject, will rule and sway it. Let me set about building castles in the air, my imagination suggests to me conveniences and pleasures with which my soul is really tickled and pleased. How often do we torment our mind with anger or sorrow by such shadows, and engage ourselves in fantastic passions that alter both the soul and body? What astonished, fleering, and confused grimaces does this raving put our faces into! What sallies and agitation, both of members and voices, does it occasion! Does it not seem that this individual man has false visions from a crowd of other men with whom he has to do, or that he is possessed with some internal demon that persecutes him? Enquire of yourself, where is the object of this mutation? Is there any thing but us in nature that nullity sustains, over which nullity has power? Cambyses, for having dreamt that his brother should be one day king of Persia, put him to death: a brother whom he tenderly loved, in whom he had always confided.[5] Aristodemus, king of the Messenians, killed himself out of a fancy of ill omen, from I know not what howling of his dogs;[6] and King Midas did as much upon account of some foolish dream he had.[7] 'Tis to prize life at its just value to abandon it for a dream. Hear how our soul triumphs over the body, and the weakness that exposes it to every injury and alteration, truly, she has just reason to laugh at it!

"O prima infelix fingenti terra Promethee!
Ille parum cauti pectoris egit opus.
Corpora disponens, mentem non vidit in arte;
Recta animi primum debuit esse via."[8]

[1] Laertius, *in vit.*
[2] Philibert, Count of Grammont and Guiche, husband of *La Belle Corisande*, already referred to. He was killed in 1580, at the siege of la Fere, undertaken on the part of the League by the Marshal de Matignon.
[3] *Institut. Orat.* lib. vi. 2.
[4] A proverb, founded on the story of a priest, named Martin, who himself acted as both parson and clerk.
[5] Herod. iii. 30.
[6] Plutarch, *On Superstition.*
[7] Id. *ib.*
[8] Propertius, iii. 5, 7.

"O, 'twas for man a most unhappy day,
When rash Prometheus forn'd him out of clay!
In his attempt the heedless architect
Did indiscreetly the main thing neglect.
In framing bodies he had not the art
To form the mind, the first and noblest part."

CHAPTER V.

UPON SOME VERSES OF VIRGIL.

In proportion as useful thoughts are full and solid, so are they also more cumbersome and heavy: vice, death, poverty, disease, are grave and grievous subjects. A man must have his soul instructed in the means to sustain and to contend with evil, and in the rules of living and believing well; he must likewise rouse it up, and exercise it in this noble study. But in a vulgar soul, it must be by intervals, and with moderation; it will otherwise grow besotted, if continually intent.

When I was young, I had need of frequent self-solicitations and admonitions to keep me to my duty; gaiety and health, it is said, do not so well agree with those grave and serious meditations; I am at present in another condition; the indispositions of age do but too much advertise and preach to me. From the excess of sprightliness I am fallen into that of gravity, which is more troublesome: and for that reason I now purposely suffer myself to run into some little liberties, and sometimes unbend my mind with youthful and foolish thoughts, in which to divert itself. I am grown now but too full, too heavy, and too ripe: my years read every day new lectures to me of coldness and temperance. This body of mine avoids disorder, and dreads it; 'tis now my body's time to guide my mind towards reformation; it governs in its turn, and more rudely and imperiously than the other; it lets me not an hour alone, sleeping or waking; but is always preaching to me death, patience, and repentance. I now defend myself from temperance, as I formerly did from voluptuousness: it draws me too much back, even to stupidity. Now I will be master of myself to all intents and purposes: wisdom has its excess, and has no less need of moderation than folly. Therefore, lest I should wither, dry up, and overcharge myself with prudence, in the intervals and truces which my infirmities allow me,

Mens intenta suis ne siet usque malis,[1]

"Lest that my mind should evermore be bent,
And fix'd on subjects full of discontent."

I gently decline it, and turn away my eyes from the stormy and frowning sky I have before me, which, thanks be to God, I consider without fear, but not without meditation and debate, and amuse myself in the remembrance of my past youth:

Animus quod perdidit optat,
Atque in præterita se totus imagine versat.[2]

"The mind longs to regain what it has lost,
And by things past is totally engross'd."

Let infancy look forward and age backward; is not this the signification of Janus's double face? Let years haul me along, if they will, but it shall be backward! As long as my eyes can discern the pleasant season expired, I shall now and then turn them that way: though it escapes from my blood and my veins, I shall not however root the image of it out of my memory;

Hoc est,
Vivere bis, vita posse priore frui.[3]

"The man lives twice, who can the gift retain
Of mem'ry, to enjoy past life again."

Plato ordains[4] that old men should be present at the exercises, dances, and sports of young people, that they may delight in others, for the activity and agility of body which is no more in themselves, and recal to memory the grace and comeliness of that flourishing age; and wills that in these recreations, the honour of the prize should be given to that young man who has most diverted the company. I formerly used to mark cloudy and gloomy days for extraordinary; those are now my ordinary ones; the extraordinary are the clear and bright; I am ready to leap out of my skin for joy, as for an uncommon favour, when nothing ails me. Let me tickle myself presently after, I cannot force a poor smile from this wretched body of mine; I am only merry in fancy, or dreaming, by artifice to divert the melancholy of age; but, certes, it requires another remedy than the efficacy of a dream. A weak contest of art against nature! 'Tis great folly to lengthen and anticipate human inconveniences, as every one does. I had rather be a less while old, than be old before I am really so.[5] I seize on even the least occasions of pleasure I can meet. I know very well by hearsay several sorts of prudent pleasures, that are effectually so, and glorious to boot; but opinion has not power enough over me to give me an appetite to them. I covet not so much to have them magnanimous, magnificent, and lofty, as I do to have them soft, easy and ready: *a natura discedimus; populo nos damus, nullius rei bono auctori*:[6] "we depart from nature, and give ourselves to the people, who understand nothing." My philosophy is in action, in natural and present use, very little in fancy: what if I have a mind to play at cob-nut, or to whip a top!

Old men should be present at the pastimes and exercises of youth.

[1] Ovid, *Trist.* i. 4. The text has *ne foret.*
[2] Petronius, *Satiric.* c. i. 28.
[3] Mart. x. 23.
[4] *Laws*, ii.
[5] This is word for word the same passage in Cicero (*de Senect.* c. 14.) for which Montaigne (book iii. c. 10.) criticises that author.
[6] Senec. *Epist.* 99.

Non ponebat enim rumores ante salutem.[1]

"He was too wise
Idle reports before his health to prize."

Pleasure is a quality of very little ambition; it thinks itself rich enough of itself, without any addition of repute; and is best pleased where most obscure. A young man should be whipped who pretends to a palate in wine and sauces; there was nothing which at that age I less valued or knew; now I begin to learn, I am very much ashamed of it; but what should we do? I am more ashamed and vexed at the occasions that put me upon it. 'Tis for us to fiddle-faddle and trifle away the time: and for young men to stand upon their reputation and punctilios; they are going towards the world, and the world's opinion; we are retiring from it: *Sibi arma, sibi equos, sibi hastas, sibi clavam, sibi pilam, sibi natationes et cursus; habeant nobis senibus, ex lusionibus multis, talos relinquant et tesseras:*[2] "Let them reserve to themselves arms, horses, spears, clubs, tennis, swimming, and races; and, of their numerous sports and exercises, leave to us old men the diversion of cards and dice:" the laws themselves send us home.[3] I can do no less, in favour of this wretched condition, into which my age has thrown me, than furnish it with toys to play withal, as they do children; for we also become such. Both wisdom and folly will have enough to do to support and relieve me by alternate offices in this calamity of age;

Misce stultitiam consiliis brevem.[4]

"Severer cares with mirth relieve,
And a few hours to folly give."[5]

Just so do I avoid the lightest punctures; and those that formerly would not have rippled the skin, now pierce me through and through: my habit of body is now so naturally open to the stroke of pain! *In fragili corpore odiosa omnis offensio est*:[6] "To a decrepid body every shock is hateful;"

Mensque pati durum sustinet ægra nihil.[6]

"And a sick mind nothing that's hard endures."

I have ever been tender, and very susceptible of bodily injury; at present I am much more tender, and open throughout:

Et minimæ vires frangere quassa valent.[7]

"A cracked pitcher is soon broken."

My judgment restrains me from kicking against and grumbling at the inconveniences that nature orders me to endure, but it does not take away my feeling: I, who have no other object in view than to live and be merry, would run from one end of the world to the other, to seek out one good year of pleasant and jocund tranquillity. A melancholic and dull tranquillity seems enough for me; but it benumbs and stupifies; I am not contented with it. If there be any person, any knot of good company, in country or city, in France or elsewhere, stay-at-home or travelling, who can like my humour, and whose humours I can like, let them but whistle, and I will come and furnish them with Essays in flesh and bone.

Seeing it is the privilege of the mind to rescue itself from old age, I advise mine to it, with all the power I have; let it in the interim continue green, and flourish, if it can, like mistletoe upon a dead tree. But I fear 'tis a traitor; it has contracted so stiff a brothership with the body that it abandons me at every turn, to follow that in its need: I wheedle and deal with it apart in vain; I try to no purpose to wean it from this correspondence; in vain quote Seneca and Catullus, and represent to it beautiful ladies and royal dances; if its companion has the cholic it seems to have it too: even the faculties that are most peculiarly and properly its own, cannot then perform their functions, but manifestly appear dozed and stupified; there is no sprightliness in its productions, if there be not at the same time an equal proportion in the body too.

The health and vigour of the body is the cause of the extraordinary sallies of the mind.

Our masters are to blame that, searching out the causes of the extraordinary emotions and sallies of the soul, besides attributing them to a divine ecstasy, love, martial fierceness, poetry, and wine, they have not also allowed health her share in them; boiling, vigorous, full, idle health, such as formerly the verdure of youth and security kept me supplied withal; that fire of sprightliness and gaiety darts into the mind flashes that are lively and bright beyond our natural light, and with the most working, if not the most extravagant enthusiasms. It is then no wonder if a contrary state stupifies my spirit, nails it down, and produces a contrary effect:

Ad nullum consurgit opus cum corpore languet;[8]

"For when the body languishing doth lie,
I to no object can myself apply;"

and yet would have me obliged to it for giving much less consent to this than is seen in other men ordinarily. Let us at least, whilst we have truce, drive away incommodities and difficulties from our commerce;

Dum licet, obducta solvatur fronte senectus;[9]

"Drive care, with age's wrinkled front, away:"

[1] This is a very pleasant application of a grave verse, quoted out of Ennius, by Cicero, *de Offic.* i. 24. where that poet, speaking of Fabius Maximus, says that, while he was acting for the public good, he was indifferent to every thing that was said at Rome to run down his conduct.
[2] Cicero, *de Senect.* c. 16.
[3] Id. *ib.* c. 17.
[4] Horace, *Od.* iv. 12. 27.
[5] Cicero, *ut supra*, c. 18.
[6] Ovid, *de Ponto*. i. 5. 18.
[7] Id. *Trist.* iii. 11. 22.
[8] Pseudo-Gallus, i. 125.
[9] Horace, *Epod.* xiii. 7.

tetrica sunt amœnanda jocularibus.[1] "Sour things are to be sweetened with those that are pleasant." I love a gay and social wisdom, and fly from all austerity and sourness of manners, all grumness and formality of countenance being suspected by me,

Tristemque vultus tetrici arrogantiam;
"The arrogant affectation of a starched, dismal face;"

Et habet tristis quoque turba cinædos.[2]
"A mien austere oft veils a vicious heart."

I entirely believe Plato, who says that easy or difficult humours are a great prejudice to the good or bad disposition of the soul. Socrates had a constant countenance, but withal serene and smiling; not sourly constant, like the elder Crassus, whom no man ever saw to laugh. Virtue is a pleasant and gay quality.

Montaigne's opinion of those who shall condemn the freedom of his writings.

I know very well that few will quarrel with the liberty of my writings, who have not more to quarrel with in the license of their own thoughts: I conform myself well enough to their inclinations, but I offend their eyes. 'Tis a pretty humour to strain at the writings of Plato, and glide gently over his pretended negotiations with Phædo, Dion, Aster, and Archeanassa! *Non pudeat dicere quod non pudeat sentire.* "Let us not be ashamed to speak what we are not ashamed to think." I hate a froward and moping spirit, that slips over all the pleasures of life, and seizes and feeds upon misfortunes; like flies, that cannot stick to a sleek and polished body, but fix and repose themselves upon craggy and rough places; and like cupping-glasses, that only suck and attract the worst blood.

Of the liberty he takes to say all that he dares to do.

As to the rest, I have enjoined myself to dare to say all that I dare to do; and even thoughts that are not to be published displease me; *the* worst of my actions and qualities do not appear to me so foul, as I find it foul and base not to dare to own them. Every one is wary and discreet in confession, but men ought to be so in action: boldness in doing ill is in some sort modified and restrained by boldness in confessing it: whoever would oblige himself to tell all, would oblige himself to do nothing that he must be forced to conceal. I wish that *this* excessive licence of mine may draw men to freedom, above these timorous and mincing pretended virtues, sprung from our imperfections; and that, at the expense of my immoderation, I may reduce them to reason. A man must see and study his vice to correct it; they who conceal it from others commonly conceal it from themselves, and do not think it covered enough, if they themselves see it; they hide and disguise it from their own conscience: *Quare vitia sua nemo confitetur? Quia etiam nunc in illis est; somnium narrare vigilantis est.*[3] "Why does no man confess his vices? Because he is yet in them; 'tis for a waking man to tell his dream." The diseases of the body explain themselves in increasing; we find that to be the gout which we called a rheum or a strain: the diseases of the soul, the greater they are, keep themselves the more obscure; the most sick are the least sensible of them; for these reasons they must often be dragged into light by an unrelenting and pitiless hand; they must be opened and torn from the caverns and secret recesses of the heart. As in doing well, so in doing ill, the mere confession is sometimes satisfaction. Is there any deformity in doing amiss, that can excuse us from confessing ourselves? It is so great a pain to me to dissemble, that I evade the trust of another's secrets, wanting the heart to disavow my knowledge: I can conceal it, but deny it I cannot, without the greatest trouble and violence to myself imaginable: to be very secret, a man must be so by nature, not by obligation. 'Tis little worth in the service of a prince to be secret, if a man be not a liar to boot. If he who asked Thales, the Milesian, whether he ought solemnly to deny that he had committed uncleanness, had applied himself to me, I should have told him that [illegible] look upon [illegible] other. Tha[illegible] bidding him [illegible] fault by the l[illegible] not so much a[illegible] vice. Upon [illegible] that we deal s[illegible] conscience, whe[illegible] culty in counte[illegible] shut him up bet[illegible] hard choice, as O[illegible] or to suffer himself [illegible] great Æthiopian sla[illegible] he submitted to the [illegible] And yet tastes differ[illegible] our times who, accordi[illegible] they had rather burden[illegible] ten men than one mass.

If it be indiscretion so [illegible] yet there is no great da[illegible] example and custom; [illegible] the winds which men fe[illegible] that laid them open. We

[1] Sidonius Apollinar. *Ep.* i. 9.

[2] Martial, vii. 58. It is not known whence Montaigne borrowed the preceding line.

[3] Seneca, *Ep.* 53.

[4] Here Montaigne makes Thales say the very contrary to what he really said; and this, by mistaking the sense of Diogenes Laertius, the author whom he must have consulted for the answer: "A man," says Diogenes, "who had committed adultery, having asked Thales [illegible] deny it upon oath? Thales made ans[illegible] jury even a worse crime than adulter[illegible] *Life of Thales.* Perhaps Montaigne w[illegible] edition of this author, where the note [illegible] omitted after the last word, which, inde[illegible] that I find in Henry Wetstein's edition [illegible] that, is very correct.

[5] Plutarch, *on Curiosity.*

ridiculous rag that hides our manners; people send their consciences to the stews, but keep a starched countenance. Even traitors and assassins espouse the laws of ceremony, and there fix their duty; so that neither can justice complain of incivility, nor malice of indiscretion. 'Tis pity but an ill man should be likewise a fool, and that decency should palliate his vice: this rough-casting is only for sound and good walls, that deserve to be preserved and whited.

Why Montaigne chose to be confessed in public.

To meet the Huguenots, who condemn our auricular and private confession, I confess myself in public, religiously and purely: St. Augustin, Origen, and Hippocrates, have published the errors of their opinions; and I moreover of my manners. I am greedy of making myself known; and I care not to how many, provided it be truly; or, rather, I hunger for nothing; but I mortally hate to be mistaken by those who happen to come across my name. He that does all things for honour and glory, what can he think to gain by shewing himself to the world in a mask, and by concealing his true being from the people? Commend a hunchback for his fine shape, he has a right to take it for an affront: if you are a coward, and that men commend you for your valour, is it of you that they speak? They take you for another. A footman behind a coach might as well glorify himself in the compliments and congees which are made, as if he were master of the company, when he is one of the most inferior of the train. Archelaus, King of Macedon, walking along the street, somebody threw water on his head; which they who were with him said he ought to punish: "Aye, but," said he, "whoever it was, he did not throw the water upon me, but upon him whom he took me to be."[1] Socrates being told that people spoke ill of him: "Not at all," said he, "there is nothing in me of what they say."[2] For my part, if any one should commend me for a good pilot, for being very modest or very chaste, I should owe him no thanks; and, by the same rule, whoever should call me traitor, robber, or drunkard, I should be as little concerned. They who do not rightly know themselves, may feed and feast upon false approbations; not I, who see myself, and examine myself even to my very bowels, and who very well know what is my due. I am content to be less commended, provided I am better known. I may be reputed a wise man in such a sort of wisdom as I take to be folly. I am vexed that my *Essays* only serve the ladies for a common moveable, a book to lie in the parlour window; this chapter shall prefer me to the closet: I love to traffic with them a little in private; public conversation is without favour and without savour. In farewells we above ordinary heat our affections towards the things we take leave of; I take my last leave of the pleasures of this world; these are our last embraces.

But to come to my subject. What has rendered the act of generation, an act so natural, so necessary, and so just, a thing not to be spoken of without blushing, and to be excluded from all serious and regular discourses? We boldly pronounce kill, rob, betray,[3] but the other we dare only to mutter betwixt the teeth. Is it to say, that the less we say in words, we may pay it so much the more with thinking? For it is certain that the words least in use, most seldom writ, and best kept in, are the best and most generally known; no age, no manners are ignorant of them, any more than of the word bread. They *imprint* themselves in every one, without being expressed, without voice, and without figure; and the sex that most practises it is bound to say least of it. 'Tis an act that we have placed in the free-franchise of silence, whence to take it is a crime, even though it be to accuse and judge it; neither dare we reprehend it, but in periphrasis and circuity. A great favour to a criminal, to be so execrable that justice itself thinks it unjust to touch and see him! free and safe by the benefit of the severity of his condemnation. Is it not here as with books, that sell better and become more public, by being suppressed?[4] For my part, I will take Aristotle at his word, who says that "bashfulness is an ornament to youth, but a reproach to old age." These verses are preached in the ancient school, a school that I much more adhere to than the modern; the virtues of it appear to me to be greater, and the vices less:

> They err as wide who Venus much forbear,
> As they who in her rites too frequent are.[5]

> Tu, dea, tu rerum naturam sola gubernas,
> Nec sine te quidquam dias in luminis oras
> Exoritur, neque sit lætum, nec amabile quidquam.[6]

> "Thou deity, by whom all nature's sway'd,
> Without whose power nothing can spring to light,
> Or beautiful, or lovely to the sight."

Pallas and the Muses are in a great connection with Venus.

I know not who could set Pallas and the Muses at variance with Venus, and make them cold towards love; but I see no deities so well met, or that are more indebted to one another. Whoever would deprive the Muses of amorous imaginations, would rob them of the best stuff they have, and of the noblest matter of their work: and who would make love lose the communication and service of poetry, would disarm him of his best weapons: in this way they charge the god of familiarity and good-will, and the protecting goddesses of humanity and justice, with the

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1 Plutarch, *Apotheg. of the Kings.*

2 Laertius, *in vitâ.*

3 See Cicero, *Epist. Fam.* ix 22.

4 *Ethics*, iv. 9.

5 Plutarch, *That a Philosopher should converse with Princes.*

6 Lucret. i. 22.

vice of ingratitude and unthankfulness. I have not been so long cashiered from the state and service of this god, that my memory is not still perfect in his force and power;

Agnosco veteris vestigia flammæ;[1]

"Of my old flame there yet remain some sparks;"

there are yet some remains of heat and emotion after the fever:

Nec mihi deficiat calor hic, hiemantibus annis![2]

"I have some heat yet in my winter age!"

Withered and drooping as I am, I feel yet some remains of that past ardour:

Qual l'alto Egeo per che Aquilone o Noto
Cessi, che tutto prima il volse et scosse,
Non s'accheta egli pero; ma l'suono e'l moto,
Ritien dell'onde anco agitate e grosse:[3]

"As Ægean seas, when storms be calmed again,
That roll'd their tumbling waves with troublous blast,
Do yet of tempests past some shew retain,
And here and there their swelling billows cast:"

but, for what I understand of it, the force and power of this god are more lively and animating in the picture of poetry than in their own essence,

Et versus digitos habet:[4]

"For there is charming harmony in verse:"

it has I know not what kind of air more amorous than love itself; Venus is not so beautiful naked, alive, and panting, as she is here in Virgil:

Dixerat; et niveis hinc atque hinc Diva lacertis
Cunctantem amplexu molli fovet. Ille repente
Accepit solitam flammam; notusque medullas
Intravit calor, et labefacta per ossa cucurrit:
Non secus atque olim tonitru cum rupta corusco
Ignea rima micans percurrit lumine nimbos.
.... Ea verba loquutus,
Optatos dedit amplexus; placidumque petivit
Conjugis infusis gremio per membra soporem.[5]

"She said, and round him threw her snow-white arms,
And warmed him, wavering, in a soft embrace.
Swift he takes fire, and through his marrow came
Accustom'd heat, the wonted amorous flame:
So amidst thunder lanced along the sky;
A stream of fire runs glittering through the sky.
* * * * *
— This having said,
After the wish'd embrace, he sank to rest,
Softly reclin'd on his fair consort's breast."

All that I find fault with in considering it is, that he has represented her a little too passionate for a married Venus; in this discreet kind of coupling, the appetite is not usually so wanton, but more grave and dull. Love hates that people should hold of any but himself, and goes but faintly to work in familiarities derived from any other title, as marriage is. Alliance and dowry therein weigh, and with reason, as much or more than grace and beauty. Men do not marry for themselves, though they say so; they marry as much or more for their posterity, for their family; the use and interest of marriage touches our race much more than us; and therefore it is that I like that custom to have matches carried on by a third hand, rather than a man's own, and by another man's liking than that of the party himself: but how much is all this opposite to the ties of love? And also it is a kind of incest to employ, in this venerable and sacred alliance, the heat and extravagance of amorous licence, as I think I have said elsewhere.[6] A man, says Aristotle must approach his wife with prudence and gravity, lest, in tickling her up too lasciviously, extreme pleasure máke her exceed the bounds of reason. What he says upon the account of conscience, the physicians say upon the account of health: "That a pleasure excessively hot, voluptuous, and frequent, deteriorates the seed and hinders conception;" and *'tis said, elsewhere*, "That to a languishing congression, as that naturally is, to supply it with a due and fruitful heat, a man must do it but seldom, and by marked intermissions;"

Quo rapiat sitiens Venerem, interiusque recondat.[7]

I see no marriages where the conjugal understanding sooner fails, than those contracted upon the account of beauty and amorous desires: there should be more solid and lasting foundations, and they should proceed with greater circumspection; this furious ardour is worth nothing.

They who think they honour marriage by joining love to it, do, methinks, like those who, to favour virtue, hold that nobility is nothing else but virtue. They are, indeed, things that have some relation to one another, but there is a great deal of difference; we shou'd not so mix their names and titles; 'tis a wrong to them both so to confound them. Nobility is a brave quality, and with good reason introduced; but, forasmuch as 'tis a quality depending upon others, and may happen in a vicious person, 'tis to be estimated infinitely below virtue: 'tis a virtue, if it be one, that is artificial and apparent; depending upon time and fortune; various in form, according to various countries; living, and mortal; without birth, as the river Nile; genealogical and common; drawn by consequence, and a very weak one. Knowledge, strength, goodness, beauty, riches, and all other qualities, fall into communication and commerce; but this is consummated in itself, and of no use to the service of others. There was proposed to one of our kings the choice of two concurrents, who both pretended to the same command, of which one was a gentleman, the other was not; he ordered that, without respect to

The transports of love banished from marriage; and why.

[1] *Æneid*, iv. 23.
[2] It is not known whence Montaigne borrowed this line; probably from some modern author.
[3] Tasso, *La Gerus.* c. xii. st. 63.
[4] Juvenal, vi. 196.
[5] *Æneid*, viii. 387, 392.
[6] Book i. c. 29.
[7] Virgil, *Georgic*, iii. 137.

quality, they should choose him who had the most merit; but where the worth of the competitors should appear to be entirely equal, they should have respect to birth: this was exactly to give it its due rank. A young man, unknown, coming to Antigonus to make suit for his father's command, a valiant man, lately dead: "Friend," said he, "in such preferments as these, I have not so much regard to the nobility of my soldiers, as to their strength and courage."[1] And, indeed, it ought not to go as it did with the officers of the kings of Sparta, trumpeters, fiddlers, cooks, the children of whom always succeeded in their places, how ignorant soever, and were preferred before the most experienced in these professions.

To what rank the nobility are promoted in the kingdom of Calicut.

They of Calicut make of their nobles a class above human: they are interdicted marriage, and all but warlike employments; they may have concubines their fill, and the women as many lovers as they please, without being jealous of one another; but 'tis a capital and irremissible crime to couple with a person of meaner condition than themselves; and they think themselves polluted if they have but touched one in walking along, and supposing their nobility to be marvellously injured and interested in it, kill such as only approach a little too near them; insomuch that the ignoble are obliged to cry out as they go, like the gondoleers of Venice, at the turning of streets, for fear of jostling; and the nobles command them to step aside to what part they please: by which means the one avoid what they repute a perpetual ignominy, and the other a certain death. No time, no favour of the prince, no office, or virtue, or riches, can ever prevail to make a plebeian become noble: to which this custom is assisting, that marriages are interdicted betwixt several trades: the daughter of a shoemaker cannot marry a carpenter; and the parents are obliged to train up their children precisely in their own callings, and not put them to any other trade; by which means the distinction and continuation of their fortune is maintained.

A good marriage,[2] if it be really so, rejects the company and conditions of love, and tries to represent those of friendship. 'Tis a sweet society of life, full of constancy, trust, and an infinite number of useful and solid offices and mutual obligations; of which any woman that has a right taste,

Optato quam junxit lumine tæda,[3]

"The wife of him she loves,"

would be loth to serve her husband in quality of a mistress. If she be lodged in his affection as a wife, she is more honourably and securely placed. Though he play the lover with another, as eager and warm as you please, let any one but then ask him, "on which he had rather a disgrace should fall, his wife or his mistress? which of their misfortunes would most afflict him? and to which of them he wishes the most grandeur?" the answer to these questions there can be no doubt about in a sound marriage.

And that so few are observed to be happy, is a token of its price and value. If well formed, and rightly taken, 'tis the best of all human societies. We cannot live without it, and yet we do nothing but degrade it.

A good marriage the most happy state in human society.

It happens as with cages: the birds without despair to get in, and those within despair of getting out. Socrates being asked[4] whether it was more advisable to take a wife or not? "Let a man take which course he will," said he, "he will be sure to repent." 'Tis a contract to which the common saying, *Homo homini, deus, or lupus:*[5] "Man to man is either a god or a wolf," may very fitly be applied: there must be a concurrence of many qualities to the erecting it. It is found now a-days more convenient for ordinary and plebeian souls, where delights, curiosity, and idleness, do not so much disturb it; but unruly humours, such as mine, that hate all sorts of obligation and restraint, are not proper for it:

Et mihi dulce magis resoluto vivere collo.[6]

"For liberty is far more sweet to me."

Why Montaigne married, though ill disposed for it.

Might I have had my own will, I would not have married Wisdom herself, if she would have had me: but 'tis to much purpose to evade it, the common custom and use of life will have it so; the most of my actions are guided by example, not choice. And yet I did not go to it of my own voluntary motion, I was led and drawn to it by extrinsic occasions: for not only things that are incommodious in themselves, but also none so ugly, vicious, and to be avoided are there, that may not be rendered acceptable by some condition or accident; so unsteady and vain is all human resolution. And I was persuaded to it when worse prepared and more backward than I am at present, that I have tried what it is. And as great a libertine as I am taken to be, I have in truth more strictly observed the laws of marriage than I either promised or expected. 'Tis vain to kick when a man has once put on his fetters. A man must prudently manage his liberty; but having once submitted to obligation, he must confine himself within the laws of common duty, at least do what he can towards

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1 Plutarch, *On False Shame.*

2 Charron (*De la Sagesse*), in his *Essay on Marriage*, has largely availed himself of Montaigne; as, indeed, he has throughout his work.

3 Catullus, *de Coma Beren. Carm.* lxiv. 79.

4 Laertius, *in vitâ.*

5 The first sentence, *Homo homini deus*, is from the poet Cecilius, *apud* Symmach. *Epist.* x. 104. The other, *homo homini lupus*, is in Plautus, *Asin.* II. iv. 88.

6 *Pseudo.* Gallus, i. 61.

Marriage ought to be exempt from hatred and contempt.

it. They who engage in this contract, and carry themselves in it with hatred and contempt, do an unjust and inconvenient thing; and the fine rule that I hear pass from hand to hand amongst the women, as a sacred oracle:

"Serve thy husband like a waiter,
But guard thyself as from a traitor:"

which is to say: "Comport thyself towards him with a dissembled, inimical, and distrustful reverence, and respect," a watchword of war and suspicion, is equally injurious and hard. I am too mild for such rugged designs: to say the truth, I am not arrived to that perfection of cunning and gallantry of wit, to confound reason with justice, and to laugh at all rule and order that does not please my palate; because I hate superstition, I do not presently run into irreligion. If a man does not always perform his duty, he ought at least to love and acknowledge it; 'tis treachery to *marry* without *espousing*. Let us go on.

Our poet represents a marriage happy in good understanding, wherein nevertheless, there is not much loyalty. Does he mean that it is not impossible to give the reins to passion, and yield to the importunities of love, and yet reserve some duty towards marriage; and that it may be hurt without being totally broken? A serving-man may ride in his master's saddle, whom nevertheless he does not hate. Beauty, opportunity, and destiny, (for destiny has also a hand in it,

Fatum est in partibus illis
Quas sinus abscondit: nam, si tibi sidera cessent,
Nil faciet longi mensura incognita nervi.[1]

"Fate with full power presides
E'en o'er those parts which modest nature hides;
And little, if her genial influence fail,
Will vigour stead, or boundless hopes avail,"[1]

have debauched her to a stranger; though not so wholly, peradventure, but that she may have some remains of kindness for her husband. They are two designs, that have several paths leading to them, without being confounded with one another; a woman may yield to such a man as she would by no means have married, not only by reason of the condition of his fortune, but by that of his person. Few men have made a wife of a mistress, that have not repented it; and even in the other world, what an unhappy life did Jupiter lead with his, whom he had first enjoyed as a mistress! 'Tis, as the proverb is, "To befoul a basket, and then to put it upon one's head." I have in my time seen love shamefully and dishonestly cured in a good family by marriage; the considerations are altogether different. 'Tis to say we love at once two things contrary in themselves, without any disturbance. Isocrates said[2] that the city of Athens pleased as ladies do that men court for love; every one was delighted to come thither to take a turn, and pass away his time; but no one liked it so well as to espouse it, that is, to inhabit there and to make it his constant residence. I have been vexed to see husbands hate their wives, only because they do them wrong. We should not at any rate, methinks, love them the less for our faults; they should, at least upon the account of repentance and compassion, be dearer to us.

They are different ends, and yet, says he, in some sort compatible. Marriage has utility, justice, honour, and constancy for its share; a dull, but more universal pleasure. Love founds itself wholly upon pleasure, and indeed has it more full, lively, and stinging; a pleasure inflamed by difficulty; there must be in it sting and ardour: 'tis no more love, if without darts and fire. The bounty of ladies is too profuse in marriage, and dulls the point of affection and desire; to evade which inconvenience do but observe what pains Lycurgus and Plato take in their laws.

Difference betwixt marriage and love.

Women are not to blame at all when they refuse the rules of life that are introduced into the world; forasmuch as the men made them without their consent. There is naturally dispute and quarrelling betwixt them and us; and the strictest friendship we have with them is yet mixed with tumult and tempest. In the opinion of our author, we deal inconsiderately with them in this: after we have discovered that they are without comparison more able and ardent in the effects of love than we, and that the old priest has testified as much, who had been one while a man and then a woman,

Laws imposed by the men upon the women, before the latter gave their consent to them.

Vemus huic erat utraque nota;[3]

"For he the pleasure of each sex had tried;"

and, moreover, that we have learnt from their own mouths the proof that in different ages was made by an emperor and empress of Rome, both famous for ability in that affair: for he[4] in one night deflowered ten Sarmatian virgins that were his captives; but she[5] had five-and-twenty bouts in one night, changing her man according to her need and liking,

Adhuc ardens rigidæ tentigine vulvæ,
Et lassata viris, nondum satiata, recessit;[6]

"Still raging with the fever of desire,
Her veins all turgid, and her blood all fire,
Exhausted, but unsatisfied, she sought
Her home;"

[1] Juvenal, ix. 32.
[2] Ælian, *Var. Hist.* xii. 52.
[3] *Tiresias*, Ovid, *Metam.* iii. 323.
[4] *Proculus*. Flav. Vopiscus, *in vita*.
[5] *Messalina*, wife of the Emperor Claudius.
[6] Juvenal, vi. 128.

and that, upon the dispute which happened in Catalonia, wherein a wife complaining of her husband's too frequent addresses to her, not so much, as I conceive, that she was incommoded by it (for I believe no miracles out of religion), as under this pretence to curtail and curb in this, which is the fundamental act of marriage, the authority of husbands over their wives, and to show that their frowardness and malignity go beyond the nuptial bed, and spurn under foot even the graces and sweets of Venus; the husband, a man really brutish and unnatural, replied, that even on fasting-days he could not subsist with less than ten courses.[1] Whereupon came out that notable sentence of the Queen of Arragon, by which, after mature deliberation of her council, this good queen, to give a rule and example to all succeeding ages of the moderation required in a just marriage, set down six times a day as a legitimate and necessary stint; surrendering and quitting a great deal of the needs and desires of her sex, that she might, she said, establish an easy, and consequently a permanent and immutable, method: whereupon doctors cry out, "What the devil must the female appetite and concupiscence be, when their reason, their reformation, and virtue, is fixed at such a rate?" considering the diverse judgment of our appetites; for Solon, patron of the law schools, taxes us but at three bouts a month,[2] that men may not fail in point of conjugal frequentation. After having, I say, believed and preached all this,[3] we go and enjoin them continency for their particular share, and upon the extremest penalties.

There is no passion so hard to contend with as this, which we will have them only to resist, not simply as a vice alone, but as an execrable abomination, worse than irreligion or parricide; whilst we, at the same time, give way to't without offence or reproach. Even those women amongst us who have tried it, have sufficiently confessed what difficulty, or rather impossibility, they have found therein, even though seeking by material remedies to subdue, weaken, and oppose the body. We, on the contrary, would have them in full health, vigorous, in good keeping, high fed, and chaste together; that is to say, both hot and cold; for the marriage which we say is to keep them from burning is but a small refreshment to them, as we order the matter. If they take one whose vigorous age is hot and boiling, he will be proud that other women should know it:

Men give themselves aloose to the passion of love, and severely forbid it, at the same time, to the women.

> Sit tandem pudor; aut eamus in jus;
> Multis mentula millibus redempta,
> Non est hæc tua, Basse; vendidisti;[4]
> "Bassus, for shame! at length give o'er,
> Or I to justice must my cause resign;
> What I demand is yours no more:
> I bought it, and assert it mine."

Polemon the philosopher was justly sued by his wife for sowing in a barren field the seed that was due to one that was fruitful.[5] If, on the other hand, they take an old, decayed fellow, they are in a worse condition in marriage than either maids or widows. We think them well provided for, because they have a man to lie withal, as the Romans concluded Clodia Læta, a vestal, violated, because Caligula had approached her, though it was affirmed he did no more than approach her:[6] but, on the contrary, we by that increase their necessity, forasmuch as the touching and company of any man whatever rouses their desires, that in solitude would be more quiet; and, to the end, it is likely, that they might render their chastity more meritorious by this circumstance and consideration, Boleslaus and Kinge his wife, King and Queen of Poland, vowed it by mutual consent, being in bed together on their very wedding-day, and kept their vow in spite of all matrimonial conveniences and delights.[7]

The whole education of women tends to inspire them with a passion for love.

We train them up from their infancy to the traffic of love; their grace, their dress, knowledge, language, and whole instruction tend that way; their governesses imprint nothing in them but the idea of love, if for nothing else but by continually representing it to them, to make them disgusted with it. My daughter, the only child I have, is now at an age that forward young women are allowed to be married at; she is of a slow, delicate and tender complexion, and has accordingly been brought up by her mother after a private and particular manner, so that she but now begins to be weaned from her childish simplicity. She was one day reading before me in a French book, where she happened to meet the word "fouteau," the name of a tree, very well known;[8] the woman to whose conduct she is committed, stopped her short a little rudely, and made her skip over that dangerous step. I let her alone, not to trouble their rules, for I never concern myself in that sort of government; the feminine polity has a mysterious course, we must leave it to them; but, if I am not mistaken, the commerce of twenty lacquies could not, in six months' time, have so imprinted in her fancy the meaning, usage, and all the consequence of the sound of those smutty syllables, as this good old woman did by reprimand and interdiction.

> Motus doceri gaudet Ionicos
> Matura virgo, et frangitur artubus

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[1] Boerius (Nicholas Bohier), *Decisiones in Senatu Burdegalensi discuss. & pronulgatæ*; *Decis.* 317, page 503, edit. of Lyons, 1579.
[2] Plutarch, *on Love.*
[3] *That women are more apt for love than men.*
[4] Martial, xii. 90. 10.
[5] Laertius, *in vita.*
[6] And accordingly buried her alive. Xiphilen, *Life of Caligula.* Cromer, *de Rebus Pol.* viii.
[8] The beech. The sound of the word resembles that of an obscene term.

Jam nunc, et incestos amores
De tenero meditatur ungui :[1]

"With pliant limbs the ripen'd maid
Now joys to learn the wanton tread
Of dance Ionic, and to prove
The pleasures of forbidden love."

Let them but give themselves the rein a little, let them but enter into liberty of discourse; we are but children to them in this science: hear them but represent our pursuits and discourses; they will perfectly make you understand that we bring them nothing they have not known before, and digested without our help. It is, perhaps, as Plato says, that they have formerly been debauched by men.[2] I happened one day to be in a place where I could hear some of their talk without their suspicion; I am sorry that I cannot repeat it. "By our lady," said I, "it is time for us to go study the phrases of Amadis, Boccaccio, and Aretin, to be able to discourse with them: we employ our time to much purpose indeed! there is neither word, example, nor step, they are not more perfect in than our books; 'tis a discipline that springs with their blood,

Et mentem Venus ipsa dedit,[3]

"Venus herself has made them what they are,"

and which those good instructors, nature, youth, and health, are continually inspiring them with; they need not learn, they breed it:

Nec tantum niveo gavisa est ulla columbo
Compar, vel si quid dicitur improbius,
Oscula mordenti semper decerpere rostro,
Quantum præcipue multivola est mulier.[4]

"Not more delighted is the milk-white dove,
(Or if there be a thing more prone to love,)
Still to be billing with her mate, than is
Woman, with every man she meets to kiss."

So that if the natural violence of their desire were not a little restrained by fear and honour, which have been wisely contrived for them, we should be all shamed. All the motions in the world tend to this conjunction; 'tis a matter infused throughout; 'tis a centre to which all things tend. We yet see the edicts of wise old Rome, made for the service of love, and the precepts of Socrates for the instruction of courtezans;

Nec non libelli stoici inter sericos
Jacere pulvillos amant:[5]

"And Stoical books, for all their gravity,
Amongst silk cushions love to lie:"

Zeno, amongst his laws, did also regulate the divarications and motions in getting a maidenhead. Of what sense was the philosopher Strato's book, "Of Carnal Conjunction?" And what did Theophrastus treat of, in those he entitled, the one, "The Lover," and the other "Of Love?" of what Aristippus, in his, "Of Ancient Delights?" what do the so long and lively descriptions of Plato of the bolder loves in his time pretend to? and the book called "The Lover," of Demetrius Phalerius? and "Clinias, or Enforced Love," by Heraclides Ponticus; and Antisthenes' "Of Getting Children, or Of Weddings;" and the other, "Of the Master, or the Lover?" and that of Aristo, "Of Amorous Exercises?" what those of Cleanthes, one "Of Love," the other, "Of the Art of Loving?" The amorous dialogues of Sphœreus? and the fable of Jupiter and Juno, of Chrysippus, impudent beyond all toleration? And his fifty so lascivious epistles? I will let alone the writings of the philosophers of the Epicurean sect, protectress of pleasure. Fifty deities were, in time past, assigned to this office;[6] and there has been a nation where, to assuage the lust of those that came to their devotion, they had purposely male and female strumpets in their temples for them to lie with; and it was an act of ceremony to use them before they went to prayers:[7] *Nimirum propter continentiam incontinentia necessaria est; incendium ignibus extinguitur.* "Doubtless incontinency is necessary for continency's sake; a conflagration is extinguished by fire."

Whores kept in temples for the use of those who came to their devotion.

In the greatest part of the world that member of our body was deified: in one and the same province, some flayed off the skin to offer and consecrate a piece, others offered and consecrated their seed. In another, the young men publicly cut through betwixt the skin and the flesh of that part in several places, and thrust pieces of wood into the apertures as long and thick as they would receive, and of those pieces of wood afterwards made a fire for an offering to their gods; and were esteemed neither very vigorous nor chaste, if, by the force of that intolerable pain, they seemed to be any thing dismayed. In other countries the most sacred magistrate was reverenced and acknowledged by that member; and in several ceremonies the effigy of it was carried in pomp, in honour of several divinities. The Egyptian ladies, in their Bacchanalia, each carried one carved of wood about their necks, exactly made, as great and heavy as each was able to bear; besides one which the statue of their god represented, which in greatness surpassed all the rest of his body.[8] The married women near to the place where I live, make of their kerchiefs

[1] Horace, *Od.* iii. 6, 21. The text has *fingitur arbutus.*
[2] Alluding to the transmigration of souls.
[3] Virgil, *Georgic.* iii. 267.
[4] Catullus, *Carm.* lxvi. 125.
[5] Horace, *Epod.* viii. 15.
[6] *Of getting a maidenhead.* In the edition of 1588, this sentence immediately follows that which is now some lines before it, respecting Zeno.
[7] At Babylon (see Herod. i. 199. Strabo, xvi. &c.), and at Heliopolis, in Phœnicia (see Eusebius, *Life of Constantine*, iii. 58. Val. Max. ii. 6, 15. &c.)
[8] Herod. ii. 48. who, however, has it, ἀνδρῶν ὃν τολλῷ τεω ἔλασσον ἐὸν τοῦ ἄλλου σώματος, "a member which is *not much less* than the rest of the body."

the figure of one upon their foreheads, to glorify themselves in the enjoyment they have of it; and, coming to be widows, they throw it behind, and cover it with their head-cloths. The most modest matrons of Rome thought it an honour to offer flowers and garlands to the god Priapus; and they made the virgins, at the time of their espousals, sit upon his shameful parts.[1] I know not whether I have not in my time seen some air of like devotion. What was the meaning of that ridiculous thing our forefathers wore before on their breeches, and that is still worn by the Swiss? To what end do we make a formal show of our implements under our gaskins, and often, which is worse, above their natural size, by cheating and imposture? I have half a mind to believe that this sort of vestment was invented in the better and more conscientious ages, that the world might not be deceived; and that every one should give public account of his dimensions; the simpler nations wear them yet, and near about the real size. In those days the tailor took its measure, as is done now of a leg or a foot. That good man who, when I was young, gelt so many noble and antique statues in his great city that they might not corrupt the sight, according to the advice of this other good ancient:

Flagitii principium est, nudare inter cives corpora:[2]

"'Tis the beginning of wickedness to shew nudities in public:"

should have called to mind that, as in the mysteries of the goddesses, all masculine appearance was excluded, that he did nothing if he did not geld horses and asses, and finally all nature too:

Omne adeo genus in terris, hominumque, ferarumque,
Et genus æquoreum, pecudes, pictæque volucres,
In furias ignemque ruunt.[3]

"All creatures to this passion are inclin'd;
For whether they be those of human kind,
Beasts, wild or tame, fish, or the feather'd choir,
They're all inflamed with wanton love's desire."

The gods, says Plato,[4] have given us one disobedient and unruly member, that, like a furious animal, attempts by the violence of its appetite to subject all things to it: and they have given women one that has the same qualities, like a greedy and ravenous animal, which, if one refuse to give him food in season, grows wild, impatient of delay, and infusing the rage into their bodies, stops the passages, and hinders respiration, causing a thousand inconveniences; till having imbibed the fruit of the common thirst, it has plentifully besprinkled and bedewed the bottom of their womb.

Now my legislator[5] should also have considered, that perhaps it would have been a chaster and more useful custom to let them know the reality betimes, than permit them to guess according to the liberty and heat of their own fancy; instead of real parts, they substitute, through hope and desire, others that are three times greater; and a certain friend of mine lost himself by letting his be seen in a place not fit to apply them to their more serious use. What mischief do not those representations of prodigious size do, that the boys scrawl upon the stair-cases and walls, which give them a strange contempt of our natural furniture. And what do we know but that Plato, after other well-instituted republics, ordered that the men and women, old and young, should expose themselves naked to the view of one another, in his Gymnastics, upon that very account? The Indian women, who see the men stark naked, have at least cooled the sense of seeing; and let the women of the kingdom of Pegu say what they will, who below the waist have nothing to cover them but a cloth slip before, so narrow, that what decency and modesty soever they pretend by it, at every step all is to be seen, that it is an invention to allure the men to them, and to divert them from the boys, to whom that nation is universally inclined; yet perhaps they lose more by it than they get; and a man may say that an entire appetite is much sharper than one already glutted by the eyes: Livia used to say that to a virtuous woman a naked man was but a statue.[6] The Lacedæmonian women, more virgins when wives than our daughters are, saw every day the young men of the city stripped naked in their exercises, little minding themselves to cover their thighs in walking, believing themselves, says Plato,[7] sufficiently covered with their virtue, without any other robe. But those of whom St. Austin speaks,[8] have given nudity a wonderful power of temptation, that have made it a doubt whether women, at the day of judgment, shall rise again in their own sex, and not rather in ours, for fear of tempting us again, though in that holy place. In brief, we allure and flesh them by all sorts of ways; we incessantly heat and stir up their imagination, and yet we find fault. Let us confess the truth: there is scarce one of us that does not more apprehend the shame that accrues to him by the vices of his wife than by his own, and that is not more solicitous (wonderful charity!) of the conscience of his wife than of his own; who had not rather commit theft and sacrilege, and that his wife was a murderess and an heretic, than that she should not be more chaste than her husband. An unjust estimate of vices! Both we and they are capable of a thousand corruptions more prejudicial and unnatural than lust: but we weigh vices, not according to nature, but according to our interest, by which means they take so many unequal forms.

[1] Lactantius, *Divin. Institt.* i. 20. St. Augustin, *de Civit. Dei*, vi. 9.
[2] Ennius, *apud* Cicero, *Tusc. Quæs.* iv. 33.
[3] Virgil, *Georg.* iii. ii. 44.
[4] *Timæus*, towards the end.
[5] *The Pope.* "the good man" above referred to.
[6] Dion, *Life of Tiberius.*
[7] *Republic*, v. Plato says this of women in general, without referring especially to the Lacedemonians.
[8] *De Civit. Dei*, xxii. 17.

The austerity of our decrees renders the propensity of women to this vice more violent and vicious than its condition tends to, and engages it in consequences worse than the cause; they will voluntarily offer to go to the Exchange to seek for gain, and to the war to get reputation, rather than, in the midst of ease and delights, to have to do with so difficult a guardship: do not they very well see that there is neither merchant nor soldier who will not leave his business to run after this other, and so much as the porter and cobbler, toiled and tired out as they are with labour and hunger?

> Num tu, quæ tenuit dives Achæmenes,
> Aut pinguis Phrygiæ Mygdonias opes,
> Permutare velis crine Licymniæ,
> Plenas aut Arabum domos,
> Dum fragrantia detorquet ad oscula
> Cervicem, aut facili sævitia negat,
> Quæ poscente magis gaudeat eripi,
> Interdum rapere occupet?[1]

> "Say, shall the wealth by kings possest,
> Or the rich diadems they wear,
> Or all the treasures of the East,
> Purchase one lock of my Lycinnia's hair?
> While now her bending neck she plies,
> Backward to meet the fragrant kiss,
> Then with an easy cruelty denies,
> Yet wishes you would snatch, not ask, the bliss."

Chastity in a woman hard to be kept.

I can hardly tell whether the exploits of Alexander and Cæsar do really surpass the resolution of a beautiful young woman, bred up after our fashion in the light and commerce of the world, assaulted by so many contrary examples, and yet keeping herself entire in the midst of a thousand continual and powerful solicitations. There is no doing more difficult or more thorny, than that not-doing: I find it more easy to keep a suit of armour on, all the days of one's life, than a maidenhead: and the vow of virginity, of all others, is the most noble, as being the hardest to keep: *Diaboli virtus in lumbis est*,[2] says St. Jerome.

What ought to be an encouragement to women to take great care of it.

We have doubtless resigned to the ladies the most difficult and most vigorous of all human endeavours, and let us resign to them the glory too. This ought singularly to encourage them to be obstinate in it; 'tis a brave thing for them to defy us, and to spurn under foot that vain pre-eminence of valour and virtue that we pretend to have over them; they will find, if they do but observe it, that they will not only be much more esteemed for it, but also much more beloved. A gallant man does not give over his pursuit for being refused; provided it be a refusal of chastity, and not of choice: we may swear, threaten, and complain as much as we please: we lie, we love them all the better: there is no allurement like modesty, if it be not rude and uncivil. 'Tis stupidity and meanness to hold on against hatred and disdain; but, against a virtuous and constant resolution, mixed with som kindness and acknowledgment. 'tis the exercis of a noble and generous soul. They ma recognise our services to a certain degree, an give us civilly to understand that they disdai us not; for that law that enjoins them t abominate us because we adore them, and t hate us because we love them, is certainly ver severe, were it but for the difficulty of it: wh should they not give ear to our offers an requests, so long as they keep within th bounds of modesty? Wherefore should w fancy them to have other thoughts within, an to be worse than they seem? A queen of ou time acutely said, that to refuse these courtships is a testimony of weakness in women, an a self-accusation of facility; and that a lad could not boast of her chastity who was neve tempted. The limits of honour are *not cut* s fine; they may give themselves a little rein, and dispense a little without forfeiting themselves; there lies before the frontier some spac free, indifferent and neuter. He that has beaten and pursued her into her fort is a strange fellow, if he be not satisfied with his fortune: the valu of the conquest is to be estimated by the difficulty. Would you know what impression you service and merit have made in her heart? Judge of it by her behaviour. Some may gran more, who do not grant so much. The obligation of a benefit wholly relates to the good-wil of those who confer it; the other coinciden circumstances are dumb, dead, and casual; i costs her more to grant you that little, than i would do her companion to grant all. If i any thing rarity gives a value, it ought especially in this. Do not consider how little it i that is given, but how few have it to give; th value of money alters according to the coin an stamp of the place.

Whatever the spite and indiscretion of som may make them say upon the excess of thei discontent, yet virtue and truth will in time recover all; I have known some, whose reputation has for a great while suffered unde slander, who have after been restored to th world's universal opinion, merely by their constancy, without care or artifice; every on repents, and gives himself the lie for what h has believed and said; and from [illegible] a littl suspected, they have been after [illegible] to the first rank am[illegible] Somebody told Plato th[illegible] ill of him: "Let them t[illegible] live so as to make the[illegible] Besides the fear of God[illegible] rare a glory, which ought [illegible] to themselves, the corruptio[illegible] in compels them to it; an[illegible] there is nothing I would [illegible] entrust my reputation in so [illegible] In my time, the pleasure of te[illegible]

[1] Horace, *Ode*, ii. 12, 21.
[2] St Jerome, *Contra Jovin.* ii.

[3] Apud Antonius et Maximus, *Se*[illegible]

little inferior to that of doing), was not permitted, but to those who had some faithful and only friend; but now the ordinary discourse and common table-talk is nothing but boasts of favours received, and the secret liberality of ladies. In earnest, 'tis too abject, and too much meanness of spirit, to suffer such ungrateful, indiscreet, and giddy-headed people so to persecute, tease, and rifle those tender and obliging favours.

The unreasonableness of jealousy.

This our immoderate and illegitimate exasperation against this vice, springs from the most vain and turbulent disease that afflicts human minds, which is jealousy.

Quis vetat apposito lumen de lumine sumi?
Dent licet assidue, nil tamen inde perit.[1]

"That light from light be taken, who'll deny?
Tho' they do nought but give, nought's lost thereby."

She, and Envy her sister, seem to me to be the most idle and foolish of the whole troop. As to the last, I can say little to it; 'tis a passion that, though said to be so mighty and powerful, had never to do with me. As to the other, I know it by sight, and that's all. Beasts feel it: the shepherd Cratis being fallen in love with a she-goat, the he out of jealousy came to butt him as he was laid asleep, and beat out his brains.[2] We have raised this fever to a greater excess by the examples of some barbarous nations; the best disciplined have been touched with it, and 'tis reason, but not transported:

Ense maritali nemo confossus adulter
Purpureo Stygias sanguine tinxit aquas.

"Ne'er did adulterer, by the husband slain,
With purple blood the Stygian waters stain:"

The wisest of men and nations have been the least touched with this passion.

Lucullus, Cæsar, Pompey, Antony, Cato, and other brave men, were cuckolds and knew it, without making any bustle about it: there was in those days but one coxcomb, Lepidus,[3] that died for grief that his wife had used him so.

Ah! tum te miserum malique fati,
Quem attractis pedibus, patente porta,
Percurrent raphanique mugilesque:[4]

"Wretched will then he thy malignant fate,
When by the heels they drag thee from the gate,
Thro' show'rs of rotten roots and stinking skate:"

and the god of our poet, when he surprised one of his companions with his wife, satisfied himself with putting them to shame only,

Atque aliquis de diis non tristibus optat
Sic fieri turpis:[5]

"Yet for the pleasure all had borne the shame."

and took fire at the languid embraces she afterwards gave him, complaining that, upon that account, she was grown jealous of his affection:

Quid causas petis ex alto? fiducia cessit
Quo tibi, diva, mei?[6]

"Why are, my goddess, all these reasons tried,
Say why in me no longer you confide?"

nay, she asks him a favour for a bastard of hers,

Arma rogo genitrix nato,[7]

"The mother for her son doth armour crave:"

which is freely granted; and Vulcan speaks honourably of Æneas,

Arma [illegible] viro,[8]

"Arms for a valiant hero shall be made,"

with, in truth, a more than common humanity; and I am willing to leave this excess of bounty to the gods:

Nec divis homines componere æquum est:[9]

"Nor is it fit to equal men with gods."

As to the confusion of children, besides that the gravest legislators ordain and affect it in their republics, it touches not the women, where this passion is, I know not how, much more strongly seated:

Sæpe etiam Juno, maxima cœlicolum,
Conjugis in culpa flagravit quotidiana:[10]

"And Juno, with fierce jealousy inflam'd,
Her husband's daily slips has often blam'd."

When jealousy seizes these poor, weak, and resistless souls, 'tis pity to see how miserably it torments and tyrannizes over them; it insinuates itself into them, under the title of amity; but after it has once possessed them, the same causes that served for a foundation of good-will serve them for a foundation of mortal hatred. 'Tis of all the diseases of the mind that which most things serve for aliment, and fewest for remedy; the virtue, health, merit, and reputation of the husband are the incendiaries of their fury and ill-will:

Nullæ sunt inimicitiæ, nisi amoris acerbæ:[11]

"No enmities so keen as those of love."

This fever defaces and corrupts all they have of

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[1] The sense of the last verse is in Ovid's *Arte Armandi*, iii. 93. Montaigne has taken the words from an epigram, entitled "Priapus," which begins thus:

"Obscure poterit lumen tibi dicere: da mihi, quod tu
Des licet assidue, nil tamen inde perit."

[2] Ælian, *Treatise of Animals*, xii. 42.

[3] "The father of one of the triumvirs, who died," says Plutarch, "having broken his heart, not so much by the distress of his affairs as by a discovery he made from a letter which fell into his hands, that his wife had forfeited her honour."—*Life of Pompey.*

[4] Catull. *Carm.* xv. 17.

[5] Ovid, *Metam.* iv. 187. taken from the *Odyssey* viii. 339.

[6] *Æneid*, viii. 395.

[7] Id. *ib.* 383.

[8] Id. *ib.* 441.

[9] Catull. *Carm.* lxviii. 141.

[10] *Æneid*, v. 138

[11] Propert. ii. 8, 3.

beautiful and good besides; and there is no action of a jealous woman, let her be how chaste and how good a housewife soever, that does not relish of anger and rudeness; 'tis a furious agitation, that rebounds them to an extremity quite contrary to its cause. Which was very manifest in one Octavius,[1] at Rome, who, having lain with Porcia Postumia, found his love so much augmented by fruition, that he solicited with all importunity to marry her; which, seeing he could not persuade her to, this excessive affection precipitated him into the effects of the most cruel and mortal hatred, and he killed her. In like manner, the ordinary symptoms of this other amorous disease are intestine hatreds, factions, conspiracies,

Notumque furens quid fœmina possit,[2]

"'Tis known what woman in her rage can do,"

and a rage which so much the more frets itself, as it is compelled to veil itself under a pretence of good-will.

Now the duty of chastity is of a vast extent. Is it their wills that we would have them restrain? That is a very pliant and active thing; a thing very quick and nimble to be staid. How, if dreams sometimes engage them so far that they cannot deny them. It is not in them, nor perhaps in chastity itself, seeing it is female, to defend itself from lust and desire. If we are only interested in their will, what a case are we in then? Do but imagine what crowding there would be amongst men in pursuance of this privilege, to run full speed, without tongue and eyes, into every woman's arms that would accept them: the Scythian women put out the eyes of all their slaves and prisoners of war, that they might have their pleasure of them, and they never the wiser.[3] Oh, the furious advantage of opportunity! Should any one ask me what was the first part of love, I should answer, that it is how to take a man's time; and so the second, and so the third; 'tis a point that can do every thing. I have sometimes wanted fortune, but I have also sometimes been wanting to myself in matter of attempt. There is greater temerity required in this age of ours, which our young people excuse under the name of warmth: but did women examine it more strictly, they would find that it rather proceeded from contempt. I was always superstitiously afraid of giving offence, and have ever had a great respect for her I loved; besides shame, he who in this traffic takes away the reverence defaces at the same time the lustre. I would in this affair have a man a little play the child, the timorous, and the servant. If not altogether in this, I have in other things, some air of the foolish bashfulness whereof Plutarch makes mention; and the course of my life has been divers ways hurt and blemished with it, a quality very ill suiting my universal form. And what is there also amongst us but sedition and discord? I am as much out of countenance to be denied, as I am to deny; and it so much troubles me to be troublesome to others, that in occasions where duty compels me to try the good-will of any one in a thing that is doubtful, and that will be chargeable to him, I do it very faintly, and very much against my will; but if it be for my own particular (whatever Homer truly says, that modesty is a foolish virtue in an indigent person[4]), I commonly commit it to a third person to blush for me, and deny those that employ me with the same difficulty; so that it has sometimes befallen me to have had a mind to deny when I had not the power to do it. 'Tis folly then to attempt to bridle in women a desire that is so powerful in them, and so natural to them; and when I hear them brag of having so maidenly and so temperate a will, I laugh at them; they retire too far back. If it be an old toothless trot, or a young dry consumptive thing, though it be not altogether to be believed, at least they may say it with more likelihood of truth; but they who are yet capable of love and desire say this to their own prejudice, by reason that inconsiderate excuses serve for accusation; like a gentleman, a neighbour of mine, suspected to be insufficient,

[illegible]anguidior tenera cui pendens sicula beta;
Nunquam se mediam sustulit ad tunicam;

"Unfit for love's sweet toil,"

who, three or four days after he was married, to justify himself, swore that he had ridden twenty stages the night before: an oath that was afterwards made use of to convict him of his ignorance in that affair and to unmarry him. Besides, it signifies nothing; for there is neither continency nor virtue where there are no opposing desires. "I feel it," they may say, "but I will not yield to it." Saints themselves speak after that manner. I mean those who boast in good earnest of their coldness and insensibility, and who expect to be believed when they profess it with a grave and serious countenance; for when it is spoken with an affected look, where their eyes give the lie to their tongue, and speak in the cant of their profession, which goes always against the hair, 'tis good sport. I am a great friend of liberty and plainness; but there is no medium; if it be not wholly simple and child-like, 'tis silly and unbecoming ladies in this commerce, and presently

[1] *Octavius Sagitta.* Tacitus, *Annal.* xiii. 44.

[2] *Æneid*, v. 21.

[3] Herodotus, lib. iv. 255, does not say that the Scythian women had the eyes of their slaves plucked out for the purpose assigned by Montaigne, but that the Scythians themselves deprived all their slaves of sight for the purpose of drawing milk from their mares, which was their food. But it does not appear very plain that there was a necessity of blinding these poor slaves for this work; and therefore the reason that Montaigne assigns for it is much more easy to comprehend.

[4] *Odyssey*, xvii. 347.

[5] Catullus, *Carm.* lxvii. 21.

runs into impudence. Their disguises and figures only serve to cozen fools. Lying is there in its seat of honour; 'tis a by-way, that by a back-door leads to truth. If we cannot curb their imagination, what would we have them do? Do indeed! there are enough who evade all foreign communication, by which chastity may be corrupted;

Illud sæpe facit, quod sine teste facit:[1]

"He often does himself apply
To that he does when none is by:"

and those whom we fear the least are perhaps most to be feared; their sins that made the least noise are the worst:

Offendor mœcha simpliciore minus.[2]

"A profess'd strumpet less offence does give."

There are ways by which they may lose their virginity without prostitution, and, which is more, without their knowledge: *Obstetrix, virginis cujusdam integritatem manu velut explorans, sive malevolentia, sive inscitia, sive casu, dum inspicit, perdidit*:[3] some one by seeking her maidenhead has lost it; another by playing with it has destroyed it. We cannot precisely define the actions we interdict them: they must guess at our meaning under general and doubtful terms; the very idea we invent for their chastity is ridiculous; for amongst the greatest examples I hear of, Fatua, the wife of Faunus, is one, who never after her marriage suffered herself to be seen by any man whatever;[4] and the wife of Hiero, who never noticed her husband's bad breath, imagining that it was common to all men.[5] They must needs become insensible and invisible to satisfy us.

The extreme chastity of some women.

Now let us confess that the knot of the judgment of this duty principally lies in the will: there have been husbands who have suffered this mishap, not only without reproaching or taking offence at their wives, but with singular obligation to them, and great commendation of their virtue. Such a woman has been, who prized her honour above her life, and yet has prostituted it to the furious lust of a mortal enemy to save her husband's life, and who, in so doing, did that for him she would not have done for herself![6] It is not here that we are to produce these examples; they are too high and rich to be set off with so poor a foil as I can give them here; let us reserve them for a nobler place; but for examples of the ordinary sort, do we not every day see women amongst us, that surrender themselves for their husband's only benefit, and by their express order and mediation? And, of old, Phaulius the Argive offered his to King Philip out of ambition,[7] as Galba did out of civility, who, having entertained Mæcenas at supper, and observing that his wife and he began to cast sheep's eyes at one another, and to complot love by signs, let himself sink down upon his cushion, like one in a profound sleep, to give opportunity to their fondling; which he himself handsomely confessed; for at the same time a servant making bold to filch a vase that stood upon the table, he frankly cried, "Hold, you rogue! Do you not see that I only sleep for Mæcenas?"[8] Such a one there may be, whose manners may be lewd enough, and yet whose will may be more staid than another, who outwardly carries himself after a more regular manner. As we see some who complain of having vowed chastity before they knew what they did; and I have also known others really complain of being given up to debauchery before they were at years of discretion; the vice of the parents, or the impulse of necessity, which is a rude counsellor, may be the cause. In the East Indies, though chastity is of singular reputation, yet custom permitted a married woman to prostitute herself to any one who presented her with an elephant, and that with glory too, to have been valued at so high a rate.[9] Phedo the philosopher, a man of birth, after the taking of his country, Elis, made it his trade[10] to prostitute the beauty of his youth for money, so long as it lasted, to any one that would, thereby to gain his living. And Solon was the first in Greece, 'tis said, who by his laws gave liberty to women, at the expense of their chastity, to provide for the necessities of life; a custom that Herodotus says had been received in many governments before his time.[11] And besides, what fruit is there of this painful solicitude? For what justice soever there is in this passion, we are yet to consider whether it turns to account or no; does any one think to curb it by his industry?

Women prostituted by the mediation of their husbands, and for their advantage.

Chastity depends on the innocence of the will.

Pone seram; cohibe: sed quis custodiet ipsos
Custodes? cauta est, et ab illis incipit uxor.[12]

"I hear, old friends, I hear you: make all sure,
Plant spies within, and bolts without the door:
But who shall keep the keepers? wives contemn
Our poor precautions, and begin with them."

What conveniency will not serve their turn in so knowing an age?

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1 Martial, vii. 62, 6.
2 Id. vi. 7, 6.
3 These words are a confirmation of what Montaigne has been saying, and though they are to be met with in St. Austin's treatise, *De Civitate Dei*, i. 18., they are too gross to be translated.
4 Varro, *apud* Lactantius, i. 22.
5 Plutarch, *Apoth. of the Ancient Kings.*
6 Bayle, *Dict.* art. *Acindynus.*
7 Plutarch, *on Love.*
8 Id. *ib.*
9 Arrian, *Hist. Indic.* c. 17.
10 He did not make a trade of himself, voluntarily; but being a slave, his master compelled him to do so. Laertius, *in vitâ.* Aulus Gellius, ii. 18.
11 Herodotus attributes it also to the Lydians (i. 94.), and to the Babylonians (i. 96.)
12 Juvenal, vi. 346.

Curiosity is vicious throughout; but 'tis pernicious here: 'tis folly to examine into a disease for which there is no physic that does not inflame and make it worse; of which the shame grows still greater and more public by jealousy, and of which the revenge more wounds our children than heals us. You wither and die in the search of so obscure a proof. How miserably have they of my time arrived at that knowledge, who have been so unhappy as to find it out? If the informer does not at the same time present a remedy, and bring relief, 'tis an injurious information, and that better deserves a dagger-stab than does the lie given. We no less laugh at him who takes pains to prevent it, than at him who is a cuckold and knows it not. The character of cuckold is indelible; he who once has it carries it to his grave; the punishment proclaims it more than the fault. It is to much purpose to see, to draw the curtain, and to discover our private misfortunes, and to trumpet forth on tragic scaffolds misfortunes that only hurt us by being known: for "a good wife," or "a happy marriage," is said, not of those that really are so, but of those whereof no one says to the contrary. Men should be so discreet as to evade this tormenting and unprofitable knowledge; and the Romans had a custom, when returning from any expedition, to send home before to acquaint their wives with their coming, that they might not surprize them;[1] and to this purpose it is that a certain nation has introduced a custom, that the priest shall on the wedding-day unlock the bride's cabinet, to free the husband from the doubt and curiosity of examining in the first assault whether she comes a virgin to his bed, or has been at the sport before.

Curiosity in the article of women's chastity pernicious.

But the world will be talking: I know an hundred honest men, cuckolds, that are handsomely and not very indecently so; a worthy man is pitied, but not disesteemed for it. Order it so that your virtue may *stifle your misfortune; that good* men may curse the occasion; and that he who wrongs you may tremble but to think on't. And, moreover, who escapes being talked of at the same rate, from the least to the greatest?

A gentleman is not the less esteemed for being dishonoured by his wife.

> Tot qui legionibus imperitavit,
> Et melior quam tu multis fuit, improbe, rebus:[2]
>
> "To whom so many legions once did bow,
> And who, poor wretch, was better far than thou:"

you hear how many honest men are reproached with this in your presence, and you may believe that you are no more spared behind your back. Nay, the ladies will be laughing too; and what are they so apt to laugh at in this virtuous age of ours, as at a peaceable and well-composed marriage? There is not one amongst you but has made somebody a cuckold; and nature runs in parallel, in compensation, and turn for turn. The frequency of this mishap ought long since to have made it easy; 'tis now passed into custom.

Miserable passion, which has this aggravation also, that it is incommunicable:

> Fors etiam nostris invidit questibus aures;[3]
>
> "And spiteful fortune too denies
> To give an ear unto our cries;"

for to what friend dare you entrust your griefs; who, if he does not laugh at them, will not make use of the information to get a share of the quarry? The sours as well as the sweets of marriage are kept secret by the wife; and, amongst other troublesome conditions annexed to it, this, to a prating fellow, as I am, is one of the chief, that custom has rendered it indecent and prejudicial to communicate to any one all that a man knows and feels.

To give even women counsel against jealousy would be so much time lost; their very being is so made up of suspicion, vanity, and curiosity, that to cure them by any lawful way is not to be hoped or expected. They often recover of this infirmity by a form of health much more to be feared than the disease itself; for as there are enchantments that cannot take away the evil but by throwing it upon another, they also willingly transfer this fever to their husbands, when they shake it off themselves. And yet I know not, to speak truth, whether a man can suffer worse from them than their jealousy; 'tis the most dangerous of all their conditions, as the head is of all their members. Pittacus used to say, "That every one had his misfortune; and that his was the jealous head of his wife; but for which he should think himself perfectly happy." It must indeed be a mighty inconvenience which could thus poison the whole life of so just, so wise, and valiant a man; what must we poor little fellows do? The senate of Marseilles had reason to grant *him his request,* that begged leave to kill himself, that he might be delivered from the clamour of his wife; for 'tis a mischief that is never removed but by carrying away the piece; and that has no remedy but flight or patience, both of them very hard. He was, to my mind, an understanding fellow that said there was no happy marriage but betwixt a blind wife and a deaf husband.

The jealousy of a wife is very fatal to her husband.

Let us also consider whether the great and violent severity of obligation we enjoin them does not produce two effects contrary to our de-

The dangerous consequences of too great a

[1] Plutarch, *Roman Questions.*

[2] Lucret. iii. 1041. 1039. Of the latter verse Montaigne gives the sense, but not the words.

[3] Catullus, *Carm.* lxvii. 170.

restraint laid on the wife by the husband.

sign; namely, whether it does not render the pursuers more eager to attack, and the women more easy to yield: for, as to the first, by raising the value of the place, we raise the value and desire of the conquest. Might it not be Venus herself who so cunningly enhanced the price of her merchandize, by making the laws her bawds; knowing how insipid a delight it would be that was not heightened by fancy, and hardness to achieve? In short, 'tis all pork, only varied by sauces, as said Flaminius's host.[1] Cupid is a roguish god, who makes it his sport to contend with religion and justice; 'tis his glory that his power makes all other powers and all other rules give place to his:

Materiam culpæ prosequiturque suæ.[2]

"And seeks out matter for his crimes."

And as to the second point, should we not be less cuckolds if we less feared to be so? according to the humour of women, whom interdiction incites, and who are more eager for being forbid:

Ubi velis, nolunt; ubi nolis, volunt ultro:[3]
Concessa pudet ire via.[4]

"In every varied choice, repugnant still,
They wou'd, you won't, and when you won't they will."

What better interpretation can we make of Messalina's behaviour? She at first made her husband a cuckold in private, as is the common use; but, bringing her business about with too much ease, by reason of her husband's stupidity, she soon scorned that way, and presently fell to making open love to her own servants, and to favour and entertain them in the sight of all. She would make him know and see how she used him. This animal, not to be roused with all this, and rendering her pleasures dull and flat by his too stupid facility, by which he seemed to authorize and make them lawful, what does she but, being the wife of a living and healthful emperor, and at Rome, the theatre of the world, in the face of the sun, and with solemn ceremony, and to Silius, whom she had long before enjoyed, she publicly marries herself, one day that her husband was gone out of the city.[5] Does it not seem as if she was going to become chaste by her husband's negligence? or that she sought another husband that might sharpen her appetite by his jealousy, and who by watching should incite her? But the first difficulty she met with was also the last; the beast suddenly roused; these stupid sort of men are oft the most dangerous to deal with. I have seen by experience that this extreme toleration, when it comes to dissolve, produces the most severe revenge; for taking fire on a sudden, anger and fury being collected in one point, discharge their utmost force at the first charge,

Irarumque omnes effundit habenas;[6]

"And poureth forth the whirlwind of his rage;"

he put her to death, and with her a great number of those with whom she had intelligence: even one man who could not help it, and whom she had caused to be forced to her bed with scourges.[7]

What Virgil says of Venus and Vulcan, Lucretius had better expressed of a stolen enjoyment betwixt her and Mars:

Belli fera mænera Mavors
Armipotens regit, in gremium qui sæpe tuum se
Rejicit, æterno devinctus vulnere amoris;
Pascit amore avidos inhians in te, Dea, visus,
Eque tuo pendet resupini spiritus ore:
Hunc tu, Diva, tuo recubantem corpore sancto
Circumfusa super, suaves ex ore loquelas
Funde.[8]

"For furious Mars,
The only governor and god of wars,
With thee enamoured often doth resort
To taste the pleasures of the Paphian court;
There, on thy bosom, he supinely lies,
Panting, and drinking love at both his eyes;
Sucking thy balmy breath with eager kiss,
And hastening to enjoy yet greater bliss;
Then, while thy tender limbs about him move,
Involv'd and fetter'd in the clasps of love,
Thy charms in that transporting moment try,
And softest language to his heart apply."

When I consider this *rejicit*, *pascit*, *inhians*, *molli*, *fovet*, *medullas*, *labefacta*, *pendet*, *percurrit*, and that noble *circumfusa*, mother of the gentle *infusus*, I contemn those little quibbles and verbal allusions that have been since in use. Those good people stood in need of no subtlety to disguise their meaning; their language is downright and plain, and full of natural and continued vigour; they are all epigram; not the sting only, but the head, body, and feet; there is nothing forced, nothing languishing; but they still keep the same pace: *Contextus totus virilis est; non sunt circa flosculos occupati.*[9] "The whole contexture is manly, without introducing little flowers of rhetoric." 'Tis not a soft eloquence and without offence merely; 'tis nervous and solid, that does not so much please as it fills and ravishes the greatest minds. When I see these brave methods of expression, so lively, so profound, I do not say that 'tis well said, but well thought. 'Tis the sprightliness of the imagination that swells and elevates the words, *Pectus est quod disertum facit.*[10] "'Tis the heart makes it eloquent." Our people call judgment, language, and fine words, full conceptions. This representation is not so much carried on by

What constitutes true eloquence.

[1] Livy, xxxv. 49.
[2] Ovid, *Trist* iv. i 34,
[3] Terence, *Eunuch.* iv. 8. 43.
[4] Lucan, ii. 446.
[5] Tacitus, *Annal.* xi. 26.
[6] *Æneid*, xii. 499.

[7] *Muester*, a comedian, and *Traulus Montanus*, a knight. Tacitus, *ut suprà.*
[8] Lucret i. 33.
[9] Seneca, *Epist.* 33.
[10] Quintilian, x 7.

dexterity of hand, as by having the object more vividly imprinted in the soul. Gallus speaks simply, because he conceives simply: Horace does not content himself with a superficial expression, that would betray him; he sees farther and more clearly into things; his wit breaks into and rummages all the magazine of words and figures wherewith to express himself, and he must have them above ordinary, because his conception is so. Plutarch says[1] that he sees the Latin tongue by the things: 'tis here the same; the sense illuminates and produces the words, not words of air, but of flesh and bone; they signify more than they express. Inferior heads perceive some image of this; for in Italy I said whatever I had a mind to do in common discourse; but in more serious subjects, I durst not have trusted myself with an idiom that I could not wind and turn out of its ordinary pace; I would therein have a power of introducing something of my own.

Men of wit enrich language, and give it fresh vigour.

The handling and utterance of fine wits is that which sets off a language; not so much by innovating it, as by putting it to more vigorous and various service, by straining, bending, and adapting; they do not create words, but they enrich their own, and give them weight and signification by the uses they put them to, and teach them unwonted motions, but withal ingeniously and discreetly. And how little this talent is given to all, is manifest by the many French scribblers of this age; they are bold and proud enough not to follow the common road, but they lose their way for want of invention and discretion. There is nothing seen in their writings but a wretched affectation of a strange new stile, with cold and absurd disguises, which, instead of elevating, depresses the matter; provided they can but trick up their style with fine new words, they care not what they signify; and to bring in a new word by the head and shoulders, they leave out the old one, very often more sinewy and significant than the other.

Montaigne's opinion of the French language.

There is stuff enough in our language, but there is a defect in fashioning it; for there is nothing that might not be made out of our terms of hunting and war, which is a fruitful soil to borrow from: and the forms of speaking, like herbs, improve and grow stronger by being transplanted. I find it sufficiently abounding, but not sufficiently pliable and vigorous: it quails under a powerful conception: if you would maintain the dignity of your style, you will oft perceive it to flag and languish under you, and there Latin steps in to its relief, as Greek does to other languages. Of some of the words I have picked out for my own use, we do not easily discern the energy, by reason that the frequent use of them has in some sort debased their beauty, and rendered it common: as in our ordinary language, there are several excellent phrases and metaphors to be met with, of which the beauty is withered by age, and the colour is sullied by too common handling; but that takes nothing from the relish to an understanding man: neither does it derogate from the glory of those ancient authors, who, 'tis likely, first brought those words into that lustre.

The sciences treat of things too finely, and after an artificial, very different from the common and natural way. My page makes love, and understands it: but read to him Leo the Hebrew, and Ficinus,[2] where they speak of him, his thoughts and actions, he understands it not. I find in Aristotle most of my ordinary notions; they are there covered and disguised in another robe for the use of their schools. Well may they speed; but, were I of the trade, I would as much naturalize art as they artify nature. Let us leave Bembo and Equicola to themselves.[3] When I write, I can very well spare both the company and the remembrance of books, lest they should interrupt my method; and also, in truth, the best authors too much humble and discourage me. I am very much of the painter's mind, who, having represented cocks most wretchedly ill, charged all his boys not to suffer any real cock to come into his shop; and had rather need to give myself a little lustre after the manner of Antigenides the musician, who, when he had to perform, took care beforehand that the auditory should, either before or after, be disgusted with some other ill musicians. But I can hardly be without Plutarch; he is so universal and so full, that, upon all occasions, and what extravagant subject soever you take in hand, he will still introduce himself into your business, and holds out to you a liberal and not to be exhausted hand of riches and embellishments. It vexes me that he is so exposed to the spoil of those who are conversant with him; I can no sooner cast an eye upon him but I purloin either a leg or a wing.

The sciences treat of things with too much art.

Why Montaigne chose to have no books by him but Plutarch while he was writing.

And also, for this design of mine, 'tis convenient for me to write at home, in a wild country, where I have nobody to assist or relieve me; where I hardly see a man that understands the Latin of

Why he chose to write at home, where he

[1] In the *Life of Demosthenes*, chap. 1. "I began to take Latin authors in hand," says he, "very late, being far advanced in the decline of life, when an odd thing happened to me, which is nevertheless true, viz., that I did not so much learn to understand things by the words, as I came to understand the words, in some degree, by the use and knowledge I had of the things thereby signified."

[2] Leo of Judah, a Portuguese rabbi, who lived under Ferdinand the Catholic, and composed a "Dialogue on Love." Ficinus, who lived at the same period, translated the works of Plato and Plotinus, and wrote several metaphysical pieces.

[3] *Cardinal Bembo*, author of a poem called *Gli Asolani*. *Equicola*, a theologian and philosopher of the sixteenth century, wrote a book entitled *Della Natura d'Amore*.

had none to help him.

his pater-noster, and of French as little, if not less. I might have made it better elsewhere, but then the work would have been less my own; and its principal end and perfection is to be exactly mine. I should well enough correct an accidental error, of which I am full, as I run carelessly on: but for any ordinary and constant imperfections, it were a kind of treason to put them out. When another tells me, or I say to myself, "Thou art too full of figures: this is a word of the Gascon growth: this a dangerous phrase (I do not reject any of those that are used in the common streets of France, they that will fight custom with grammar are fools): this is an ignorant discourse; this is a paradoxical saying; this is a foolish expression: thou makest thyself merry sometimes; and men will think thou sayest a thing in good earnest, which thou only speakest in jest." Yes, say I; but I correct the faults of inadvertence, not those of custom. Do I not talk at the same rate throughout? Do I not represent myself to the life? Enough: I have done what I designed; all the world knows me in my book, and my book in me.

Now I have an apish imitating quality; when I used to write verses (and I never made any but Latin), they evidently accused the poet I had last read; and some of my first essays have a little exotic taste: I speak somewhat another kind of language at Paris than I do at Montaigne. Whomever I stedfastly look upon easily leaves some impression of his upon me: whatever I consider, I usurp: a foolish countenance, a disagreeable look, or a ridiculous way of speaking; vices most of all, because they seize and stick to me, and will not leave their hold without shaking off. I swear more by imitation than humour. A murdering imitation, like that of the apes, so terrible both in stature and strength, that Alexander met with in a certain country of the Indies, which he would have had much ado any other way to have subdued; but they afforded him the means, by that inclination of theirs, to imitate whatever they saw done. For the hunters, being directed to put on shoes in their sight, and to tie them fast with many knots, and to muffle up their heads in caps with running nooses, and to seem to anoint their eyes with glue:[1] so did those silly creatures employ their imitations to their own ruin; they glued up their own eyes, haltered and bound themselves. The other faculty of playing the mimic, and ingeniously acting the words and gestures of another, purposely to make others merry, and to raise their admiration, is no more in me than in a stock. When I swear my own oath, 'tis only, by God, of all oaths the most direct. They say that Socrates swore by his dog; Zeno had for his oath the same interjection, at this time in use amongst the Italians, *cappari*;[2] Pythagoras swore by water and air.[3] I am so apt, without thinking of it, to receive these superficial impressions, that have I majesty or highness in my mouth for three days together, eight days after they come out instead of excellency and lordship; and what I say to-day in sport and fooling, I shall say seriously to-morrow. Wherefore, in writing, I more unwillingly undertake beaten arguments, lest I should handle them at another's expense. Every subject is equally fertile to me. A fly will serve me for a subject; and 'tis well if this I have in hand has not been undertaken at the recommendation of as flighty a will! I may begin with that which pleases me best, for matter is all linked to one another.

Montaigne very apt to imitate.

But my soul displeases me, in that it ordinarily produces its deepest and most airy conceits, and those which please me best, when I least expect or study for them, and then suddenly vanish, I having, at that instant, nothing to apply them to: on horseback, at table, or in bed; but most on horseback, where I am most given to think. My speaking is somewhat nicely jealous of silence and attention; if I am talking forcibly, who interrupts, stops me. In travelling, the necessity of the way will often put a stop to discourse; besides that I, for the most part, travel without company fit to entertain long discourse, by which means I have all the leisure I would to entertain myself. It falls out as it does in my dreams; whilst dreaming I recommend them to my memory (for I am apt to dream that I dream), but the next morning I may represent to myself of what complexion they were, whether gay, or sad, or strange, but what they were, as to the rest, the more I endeavour to retrieve them, the deeper I plunge them into oblivion. So, of thoughts that come accidentally into my head, I have no more but a vain image remaining in my memory, only enough to make me torment myself in their quest to no purpose.

He generally produced his profoundest thoughts on a sudden.

Well then, laying books aside, and more simply and materially speaking, I find after all that love is nothing else but the thirst of enjoying the object desired; neither is Venus any other thing than the pleasure of discharging the vessels, like the pleasure nature gives us in discharging other parts; which either by immoderation or indiscretion becomes vicious. According to Socrates,[4] love is the appetite of generation, by the mediation of beauty. And having often

Definition of love.

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[1] Ælian, *de Animal*, xvii. 25, and Strabo, xv.

[2] Laertius, *in vitâ*. *Cappari*, or *capparis*, is the name of a shrub bearing capers; others swore by a cabbage, as is the custom in France even at this day; witness the word *vertuchoux*, a kind of oath, which signifies the virtue of cabbage; an expression which many people make use of constantly.

[3] Laertius, *in vitâ*.

[4] Plato, *Banquet*.

considered the ridiculous titillation of this pleasure, the absurd, hair-brained, and senseless motions with which it inspires Zeno and Crisippus, the indiscreet rage, and the countenance enflamed with fury and cruelty in the sweetest effects of love, and then that grave, severe, and extatic air in so wanton an action; that our delights and our excrements are promiscuously shuffled together; and that the supreme pleasure carries along with it fainting and complaining, as well as grief; I believe it to be true that, as Plato says,[1] the gods made man for their sport,

Quænam ista jocandi
Sævitia?[2]

"What a strange sporting cruelty is this?"

and that it is in mockery that nature has ordered the most troublesome of actions to be the most common, by that to make us equal, and to parallel fools and wise men, beasts and us. Even the most contemplative and sedate man, when I imagine him in this posture, I hold him an impudent fellow to pretend to be sedate and contemplative: 'tis the peacock's feet abating his pride.

Ridentem dicere verum
Quid vetat?[3]

"Why may not truth in laughing guise be drest?"

They who banish serious imaginations from their sports, do, says one, like him who dares not adore the statue of a saint, if not covered with a veil. We eat and drink, indeed, as beasts do; but those are not actions that obstruct the functions of the soul; in these we maintain our advantage over them; but this subjects all other thoughts, and by its imperious authority makes an ass of all Plato's divinity and philosophy too, and yet he complains not of it. In every thing else a man may keep some decorum, all other operations submit to the rules of decency; this cannot so much as in imagination appear other than vicious or ridiculous. Examine if you can therein find one wise and discreet proceeding. Alexander said[4] that he chiefly knew himself to be mortal by this act and sleeping. Sleep suffocates and suppresses the faculties of the soul: the familiarity with women does likewise dissipate and exhaust them. Truly, 'tis a mark not only of our original corruption, but also of our vanity and deformity.

On the one hand, nature pushes us on to it, having fixed the most noble, useful, and pleasant of all her functions to this desire: and, on the other, leaves us to accuse and avoid it, as insolent and indecent, to blush at it, and to recommend abstinence.

Why is love, with which nature inspires us, to be condemned.

Are we not, in fact, brutes to call that work brutish which begets us? People of differing religions have concurred in several ceremonies, as sacrifices, lamps, burning incense, fasts, and offerings; and amongst others, in condemning this act: all opinions come to this, besides the so extended custom of circumcision, which is for punishment of it. We have perhaps reason to blame ourselves for being guilty of so foolish a production as man, and to call the act and parts shameful that are employed in the work (I am sure mine are now properly shameful and abject). The Essenians, of whom Pliny speaks,[5] kept up their nation several ages without nurse or baby-clouts, by the arrival of strangers, who following this pretty humour, came continually into them: a whole nation resolute rather to hazard a total extermination, than to engage themselves in female embraces, and rather to lose a succession of men than to beget one. 'Tis said that Zeno never had to do with a woman but once in his life, and then out of civility, that he might not seem too obstinately to disdain the sex.[6] Every one avoids seeing a man born, every one runs to see him die; to destroy a man a spacious field is sought out, and in the face of the sun; but to make him, we creep into as dark and private a corner as we can; 'tis a man's duty to withdraw himself from the light to do it; but 'tis glory, and the fountain of many virtues to know how to destroy what we have done: the one is injury, the other favour: for Aristotle says that to do any one a benefit, in a certain phrase of his country, is to kill him. The Athenians,[7] to couple the disgrace of these two actions, having to purge the Isle of Delos, and to justify themselves to Apollo, interdicted at once all birth and burial in the precincts thereof: *Nostri nosmet pœnitet.*[8] "We are ashamed of ourselves."

There are some nations that will not be seen to eat.[9] I know a lady, and of the best quality, who has the same opinion, that it is an ill sight to see women chew their meat, that it takes away much from their grace and beauty, and therefore unwillingly appears at a public table with an appetite; and I know a man also that cannot endure to see another eat, nor be seen himself; and is more shy of company in putting in than putting out. In the Turkish empire there are a great number of men who, to excel others, never suffer themselves to be seen when they make their repast; who never have more than one a week; who cut and mangle their faces and limbs, and never speak to any one. Fanatic people! who think to honour their nature by disnaturing themselves; that value themselves upon their contempt of themselves,

There are people who do not care that any should see them eat.

[1] *Laws*, i. 13.
[2] Claudian, *in Eutrop.* i. 4.
[3] Horace, *Sat.* I. i. 24.
[4] Plutarch, *How to distinguish a Flatterer.*
[5] *Nat. Hist.* v. 17.
[6] Laertius, *in vitâ.*
[7] Thucydides, iii. 104.
[8] Terence, *Phormio*, i. 3, 20.
[9] Leo, *Description of Africa.*

and grow better by being worse! What monstrous animal is this, that is a horror to himself, to whom his delights are grievous, and who weds himself to misfortunes! There are who conceal their life,

Exilioque domos et dulcia limina mutant,[1]

"There in exile roam,
Seek a new sun, and leave their blissful home,"

and withdraw them from the sight of other men; that avoid health and cheerfulness as dangerous and prejudicial qualities. Not only many sects, but many nations, curse their birth and bless their death; and there is a place where the sun is abominated and darkness adored. We are only ingenious in using ourselves ill; 'tis the real quarry our wits fly at; and wit, when misapplied, is a dangerous tool!

Men who conceal themselves from sight, and are ingenious in using themselves ill.

O miseri! quorum gaudia crimen habent.[2]

"O wretched men! whose pleasures are a crime!"

Alas, poor man! thou hast enough inconveniences that are inevitable, without increasing them by thine own invention; and art miserable enough by nature, without being so by art; thou hast real and essential deformities enough, without forging those that are imaginary: is the little ease thou hast, too much for thee, that thou wouldst abridge the half of that? Dost thou find that thou hast performed all the necessary offices that nature has enjoined thee, and that she is idle in thee, if thou dost not oblige thyself to more and new ones? Thou dost not stick to infringe the universal and undoubted laws, but stickest close to those confederate and fantastic ones of thy own; and by how much more particular, uncertain, and contradictory they are, by so much thou employest thy whole endeavour in them; the laws of thy parish occupy and bind thee; those of God and the world concern thee not. Run but a little over the examples of this kind; thy life is full of them.

The verses of these two poets treating so reservedly and discreetly of wantonness as they do, methinks they discover it much more. Ladies cover their persons with net-work, as priests do several sacred things; and painters shade their pictures, to give them greater lustre; and 'tis said that the sun and wind strike more violently by reflection than in a direct line. The Egyptian wisely answered him who asked him what he had under his cloak; "It is hid under my cloak," said he, "that thou mayest not know what it is:"[3] but there are certain other things that people hide only to show them. Hear this one, that speaks plainer:

To talk discreetly of love only stimulates it the more.

Et nudam pressi corpus ad usque meum:[4]

"And pressed her naked body close to mine."

methinks I am eunuched with the expression. Let Martial turn up Venus's coats as high as he can, he cannot shew her so naked: he who says all that is to be said gluts and disgusts us. He who is afraid to express himself, draws us on to guess at more than is meant; there is a kind of treachery in this sort of modesty, and especially whilst half opening, as they[5] do, so fair a path to imagination; both the action and description should give a relish to their theft.

The more respectful, more timorous, more coy and secret love of the Spaniards and Italians pleases me; I know not who, of old, wished his neck as long as that of a crane, that he might the longer taste what he had swallowed; it had been better wished in this quick and precipitous pleasure, especially in such natures as mine, that have the fault of being too prompt. To stop its flight and delay it with preambles, all things, a wink, a bow, a word, a sign, stand for favour and recompense betwixt them. Was it not an excellent piece of thrift in him that could dine on the steam of the roast? 'Tis a passion that mixes, with very little of solid essence, much more of vanity and feverish raving, and we are to reward and pay it accordingly. Let us teach the ladies to value and esteem themselves, to amuse and fool us. We give the last charge at the first onset; the French impetuosity will still show itself. By spinning out their favours, and exposing them in small parcels, all, even miserable old age, will find some little share of reward, according to their worth and merit. He who has no fruition but in fruition, who wins nothing unless he sweeps the stakes, who takes no pleasure in the chace but in the quarry, ought not to introduce himself into our school. The more steps and degrees there are, so much higher and more honourable is the uppermost seat; we should take a pleasure in being conducted to it, as in magnificent palaces, by porticos, entries, long and pleasant galleries, by many turns and windings. This disposition of things would turn to our advantage; we should there longer stay, and longer love; without hope and without desire we proceed not worth a pin. Our conquest and entire possession is what they ought infinitely to dread: when they wholly surrender themselves up to the mercy of our fidelity and constancy they run a mighty hazard; they are virtues very rare, and hard to be found; they are no sooner ours but we are no more theirs;[6]

Love ought to be made gradually, and without precipitation.

Postquam cupidæ mentis satiata libido est,
Verba nihil metuere, nihil perjuria curant;[6]

[1] Virgil, *Georgic* ii. 511.
[2] Pseudo-Gallus. i. 180.
[3] Plutarch, *on Curiosity*.
[4] Ovid, *Amor.* i. 5. 24.
[5] *Virgil* and *Lucretius*.
[6] Catullus, *Carm.* lxiv. 147.

"When our desires and lusts once eated are,
For oaths and promises we little care;"

And Thrasonides,[1] a young man of Greece, was so in love with his passion, that having gained a mistress's consent, he refused to enjoy her, that he might not by fruition quench and stupify the unquiet ardour of which he was so proud, and with which he so pleased himself. Dearness is a good sauce to meat. Do but observe how much the form of salutation, particular to our nation, has by its facility made kisses, which Socrates says[2] are so powerful and dangerous for stealing hearts, of no esteem. It is a nauseous and injurious custom for ladies, that they must be obliged to lend their lips to every fellow that has three footmen at his heels,[3] how nasty or deformed soever,

Cujus livida naribus caninis,
Dependet glacies, rigetque barba - - -
Contum occurrere malo cutilingis:[4]

and we do not get much by the bargain; for as the world is divided, for three pretty women, we must kiss fifty ugly ones; and to a tender stomach, like those of my age, an ill kiss overpays a good one.

In Italy they passionately court, even their common women, who prostitute themselves for money, and justify the doing so by saying that there are degrees of fruition; and that by courting they will procure themselves that which is best and most entire; they sell nothing but their bodies, the will is too free, and too much its own to be exposed to sale. So say these, that 'tis the will they undertake, and they have reason; 'tis indeed the will that we are to serve, and to have to do withal. I abhor to imagine as mine a body without affection; and this madness is, methinks, cousin-german to that of the boy, who would needs lie with the beautiful statue of Venus, made by Praxiteles,[5] or that of the furious Egyptian, who violated the dead carcase of a woman he was embalming, which was the occasion of the law, afterwards made in Egypt, that the corpse of beautiful young women, and of those of good quality, should be kept three days before they should be delivered to those whose office it was to take care for the interment.[6] Periander did more wonderfully, who extended his conjugal affection (more regular and legitimate) to the enjoyment of his wife Melissa after she was dead.[7] Does it not seem a lunatic humour in the moon, seeing she could not otherwise enjoy her darling Endymion, to lay him for several months asleep, and to please herself with the fruition of a boy, who stirred not but in his sleep? So I say that we love a body without a soul, when we love a body without its consent and concurring desire. All enjoyings are not alike; there are some that are hectic and languishing; a thousand other causes, besides good will, may procure us this favour from the ladies; this is not a sufficient testimony of affection; treachery may lurk there as well as elsewhere; they sometimes go to it but by halves,

Tanquam thura merumque parent
Absentem, marmoreamve putes:[8]

"So coldly they unto the work prepare,
You'd think them absent, or else marble were:"

I know some who had rather lend that than their coach, and who only impart themselves that way. You are to examine whether your company pleases them upon any other account, or for that only, as some strong-limbed groom; in what character, and what degree of favour you are with them,

Tibi si datur uni:
Quo lapide illa diem candidiore notat.[9]

"Whether thy mistress favour thee alone,
And mark thy day out with the whiter stone."

What if they eat your bread with the sauce of a more pleasing imagination?

Te tenet, absentes alios suspirat amores.[10]

"While in her arms entwin'd, you don't discover
She pants with longing for an absent lover."

What! have we not seen one, in these days of ours, that made use of this act upon the account of a most horrid revenge, by that means to kill and poison, as he did, an excellent woman?

Such as know Italy will not think it strange if, for this subject, I seek not elsewhere for examples; for that nation may be called the regent of the world in this. They have generally more handsome, and fewer ugly, women than we; but for rare and excelling beauties,

The corpse of beautiful women kept three days in Egypt, before they were interred.

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1 Laertius, vii. 130.

2 Xenophon, *Mem. on Socrates.*

3 The kiss of ceremony or salutation, which Montaigne here erroneously affirms to be peculiar to France, came, not long afterwards, to be regarded as a piece of great immodesty there, as appears from Dr. Heylin's "Survaye of France." When the Doctor visited that country, in 1625, he thought it strange and uncivil that the ladies should turn away from the proffer of a salutation; and he indignantly exclaims, "that the chaste and innocent kiss of an English gentlewoman is more in heaven than their best devotions."—Erasmus, in a letter, urging his friend Andrelinus to come to England, very pleasantly makes use of this custom to strengthen his invitation. "If, Faustus," says he, "thou knewest the advantages of England, thou wouldst run hither with winged feet, and if the gout would not suffer that, thou wouldst wish thyself a Dædalus. For, to name one among many, here are girls with divine countenances, bland and courteous, and whom thou wouldst readily prefer to thy Muses. And besides, there is a custom which can never be sufficiently praised: for, if you visit any where, you are dismissed with kisses; if you return, these sweet things are again rendered; if any one goes away with you, the kisses are divided; wherever you go you are abundantly kissed. In short, move which way you will, all things are full of delight." Erasmus, *Ep.* v. 10.

4 Martial, vii. 94. The Latin is the only language that is so licentious as to convey ideas so gross and nasty. Seneca says it is better to suppress some things in silence, though it be to the detriment of the cause, rather than to transgress the bounds of modesty. Seneca, *Controv.* i. 2. towards the end.

5 Val. Max. viii. 2. *Ext.* 5.

6 Herod ii. 89.

7 Laertius, i. 96.

8 Martial, xi. 103, 12. and 59, 8.

9 Catullus, lxviii. 147.

10 Tibullus, i. 5, 35.

I think we may have as many as they. I think the same of their wits; of those of the common sort they have evidently far more: brutal stupidity is without comparison much rarer there; but for singular souls and of the highest form, we are nothing indebted to them. If I should carry on the comparison, I might say, as touching valour, that on the contrary it is, to what it is with them, common and natural with us: but sometimes we see them possessed of it to such a degree as surpasses the greatest examples we can produce. The marriages of that country are defective in this: their custom commonly imposes so rude and so slavish a law upon the women, that the most distant acquaintance with a stranger is held as criminal in them as the most intimate; a law which necessarily renders all such acquaintances, when they are made, substantial; and seeing that all comes to one account, they have no hard choice to make; and when they have broken down the fence, believe me, they launch out to some tune: *Luxuria ipsis vinculis, sicut fera bestia, irritata, deinde emissa.*[1] "Lust, like a wild beast, being more enraged by being bound, breaks from his chains with greater wildness." They must give them a little more rein:

> Vidi ego nuper equum, contra sua frena tenacem,
> Ore reluctanti fulminis ire modo:[2]
>
> "The fiery courser, whom no art can stay,
> Or reined force, doth oft fair means obey."

The desire of company is allayed by giving a little liberty. We run pretty nearly the same fortune; they go to extremes from their constraint; we from our licence. 'Tis a good custom we have in France, that our sons are received into high families, there to be entertained and bred up pages, as in a school of nobleness; and 'tis looked upon as a discourtesy and an affront to refuse a gentleman: I have taken notice (for so many families, so many different forms) that the ladies who have been strictest with their women attendants have had no better luck than those who allowed them a greater liberty; there should be moderation in all things; one must leave a great deal of their conduct to their own discretion; for, when all comes to all, no discipline can curb them throughout. It is certain that she who comes off with flying colours from a school of liberty, brings with her whereon to repose more confidence than she who comes away sound from a severe and strict education.

Modesty necessary to women.

Our fathers dressed up their daughters' looks in bashfulness and fear; we ours in confidence and assurance, the courage and the desires being alike in both cases. We understand nothing of the matter; we must leave it to the Sarmates, that may not lie with a man till with their own hands they have first killed another in battle.[3]

For me, who have no other title left me to these things but by the ears, 'tis sufficient, if, according to the privilege of my age, they retain me for one of their counsel. I advise them then, and men too, to abstinence; but if the age we live in will not endure it, at least to modesty and discretion; for as the story says of Aristippus,[4] speaking to some young men, who blushed to see him go into a scandalous house: "The vice is in not coming out, not in going in." Let her that has no care for her conscience have yet some regard to her reputation; and though she be rotten within, let her carry a fair outside at least.

I commend a gradation and procrastination in their bestowing of favours: Plato declares that, in all sorts of love, facility and promptness are forbidden the defendant. 'Tis a sign of eagerness, so rashly, suddenly, and hand-over-head, to surrender themselves, and they ought to disguise it with all the art they have; in carrying themselves with modesty and reluctance in granting their last favours, they much more allure our desires, and hide their own. Let them still fly before us, even those who have most mind to be overtaken; they conquer more surely by flying, as the Scythians do. Indeed, according to the law that nature has imposed upon them, it is not properly for them either to will or desire; their part is to suffer, consent, and obey; and for this it is that nature has given them a perpetual capacity, which in us is but occasional and uncertain; they are always fit for the encounter, that they may be always ready when we are so, *pati nate*:[5] "born to endure:" and whereas she has ordered that our appetites shall be manifest by a prominent demonstration, she would have theirs to be hidden and concealed within, and has furnished them with parts improper for ostentation, and simply defensive. Such proceedings as this that follows, must be left to the Amazonian licence: Alexander marching his army through Hyrcania, Thalestris, queen of the Amazons, came with three hundred horse of her own sex, well mounted and armed, having left the remainder of a very great army that followed her, behind the neighbouring mountains, to pay him a visit; and publicly and in plain terms told him, that the fame of his valour and victories had brought her thither to see him, and to make him an offer of her forces, to assist him in the pursuit of his enterprises; and that, finding him so handsome, young, and vigorous, she, who was also perfect in all her qualities, advised that they might lie together; to the end that from the most valiant woman of the world, and the bravest man then living, there might spring some great and wonderful issue for the time to come. Alexander returned her thanks for all the rest; but to give leisure for the ac-

Alexander and Thalestris.

[1] Livy, xxxiv. 4.
[2] Ovid, *Amor*, iii. 4. 13.
[3] Herod. iv. 117.
[4] Laertius, *in vitâ*.
[5] Seneca, *Ep.* 95.

complishment of her last demand, he stayed thirteen days in that place, which were spent in royal feasting and jollity, for the welcome of so brave a princess.[1]

We are almost throughout incompetent and unjust judges of their actions, as they are of ours. I confess the truth when it makes against me, as when 'tis on my side. 'Tis an abominable intemperance that pushes them on so often to change, and that hinders them to limit their affection to any one person whatever; as is evident in that goddess to whom are attributed so many changes and so many lovers: but 'tis true withal that love is contrary to its own nature if it be not violent, and that violence is contrary to its nature if it be constant. And they who make it a wonder, exclaim, and keep such a clutter to find out the causes of this frailty of theirs, as unnatural and not to be believed; how comes it to pass they do not discern how often they are themselves guilty of the same, without any astonishment or miracle at all? It would peradventure be more strange to see the passion fixed; 'tis not a simply corporeal passion: if there be no end in avarice and ambition, there is doubtless none the more in desire; it still lives after satiety; and 'tis impossible to prescribe either constant satisfaction or end; it ever goes beyond its possession.

Love a passion naturally subject to change.

And inconstancy perhaps is in some sort more pardonable in them than in us: they may plead, as well as we, the inclination to variety and novelty, common to us both; and secondly, which we cannot, that they buy a pig in a poke. Joan, Queen of Naples, caused her first husband, Andreosso,[2] to be hanged at the bars of her window, in a halter of gold and silk, woven with her own hand, because that, in matrimonial performances, she neither found his parts nor abilities answer the expectation she had conceived from his stature, beauty, youth, and activity, by which she had been caught and deceived. They may allege that there is more required in doing than in suffering; and so they are on their part always at least provided for necessity, whereas on our part it may fall out otherwise. For this reason it was that Plato, in his *Laws*, wisely provided that, before every marriage, to determine of the fitness of the persons, the judges should see the young men who pretended to it stark naked, and the women naked to the girdle only. When they come to try us they do not perhaps find us worthy of their choice:

Inconstancy pardonable in women.

Men stripped naked before marriage.

> Experta latus, madidoque simillima loro
> Inguina, nec lassa stare coacta manu,
> Deserit imbelles thalamos.[3]
>
> "All efforts vain t' excite his vigour dead,
> The married virgin flies th' injoyous bed."

'Tis not enough that a man's will be good; weakness and insufficiency lawfully break a marriage,

> Et quærendum aliunde foret nervosius illud,
> Quod posset zonam solvere virgineam:[4]
>
> "And elsewhere seek a man fit for love's toil:"

and why not? and, according to her own measure, an amorous intelligence, more bold and active,

> Si blando nequeat superesse labori.[5]
>
> "If strength they want love's task to undergo."

But is it not a great impudence to offer our imperfections and imbecilities, where we desire to please, and leave a good opinion and esteem of ourselves? For the little that I am able to do now,

> Ad unum
> Mollis opus,[6]
>
> "One bout a night,"

I would not trouble a woman that I reverence and fear:

> Fuge suspicari,
> Cujus undenum trepidavit ætas
> Claudere lustrum.[7]
>
> "Suspect not him
> On whose love's wild-fire age doth throw
> Of fifty years the cooling snow."[8]

Nature should satisfy herself in having rendered age miserable, without making it ridiculous too. I hate to see it, for one poor inch of pitiful vigour, which comes upon it but thrice a week, to strut and set out itself with as great an air as if it could do mighty feats, a true flame of flax; and wonder to see it so boil and bubble at a time when it is so congealed and extinguished. This appetite ought not to appertain to anything but the flower of beautiful youth; trust not to it because you see it seconds that indefatigable, full, constant, and magnanimous ardour that is in you, for it will certainly leave you in the lurch at your greatest need; but rather return it to some tender, bashful, and ignorant boy, who yet trembles under the rod, and blushes:

> Indum sanguineo veluti violaverit ostro
> Si quis ebur, vel mixta rubent ubi lilia multa
> Alba rosa.
>
> "Thus Indian iv'ry shows
> Which with a bord'ring hue of purple glows;
> Or lilies damasked with the neighbouring rose."

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[1] Diodorus Sic. xvii. 16. But this historian does not say that this queen of the Amazons offered Alexander troops to aid him in his military expeditions: and Quintus Curtius, vi. 5, says expressly that Alexander having asked her if she would go to the wars with him, she excused herself by saying, that she had left nobody to be guardian of her kingdom: "Causata, sine custode regnum reliquisse."

[2] Andrew (whom the Italians called Andreosso), son of Charles, King of Hungary. See Bayle, art. *Joan I. of Naples.*

[3] Martial, vii. 58. 3.

[4] Catullus, *Carm.* lxvii. 27.

[5] Virgil, *Georg.* iii. 127.

[6] Horace, *Epod.* xii. 15.

[7] Id. *ode.* ii. 4. 12.

[8] *Eneid*, xii. 67.

He who can stay till the morning, without dying for shame, to behold the disdain of the fair eyes of her who knows so well your fumbling impertinence,

Et taciti fecere tamen convicia vultus,[1]

"And though she nothing say,
How ill she likes my work her looks betray,"

never had the satisfaction and the glory of having battled them till they were weary, with the vigorous performance of one heroic night. When I have observed any one to be tired of me, I have not presently accused her levity; but have been in doubt if I had not reason rather to complain of nature. She has certainly used me very uncivilly and unkindly;

Si non longa satis, si non bene mentula crassa:
Nimirum sapiunt, videntque parvam
Matronæ quoque mentulam illibenter;[2]

and done me a most irreparable injury. Every member I have, as much one as another, is equally my own, and no other does more properly make me a man than this.

I universally owe my entire picture to the public. The wisdom of my instruction wholly consists in liberty and naked truth; disdaining to introduce little, feigned, common, and provincial rules into the catalogue of its real duties, all natural, general, and constant; of which civility and ceremony are daughters indeed, but illegitimate. We are sure to have the vices of appearance, when we have had those of essence; when we have done with these, we run full drive upon others, if we find it must be so; for there is danger that we shall fancy new offices, to excuse our negligence towards the natural ones, and to confound them. That this is so, it is seen that in places where faults are crimes, crimes are but faults; and that in nations where the laws of courtesy are most rare and remiss, the primitive laws of common reason are better observed, the innumerable multitude of so many duties stifling and dissipating our care. Application to trivial things diverts us from those that are necessary and just. Oh, how these superficial men take an easy and plausible way in comparison of ours! These are shadows wherewith we palliate and pay one another; but we do not pay, but inflame our reckoning to that great judge, who tucks up our rags and tatters about our shameful parts, and is not nice to view us all over, even to our inmost and most secret vilenesses: it were an useful decency of our maidenly modesty, could it keep him from this discovery. In fine, whoever could reclaim man from so scrupulous a verbal superstition, would do the world no great disservice. Our life is divided betwixt folly and prudence. Whoever will write of it but what is reverend and canonical, will leave more than half behind. I do not excuse myself to myself; and if I did, it should rather be for my excuses that I would excuse myself, than for any other fault; I excuse myself, of certain humours, which I think more strong in number than those that are on my side. In consideration of which, I will farther say this (for I desire to please every one, though a thing hard to do: *Esse unum hominem accommodatum ad tantam morum ac sermonum et voluntatum varietatem*:[3] "That one man accommodates himself to so great a variety of manners, discourses, and wills): that they ought not to condemn me for what I make authorities, received and approved of by many ages, to utter; and that there is no reason that, for want of rhyme, they should refuse me the liberty they allow even to churchmen of our nation, and of which here are two specimens:

Rimula, dispeream, ni monogramma tua est;[4]

Un vit d'amy la contente, et bien traicte;[5]

besides many others. I love modesty, and 'tis not out of judgment that I have chosen this scandalous way of speaking; 'tis nature that has chosen it for me. I recommend it not, no more than other forms that are contrary to common custom; but I excuse it, and by circumstances, both general and particular, alleviate the accusation.

But to proceed: whence also can proceed that usurpation of sovereign authority you take upon you over the women who favour you at their own expense,

Si furtiva dedit nigra munuscula nocte,[6]

"If in the silence of the night
She has permitted stolen delight,"

so that you presently assume the interests, coldness, and authority of a husband; whence, I ask, can it be derived? 'Tis a free contract: why do you not begin, as you intend to hold on? there is no prescription upon voluntary things. 'Tis against the form, but it is true, withal, that I in my time have carried on this affair, as well as the nature of it would permit, as conscientiously, and with as much colour of justice, as any other contract whatever; and that I never pretended other affection than what I really had, and have truly acquainted them with the declination, vigour, and birth of the same, the fits and intermissions; a man does not always hold on at the same rate. I have been so sparing of my promises that I think

The author's fidelity in love.

[1] Ovid, *Amor.* i. 7. 21.

[2] Of these three verses the first is the beginning of a sort of epigram, entitled *Priapus*, in the *Veterum Poetarum Catalecta*, and the two others are taken from one of the first epigrams of the same collection, *Ad Matronas*, two of which are parodied by Montaigne. The lines are altogether unsusceptible of translation.

[3] Q. Cicero, *de Petit. Consul.* c. 14.

[4] Theodore Beza. *Juvenilia.* See Bayle, art. *Beza*.

[5] St. Gelais, *Œuvres Poetiques*, p. 99.

[6] Catullus, *Carm.* lxviii. 145.

I have been better than my word. They have found me faithful to their inconstancy, even to a confessed, and even to a multiplied, inconstancy. I never broke with them whilst I had any hold at all; and what occasion soever they have given me, never broke with them to hatred or contempt: for such privacies, though obtained upon never so scandalous terms, do yet oblige us to some good will. I have sometimes, upon their tricks and evasions, discovered a little indiscreet anger and impatience; for I am naturally subject to rash emotions, which, though slight and short, often spoil my marketing. Would they freely have consulted my judgment, I should not have stuck to have given them sharp and paternal counsels, and to have pinched them to the quick. If I have left them any cause to complain of me, 'tis rather to have found in me, in comparison of the modern custom, a love foolishly conscientious, than anything else. I have kept my word in things wherein I might easily have been dispensed; they then sometimes surrendered themselves with reputation, and upon articles that they were willing enough should be broken by the conqueror. I have more than once made pleasure in its greatest temptation strike to the interest of their honour; and where reason importuned me, have armed them against myself; so that they conducted themselves more decently and securely by my rules, when they frankly referred themselves to them, than they would have done by their own. I have ever, as much as I could, wholly taken upon myself alone the hazard of our assignations to acquit them, and have always contrived our meetings after the hardest and most unusual manner, as less suspected, and moreover, in my opinion, more accessible. They are chiefly more open where they think they are the most securely shut; things least feared are less defended and observed; one may more boldly dare what nobody thinks you will dare, which by the difficulty becomes easy. Never had any man his approaches more impertinently genital. This way of loving is more according to discipline, but 'tis most ridiculous and ineffectual to our people. Who better knows it than I, yet I repent me not of it. I have nothing there more to lose:

> Me tabula sacer
> Votiva paries indicat uvida
> Suspendisse potenti
> Vestimenta maris deo:[1]
>
> "For me my votive tablet shows
> That I have hung my dripping clothes
> At Neptune's shrine:

'tis now my time to speak out. But I might perhaps say, as another would do, "Thou talkest idly, my friend; the love of thy time has little commerce with faith and integrity:"

> Hæc si tu postules
> Ratione certa facere, nihilo plus agas,
> Quam si des operam, ut cum ratione insanias:[2]
>
> "These things if thou wilt undertake,
> By reason, permanent to make;
> This will be all thou'lt get by it,
> Wisely to run out of thy wit."

But, on the contrary, if it were for me to begin again, assuredly it should be by the same method and the same progress, how unfruitful soever it might prove. Folly and ignorance are commendable in an incommendable action; the farther I go from their humour in this, I approach so much nearer to my own.

As to the rest, in this traffic, I did not suffer myself to be totally carried away; I pleased myself in it, but did not forget myself withal. I kept the little sense and discretion that nature has given me entire for their service and my own: a little emotion, but no dotage. My conscience also was engaged in it, even to debauchery and dissoluteness, but never so far as to ingratitude, treachery, malice and cruelty. I did not purchase the pleasure of this vice at any price, but contented myself with its proper and single cost: *Nullum intra se vitium est.*[3] "Nothing is a vice in itself." I almost equally hate a stupid and slothful laziness, as I do a toilsome and painful employment; the one pinches, the other lays me asleep. I like wounds as well as bruises, and cuts as well as dry blows. I found in this commerce, when I was the most able for it, a just moderation betwixt these extremes. Love is a sprightly, lively, and gay agitation; I was neither troubled nor afflicted with it, but heated, and, moreover, disordered. A man must stop there; it hurts nobody but fools. A young man asked the philosopher Panætius, if it was becoming a wise man to be in love? "Let the wise man look to that," answered he, "but[4] let not thou and I, who are not such, engage ourselves in so stirring and violent an affair, that enslaves us to others, and renders us contemptible to ourselves." He said true, that we are not to entrust a thing so precipitous in itself to a soul that has not wherewithal to withstand its assaults, and disprove the saying of Agesilaus, "that prudence and love cannot live together."[5] 'Tis a vain employment, 'tis true; unbecoming, shameful, illicit, and illegitimate; but, to carry it on after this manner, I look upon it as wholesome, and proper to enliven a drowsy soul, and to rouse up a heavy body; and, as a physician, I would prescribe it to a man of my form and condition, as soon as any other recipe whatever, to rouse and keep him in vigour till well advanced in years, and to defer the approaches of age. Whilst we are but in the suburbs, and that the pulse yet beats,

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[1] Horace, *Od.* i. 5. 13.

[2] Terence, *Eunuch.* i. 1. 15.

[3] Seneca, *Epist.* 95. The text has *manet*, not *est*.

[4] Seneca, *Epist.* 117.

[5] "Oh! how hard a matter is it," said Agesilaus, "for a man to be in love and in his sober senses at one and the same time!" Plutarch, *in vitâ*.

Dum nova canities, dum prima et recta senectus,
Dum superest Lachesi quod torqueat, et pedibus me
Porto meis, nullo dextram subeunte bacillo;[1]

"While something yet of health and strength remains,
While yet my steps no bending staff sustains,
While few grey hairs upon my head are seen;"

we have need to be tickled by some such nipping incitation as this. Do but observe what youth, vigour, and gaiety it inspired Anacreon withal; and Socrates, who was then older than I, speaking of an amorous object: "Leaning," says he,[2] "my shoulder to her shoulder, and my head to hers, as we were reading together in a book, I felt, it is a fact, a sudden sting in my shoulder, like the biting of a flea, which I still felt above five days after, and a continual itching crept into my heart." A mere accidental touch, and of a shoulder, to heat and excite a soul mortified and enervated by age, and the most moderate liver of all mankind! And why not? Socrates was a man, and would neither be, nor be like, any other thing. Philosophy does not contend against natural pleasures, provided they be moderate; and only preaches moderation, not a total abstinence. The power of resistance is employed against those that are adulterate, and introduced by innovation; philosophy says that the appetites of the body ought not to be augmented by the mind; and intelligently warns us not to stir up hunger by saturity; not to stuff instead of filling the belly; to avoid all enjoyments that may bring us to want, and all meats and drinks that procure thirst and hunger, as in the service of love, she prescribes us to take such an object as may simply satisfy the body's real need, and may not stir the soul, which ought only barely to follow and assist the body, without mixing in the affair. But have I not reason to believe that these precepts, which also, in my opinion, are in other respects somewhat rigorous, only apply to a body that really performs its office; and that in a body broken with age, as in a weak stomach, tis excusable to warm and support it by art, and, by the meditation of the fancy, to restore that appetite and vivacity it has lost in itself?

Natural pleasures allowed if moderate.

May we not say that there is nothing in us, during this earthly prison, that is purely either corporeal or spiritual, and that we injuriously dissever a man alive, and that it seems but reasonable that we should regard as favourably, at least, the use of pleasure as we do that of pain? This[3] was (for example) vehement even to perfection in the souls of the saints by penitence; the body had there naturally a share by the right of union, and yet might have but little part in the cause. And yet are they not

[1] Juvenal, iii. 26.

[2] Xenophon, *Banquet*, iv. 27.

[3] *Pain.*

[4] Horace, *Epod.* xii. 19. "Who are always in a capacity

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ppetite to the Emperor
for hard old flesh;[4] and

ncholy place of exile writes thus
. 49.

O ego dii faciant talem te cernere possim,
Caraque mutatis oscula ferre comis,
Amplectique meis corpus non pingue lacertis![5]

"O! would to heav'n I such might thee behold,
To kiss those locks now thou in cares art old,
And thy worm body in my arms enfold!"

and amongst the chief deformities, I reckon forced and artificial beauty. Emonez, a young courtezan of Chios, thinking by fine dressing to acquire the beauty that nature had denied her, came to the philosopher Arcesilaus, and asked him if it was possible for a wise man to be in love: "Yes," replied he,[6] "provided it be not with a factitious and sophisticated beauty like thine." The ugliness of a confessed old age is to me less ugly and less old than another that is polished and painted up. Shall I say it without the danger of having my throat cut?—love, in my opinion, is not properly and naturally in its season, but in the age next to childhood,

Painted beauties reckoned among deformities.

At what age love is in his throne.

Quem si puellarum insereres choro,
Mire sagaces falleret hospites,
Discrimem obscurum, solutis,
Crinibus, ambiguoque vultu:[7]

"Who in the virgin choir defies
The curious stranger's prying eyes
So smooth his doubtful cheeks appear,
So loose, so girlish, flows his hair:"

and beauty the same; for whereas Homer extends it so far as to the budding of the chin, Plato himself has observed this as rare. And the reason why the sophist Bion so pleasantly called the first appearing hairs of adolescence Aristogitons and Harmodians is sufficiently known.[8] I find it in virility already, in some sort, a little out of date, to say nothing of old age;

Importunus enim transvolat aridas
Quercus:[9]

"Love, restless, with quick motion flies
From wither'd oaks:"

and Margaret, Queen of Navarre, like a woman, does very far extend the advantage of women, ordaining that it is time for them at thirty years old to convert the title of fair into that of good. The shorter authority we give him over our lives 'tis so much the better for us. Do but observe his port; 'tis a beardless boy. Who knows not how, in his school, they proceed contrary to all order? study, exercise, and custom, are ways for insufficiency to proceed by; there novices rule: *Amor ordinem nescit.*[10] "Love knows no rules." Doubtless his conduct is much more graceful when mixed with inadvertency and trouble; miscarriages and ill successes give him appetite and

[6] Laertius, *in vita.*
[7] Horace, *Od.* ii. 5. 21.
[8] See Plutarch, *on Love.*
[9] Horace, *Od.* iv. 13. 9.
[10] St. Jerome, *Epist. ad Chromat.* Anacreon long before him, said much the same thing. See *Ode* 50, verse 24.

grace; provided it be sharp and eager, 'tis no great matter whether it be prudent or no; do but observe how he goes reeling, tripping, and playing; you put him in the stocks when you guide him by art and wisdom; and restrain his divine liberty when you put him into those hairy and callous hands.

As to the rest, I often hear them set forth this intelligence as entirely spiritual, and disdain to put the interest the senses there have into consideration: everything there serves turn; but I can say that I have often seen that we have excused the weakness of their understandings in favour of their outward beauty; but have never seen that in favour of a mind, how mature and well-disposed soever, any one would lend a hand to a body that was never so little decayed. Why does not some one take it into her head to make that noble Socratical contract and exchange of body for soul? purchasing, at the price of her thighs, a philosophical and spiritual intelligence and regeneration, the highest value she can get for them. Plato[1] ordains, in his *Laws*, that he who has performed any signal and advantageous exploit in war, may not be refused during the whole expedition, whatever his age or deformity may be, a kiss or any other amorous favour from any woman whatever. What he thinks to be so just in recommendation of military valour, why may it not be the same in recommendation of any other good quality? And why does not some woman take a fancy to prepossess, over her companions, the glory of this chaste love? I say chaste,

> Nam si quando ad prælia ventum est,
> Ut quondam in stipulis magnus sine viribus ignis
> Incassum furit:[2]
>
> "For when to join love's battle they engage,
> Like fire in straw they weakly spend their rage:"

the vices that are stifled in the thought are not the worst.

To conclude this notable commentary, which has escaped from me in a torrent of chatter, a torrent sometimes impetuous and hurtful,

> Ut missum sponsi furtivo munere malum
> Procurrit casto virginis e gremio,
> Quod miseræ oblitæ molli sub veste locatum,
> Dum adventu matris prosilit, excutitur,
> Atque illud prono præceps agitur decursu:
> Huic manat tristi conscius ore rubor,[3]
>
> "As a fair apple, by a lover sent
> To 's mistress for a private compliment,
> Which tumbles from the modest virgin's lap,
> Where she had quite forgot it, by mishap,
> When starting as her mother opes the door,
> And falls out of her garments on the floor!
> While as it rolls, and she betrays surprize,
> A guilty blush her fair complexion dyes,"

I say that males and females are cast in the same mould, and that, education and custom excepted, the difference between them is not great. Plato indifferently invites both the one and the other to the society of all studies, exercises, commands, and occupations, military and civil, in his commonwealth; and the philosopher Antisthenes took away all distinction between their virtue and ours.[4] It is much more easy to accuse one sex than to excuse the other: 'tis the old saying: "the pot and the kettle."

CHAPTER VI.

OF COACHES.

It is no difficult matter to prove, that when great authors write of causes, they not only make use of those they think to be the true causes really, but also of such as they believe are not so, provided they have some beauty and invention; they speak true and usefully enough, if it be ingeniously. We cannot make ourselves sure of the supreme cause; and therefore collect a great many together, to see if it may not accidentally be amongst them,

> Namque unam dicere causam
> Non satis est, verum plures, unde una tamen sit.[5]
>
> "And thus my muse a store of causes brings;
> For here, as in a thousand other things,
> Tho' by one single cause th' effect is done,
> Yet since 'tis hid, a thousand must be shown,
> That we may surely hit that single one."

Why they say God bless you, when you sneeze.

Will you ask me whence the custom of blessing those that sneeze? we break wind three several ways; that which sallies from below is too filthy; that which breaks out from the mouth carries with it some reproach for having eaten too much; the third eruption is sneezing, which, because it proceeds from the head, and is without offence, we give it this civil reception. Do not laugh at this distinction, for they say 'tis Aristotle's.[6]

Why people are apt to vomit at sea.

I think I have read in Plutarch[7] (who, of all the authors I ever conversed with, is he that has best mixed art with nature, and judgment with knowledge), giving a reason for the rising of the stomach in those that are at sea, that it is occasioned by fear, having found out some reason by which he proves that fear may produce such an effect. I, who am very subject to being sick, know very well that that cause concerns not me; and know it, not by argument, but by necessary experience. Without instancing what has been told me, that the same thing often happens in beasts, especially hogs, free from all apprehension of danger; and

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[1] *Republic*, v.
[2] *Georgic*. iii. 98. The application which Montaigne here makes of Virgil's words is very extraordinary, as will appear immediately to those who will be at the pains of consulting the original.
[3] Catullus, *Carm.* lxv. 19.
[4] Laertius, *in vita*.
[5] Lucret. vi. 704.
[6] *Problem*, sect. 33, quæs. 9.
[7] *On Natural Causes*.

what an acquaintance of mine told me of himself, that being very subject to it, the disposition to vomit has three or four times gone off him, being very much afraid in a violent storm, as it happened to that ancient, *Pejus vexabar, quam ut periculum mihi succurreret*;[1] "I was too ill to think of my danger." I was never afraid upon the water, nor, indeed, any where else (and I have had just occasions enough before my eyes, if death be one), so as to be confounded and lose my judgment. Fear springs sometimes as well from want of judgment as from want of courage. All the dangers I have been in, I have looked upon without winking, with an open, sound, and entire sight; and besides, a man must have courage to fear. It has formerly served me better than some others, so to order my retreat, that it was, if not without fear, nevertheless without affright and astonishment; it was stirring indeed, but not amazed nor stupified. Great souls go yet much farther, and represent flights not only sound and firm, but moreover fierce. Let us make a relation of that which Alcibiades reports[2] of Socrates, his fellow in arms: "I found him," says he, "after the rout of our army, him and Laches, in the rear of those that fled; and considered him at my leisure, and in security, for I was mounted on a good horse, and he on foot, and had so fought. I took notice, in the first place, how much judgment and resolution he shewed, in comparison of Laches; and then the bravery of his march, nothing different from his ordinary gait; his sight firm and regular, considering and judging what passed about him, looking one while upon those, and then upon others, friends and enemies, after such a manner as encouraged the one, and signified to the others that he would sell his life dear to any one that should attempt to take it from him, and so they came off; for people are not willing to attack such kind of men, but pursue those they see are in a fright." This is the testimony of this great captain, which teaches us what we every day see, that nothing so much throws us into dangers as an inconsiderate eagerness to get ourselves clear of them: *Quò timoris minus est, eo minus ferme periculi est.*[3] "Where there is least fear, there is, for the most part, least danger." Our people are to blame to say that such a one is afraid of death, when he expresses that he thinks of it, and foresees it. Foresight is equally convenient in what concerns us, whether good or ill: to consider and judge of the danger is, in some sort, the reverse to being astonished thereat. I do not find myself strong enough to sustain the force and impetuosity of this passion of fear, nor of any other vehement passion whatever; if I was once conquered and beaten down, I should never rise again very

What fear is.

sound; whoever should once make my soul lose her footing, would never set it upright again; she retastes and researches herself too profoundly, and too much to the quick, and therefore would never let the wound she had received heal and cicatrise. It has been well for me that no sickness has ever yet discomposed it; at every charge made upon me, I make my utmost opposition and best defence; by which means the first that should rout me, would disable me from ever rallying again. I have no after-game to play; on which side soever the inundation breaks my banks, I lie open, and am drowned without remedy. Epicurus says[4] that a wise man can never become a fool; and I have an opinion converse to this sentence, which is, that he who has once been a very fool, will never after be very wise. God gave me cold according to my cloth, and passions proportionable to the means I have to withstand them; nature having laid me open on the one side, has covered me on the other; having disarmed me of strength, she has armed me with insensibility, and an apprehension regular or dull.

Now I cannot long endure (and when I was young much less endured) either coach, litter, or boat, and hate all other riding but on horseback, both in the city and country; but I can worse endure a litter than a coach, and, by the same reason, better a rough agitation upon the water, whence fear is produced, than the motion of a calm. At the little jerks of oars, stealing the vessel from under us, I find, I know not how, both my head and my stomach disordered; neither can I endure to sit upon a tottering stool. When the sail or the current carries us equally, or if we are towed, those equal agitations do not disturb me at all. 'Tis an interrupted motion that offends me, and most of all when most slow. I cannot otherwise express it. The physicians have ordered me to squeeze and gird myself about the bottom of my belly with a napkin, to remedy this accident; which however I have not tried, being accustomed to wrestle with my own defects, and to overcome them by myself.

Would my memory serve me, I should not think my time ill spent in setting down here the infinite variety that history presents us of the use of coaches in the service of war; various, according to the nations, and according to the ages; in my opinion of great necessity and effect; so that it is a wonder that we have lost all knowledge of them. I will only say this, that very lately, in our fathers' time, the Hungarians made very advantageous use of them against the Turks; having in every one of them a targetteer and a musketeer, and a number of harquebuses, ranged along, loaded and ready, the whole protected by shield-work, like a galliot. They made the front of their

[1] Seneca, *Epist.* 53.
[2] Plato, *Banquet.*
[3] Livy, xii. 5.
[4] Laertius, *in vitâ.*

battle with three thousand such coaches; and, after the cannon had played, made them all pour in their shot upon the enemy, and made them swallow that volley before they tasted of the rest, which was no slight instalment; and that done, these chariots charged into their squadrons to break them, and make way for the rest: besides the use they might make of them to flank their troops, in a place of danger marching in the field, or to cover a building and fortify it in haste. In my time, a gentleman in one of our frontiers, unwieldy of body, and not being able to procure a horse able to carry his weight, having a quarrel, rode up and down in a chariot of this fashion, and found great convenience in it. But let us leave these chariots of war.

As if their insignificance had not been sufficiently known by better proofs, the last kings of our first race travelled in a chariot drawn by four oxen.[1] Mark Anthony was the first at Rome that caused himself to be drawn in a coach by lions, and a singing wench with him.[2] Heliogabalus[3] did since as much, calling himself Cybele the mother of the gods; and was also drawn by tigers, taking upon him the person of the god Bacchus; he also sometimes harnessed two stags to his coach, another time four dogs, at another four naked wenches, causing himself to be drawn by them in pomp, he being stark naked too. The Emperor Firmus[4] caused his chariot to be drawn by ostriches of a prodigious size, so that it seemed rather to fly than roll.

The strangeness of these inventions puts this other fancy in my head; that it is a kind of pusillanimity in monarchs, and a testimony that they do not themselves sufficiently understand what they are, when they study to make themselves honoured, and to appear great by excessive expense; it were excusable in a foreign country, where they are strangers, but amongst their own subjects, where they may do what they please, they derive from their dignity itself the most supreme degree of honour to which they can arrive; as, methinks, it is superfluous in a private gentleman to go finely dressed at home: his house, his attendance, and his kitchen, sufficiently answer for him. The advice that Isocrates[5] gave his king seems to be grounded upon reason: "that he should be splendid in plate and furniture, forasmuch as it is an expense of duration, that devolves to his successors, and that he should avoid all magnificence that will, in a short time, be forgotten." I loved to go fine, when I was a younger brother, for want of other ornament, and it became me well; there are some upon whom rich clothes weep. We have strange stories of the frugality of our kings about their own persons, and in their gifts; kings that were great both in reputation, valour, and fortune. Demosthenes[6] mightily stickles against the law of the city, that assigned the public money for the pomp of their public plays and festivals; he would that their greatness should be seen in the number of ships well equipped, and good armies well provided for; and there is good reason to condemn Theophrastus,[7] who, in his Book of Riches, has laid down a contrary opinion, and maintains that sort of expense to be the true fruit of opulence; they are delights, says Aristotle,[8] that only please the lowest sort of the people; and that vanish from the memory so soon as they are sated with them, and for which no serious and judicious man can have any esteem.[9] This money would, in my opinion, be much more royally, as more profitably, justly, and durably, laid out in ports, harbours, walls, and fortifications; in sumptuous buildings, churches, hospitals, colleges; the regeneration of streets and roads, wherein Pope Gregory the Thirteenth will leave a laudable memory to future times; and wherein our Queen Catherine would, to all posterity, manifest her natural liberality and munificence, did her means equal her affection. Fortune has done me a great despite, in interrupting the noble structure of the Pont-Neuf of our great city, and depriving me of the hopes of seeing it finished before I die.

The excessive expenses of monarchs a testimony of pusillanimity.

The public money, how it should be expended.

Moreover, it seems to the subjects, who are daily spectators of these triumphs, that their own riches are exposed before them, and that they are entertained at their own expense: for the people are apt to presume of kings, as we do of our servants, that they are to take care to provide us all things necessary, in abundance, but not to touch it themselves. And therefore the Emperor Galba, being pleased with a musician that played to him at supper, called for his cash-box, and gave him a handful of crowns that he took out of it, with these words: "This is not the public money, but my own."[10] And it so falls out that the people, for the most part, have reason on their side; and that their princes feed their eyes with what they once had to fill their bellies withal.

Liberality itself is not in its true lustre in a sovereign hand; private men have therein the most right; for, to take it exactly, a king has nothing properly his own; he owes even himself to others; authority is not given in favour of the magistrate, but of

Whether liberality well becomes a king, and to what degree.

[1] See Eginhard, *Life of Charlemagne.*
[2] The comedian Cytheris. Plutarch, *Life of Antony.*—Cicero, *Philip.* ii. 24.
[3] Lampridius, *in vitâ*, c. 28.
[4] Flav. Vopiscus, *in vitâ*, c. 6.
[5] *Disc. to Nicocles.*

[6] *Third Olynthiac.*
[7] It is Cicero who passes this criticism upon Theophrastus, *De Offic.* ii. 16.
[8] Id. *ib.*
[9] Id. *ib.* 17.
[10] Plutarch, *in vitâ.*

the people. A superior is never made so for his own profit, but for the profit of the inferior; a physician for the sick person, and not for himself; all magistracy, as well as all art, has its end out of itself: *Nulla ars in se versatur.*[1] "No art is comprehended within itself." Wherefore the governors of young princes, who make it their business to imprint in them this virtue of liberality, and to preach to them to deny nothing, and to think nothing so well spent as what they give, a doctrine that I have known in great credit in my time, either have more particular regard to their own profit than that of their master, or ill understand to whom they speak. It is too easy a thing to imprint liberality in him, who has as much as he will to supply it with, at the expense of others; and the estimate of it not being proportioned to the value of the gift, but to the wealth of him who bestows it, it comes to nothing in so mighty hands; they find themselves prodigal before they are reputed liberal: and yet it is but of little recommendation, in comparison of other royal virtues; and the only one, as the tyrant Dionysius said,[2] that suits well with tyranny itself. I should rather teach him this verse of the ancient labourer:[3]

Τῇ χειρὶ δεῖ σπείρειν, ἀλλὰ μὴ ὅλ ηὴ ὅλῳ τῷ θυλάκῳ;

"Whoever will have a good crop, must sow with his hand, and not pour out of the sack:" that he must disperse it abroad, and not lay it on a heap in one place: and that, as he has to give, or rather to pay and restore to so many people, according as they have deserved, he ought to be a faithful and discreet disposer. If the liberality of a prince be without measure or discretion, I had rather he were coveteous.

Wherein royal virtue consists.

Royal virtue seems most to consist in justice; and, of all the parts of justice, that best denotes a king which accompanies liberality; because they have particularly reserved it to be performed by themselves, whereas all other sorts of justice they remit to the administration of others. An immoderate bounty is a very weak means to acquire them good-will, for it checks more people than it allures: *Quo in plures usus sis, minus in multos uti possis. . . . Quid autem est stultius, quam quod libenter facias, curare ut id diutius facere non possis?* "By how much more you exercise it to many, by so much less will you be in a capacity to do so to many more. And what greater folly can there be, than to order it so that what you would do willingly you cannot do long?" and if it be conferred without due respect of merit, it puts him out of countenance that receives it, and is received without grace. Tyrants have been sacrificed to the hatred of the people, by the hands of the very men they have unjustly advanced; such kind of men thinking to secure to themselves the possession of benefits unduly received, if they manifest to have him in hatred and disdain, of whom they hold them, and thus associate themselves to the common judgment and opinion.

Tyrants hated by those that they have unjustly advanced.

The subjects of a prince profuse in gifts, grow unreasonable in asking, and accommodate themselves not to reason but example. We have, indeed, very often reason to blush at our own impudence; we are overpaid, according to justice, when the recompense equals our service; for do we owe nothing of natural obligation to our princes? If he bears our charges, he does too much; 'tis enough that he contributes to them; the overplus is called benefit, which cannot be exacted, for the very name of liberality sounds of liberty. There is no end of it, as we use it; we never reckon what we have received; we care only for the future liberality;[4] wherefore, the more a prince exhausts himself in giving, the poorer he grows in friends. How should he satisfy desires, that still increase the more they are fulfilled? He who has his thoughts upon taking, never thinks of what he has taken: covetousness has nothing so much its own as ingratitude.

The example of Cyrus will not do amiss in this place, to serve the kings of these times for a touchstone to know whether their gifts are well or ill bestowed, and to see how much better that emperor conferred them than they do, who are reduced to borrow of their unknown subjects, and rather of them whom they have wronged, than of them on whom they have conferred their benefits, and so receive aids, wherein there is nothing of gratuitous but the name. Crœsus reproached him with his bounty, and cast up to how much his treasure would have amounted, if he had been a little closer-fisted. He had a mind to justify his liberality, and therefore sent dispatches into all parts, to the grandees of his dominions, whom he had particularly advanced, entreating every one of them to supply him with as much money as they could, for a pressing occasion, and to send him a particular of what every one could advance. When all the answers were brought to him, every one of his friends, not thinking it enough barely to offer him only so much as he had received from his bounty, having added to it a great deal of his own, it appeared that the sum amounted to much more than Crœsus's savings would. Whereupon Cyrus: "I am not," said he, "less fond of riches than

[1] Cicero. *de Finib.* v. 6.

[2] Plutarch, *Apothegms of the Kings.*

[3] Plutarch, *Whether the Athenians were more excellent in Arms than in Learning*; where Corinna makes use of it to convince Pindar that he had in one of his poems inserted too many fables.

[4] So, one of our own wits defines gratitude to be "a lively sense of future favours."

other princes, but rather a better husband of them: you see with how small a venture I have acquired the inestimable treasure of so many friends; and how much more faithful treasurers they are to me, than mercenary men without obligation or affection would be; and my money better laid up than in chests, bringing upon me the hatred, envy, and contempt of other princes."[1]

The expenses of the emperors at the public spectacles, why not justifiable.

The emperors excused the superfluity of their plays and public spectacles, by the reason that their authority did, in some sort (at least in outward appearance), depend upon the will of the people of Rome, who, time out of mind, had been accustomed to be entertained and caressed with such shows and excesses. But they were private men who had nourished this custom, to gratify their fellow-citizens and companions, and chiefly out of their own purses, by such profusion and magnificence; it had quite another taste, when they were the masters who came to imitate it: *Pecuniarum translatio a justis dominis ad alienos non debet liberalis videri*:[2] "The transferring of money from the right owners to strangers, ought not to have the title of liberality." Philip, seeing his son sought by presents to gain the affection of the Macedonians, reprimanded him in a letter after this manner: "What! hast thou a mind that thy subjects look upon thee as their cash-keeper, and not as their king? Wilt thou tamper with them to win their affections? Do it then by the benefits of thy virtue, and not by those of thy chest."[3]

And yet it was doubtless a fine thing to bring and plant within the theatre a great number of vast trees, with all their branches in their full verdure, representing a great shady forest, disposed in excellent order; and the first day to throw into it a thousand ostriches, a thousand stags, a thousand boars, and a thousand fallow-deer, to be killed and disposed of by the people; the next day, to cause a hundred great lions, a hundred leopards, and three hundred bears to be killed in their presence; and for the third day, to make three hundred pair of gladiators fight it out to the death, as the emperor Probus did.[4] It was also very fine to see those vast amphitheatres, all faced with marble without, curiously wrought with figures and statues, and the inside sparkling with rare decorations and enrichments,

Rich and sumptuous amphitheatres.

Balteus[5] en gemmis, en illita porticus auro:[6]

" Behold a belt with jewels glorious made,
And a fine portico with gold o'erlaid:"

all the sides of this vast space were filled and environed, from the bottom to the top, with three or four score ranges of seats, all of marble also, and covered with cushions,

Exeat, inquit,
Si pudor est, et de pulvino surgat equestri,
Cujus res legi non sufficit;[7]

" Begone, your means suffice not law, he cries,
For shame, from off the noble cushion rise:"

where a hundred thousand men might sit at their ease: and the place below, where the plays were played, to make it by art first open and cleft into chinks, representing caves, that vomited out the beasts designed for the spectacle; and then, secondly, to be overflowed with a deep sea, full of sea-monsters, and covered with ships of war, to represent a naval battle; and, thirdly, to make it dry and even again, for the combats of the gladiators; and for the fourth scene, to have it strewed with vermilion and storax instead of sand, there to make a solemn feast for all that infinite number of people, the last act of one single day.

Quoties nos descendentis arenæ
Vidimus in partes, ruptaque voragine terræ
Emersisse feras, et iisdem sæpe latebris,
Aurea cum croceo creverunt arbuta libro! . . .
Nec solum nobis silvestria cernere monstra
Contigit; sequoreos ego cum certantibus ursis
Spectavi vitulos, et equorum nomine dignum,
Sed deforme pecus.[8]

" How often, when spectators, have we seen
Part of the spacious theatre sink in,
And, from a sudden chasm in the earth,
Start up wild beasts: then presently give birth
Unto a shining grove of golden bow'rs,
Of shrubs that blossom'd with enamell'd flow'rs?
Nor yet of sylvan monsters had we sight
Alone; I saw sea-calves with wild bears fight;
And a deformed sort of cattle came,
Which river or sea-horses we might name."

Sometimes they made a high mountain rise, full of fruit and other trees in full fruit and foliage, sending down rivulets of water from the top, as from the mouth of a fountain; other whiles a great ship was seen to come rolling in, which opened and divided of itself; and, after having disgorged from the hold four or five hundred beasts for fight, closed again, and vanished without help; at other times, from the floor of this place they made spouts of perfumed waters dart their streams upward, and so high as to besprinkle all that infinite multitude. To defend themselves from the injuries of the weather, they had that vast place, one while covered over with purple curtains of needle-work, and by and

[1] Xenophon, *Cyrop.* viii. 9.
[2] Cicero, *de Off.* i. 14.
[3] Id. *ib.* ii. 15.
[4] Vopiscus, *in vita*, c. 19.
[5] "I know not," says Mr. Coste, "what is strictly to be understood here by the word *balteus*. In the amphitheatres this term was applied to certain steps that were higher and wider than the others, as may be seen in the Antiquities of Father Montfaucon, tom. iii. part ii. p. 256. Father Tachart, in his Latin and French Dictionary, says that the word is used by Vitruvius to denote a belt or girdle round the bottom and top of a column. Whether jewels would make a better figure there than on Montfaucon's steps, I leave to the determination of the connoisseurs."
[6] Calpurnius, *Eclog.* 7. entitled *Templum*, verse 47.
[7] Juvenal, iii. 153.
[8] Calpurnius, *ut supra*, verse 64.

by with silk of sometimes one sometimes another colour, which they could draw off or on in a moment, as they had a mind:

Quamvis non modico caleant spectacula sole,
Vela reducuntur, cum venit Hermogenes.[1]

"The curtains, tho' the sun does scorch the skin,
Are, when Hermogenes appears, drawn in."

The net-work also that was set before the people, to defend them from the violence of these turned-out beasts, was interwoven with gold:

Auro quoque torta refulgent
Retia.[2]

"And woven nets refulgent are with gold."

If there be any thing excusable in such excesses as these, it is where the novelty and invention create the wonder and admiration, not the expense: even in these vanities we discover how fertile those ages were in other kind of wits than these of ours. It is with this sort of fertility as with other products of nature; it is not to say she there employed her utmost force; we do not go, we rather wander up and down, this way and that; we turn back the road we came. I am afraid our knowledge is weak in every way; we neither see far forward nor backward; our understanding comprehends little, and lives but a little while; 'tis short, both in extent of time and extent of matter:

Vixere fortes ante Agamemnona
Multi, sed omnes illachrymabiles,
Urgentur, ignotique longa
Nocte.[3]

"Before Atrides, brave in fight,
Reigned many kings; but endless night
To all denies our tears and praise,
For never were they graced with lays."

Et supera bellum Thebanum, et funera Trojæ,
Multi alias alii quoque res cecinere poetæ:[4]

"And long before the wars of Thebes and Troy
On other things bards did their song employ:"

and the narrative of Solon,[5] of what he had got out of the Egyptian priests, touching the long life of their state, and their manner of learning and preserving foreign histories, is not, methinks, a testimony to be slighted in this consideration. *Si interminatam in omnes partes magnitudinem regionum videremus*, et temporum, *in quam se injiciens animus et intendens, ita late longeque peregrinatur, ut nullam oram ultimi videat, in qua possit insistere: in hac immensitate . . . infinita vis innumerabilium appareret formarum.*[6] "Could we see that boundless extent of countries and ages, in all their parts, on which the mind, being fixed and intent, might ramble where and when it list, without meeting with any limits to its sight, we should discover innumerable forms in that immensity." Though all that has arrived at our knowledge of times past should be true, and known by any one, it would be less than nothing in comparison of what is unknown. And of this same image of the world, which glides on whilst we are in it, how wretched and narrow is the knowledge of the most curious? Not only of particular events, which fortune often renders exemplary and of great concern, but of the state of great governments and nations, an hundred more things escape us than ever com[illegible]ur knowledge; we make a [illegible]cy business of the invention of artillery and printing, which other men at the other end of the world, in China, had a thousand years ago. Did we but see as much of the world as we do not, we should perceive, it is to be supposed, a perpetual multiplication and vicissitude of forms. There is nothing singular and rare in respect of nature, but in respect of our knowledge; which is a wretched foundation whereon to ground our rules, and that represents to us a very false image of things. As we now-a-days vainly conclude the declension and decrepitude of the world by the arguments we extract from our own weakness and decay;

Printing in China.

Jamque adeo est affecta ætas, effœtaque tellus:[7]

"So much the age, so much the earth decays;"

so did he[8] vainly conclude the birth and youth of theirs by the vigour they observed in the wits of their time, abounding in novelties and the invention of divers arts:

Verum, ut opinor, habet novitatem summa, recensque
Natura est mundi, neque pridem exordia cepit:
Quare etiam quædam nunc artes expoliuntur,
Nunc etiam augescunt; nunc addita navigiis sunt
Multa.[9]

"But sure the nature of the world is strong,
Perfect, and young; nor can I think it long
Since it beginning took, because we know
Arts still increase, and still politer grow,
And many things, from former times concealed,
Are now, by means of ships, to us revealed."

Of the new world, and the genius of its inhabitants, when it was first discovered.

Our world has lately discovered another (and who will assure us it is the last of his brothers, since the demons, the sibyls, and we ourselves, have been ignorant of this till now?) as large, well peopled, and fruitful as this whereon we

[1] Martial, xii. 29, 15. This Hermogenes was a notorious thief.
[2] Calpurnius, *ut supra*, 53.
[3] Horace, *Od.* iv. 9. 25.
[4] Lucret. v. 327. Montaigne here gives Lucretius' words a construction directly contrary to what they bear in the poem.
[5] Plato, *Timæus*.
[6] Cic. *de Natura Deorum*, ii. 20. Here also Montaigne puts a sense quite different from what the words bear in the original; but the application he makes of them is so happy that one would declare they were actually put together only to express his own sentiment. "Et temporum" is an addition by Montaigne; and, instead of "infinita vis innumerabilium appareret formarum," it is in Cicero "infinita vis innumerabilium volitat atomorum." These two last are sufficient to show that Cicero treats of quite another thing than what Montaigne does here.
[7] Lucret. ii. 1151.
[8] *Lucretius*, in his poem.
[9] Lucret. v. 331.

live, and yet so raw and childish, that we yet teach it its *a, b, c;* 'tis not above fifty years since it knew neither letters, weights, measures, vestments, corn, nor vines; it was then quite naked, in the mother's lap, and only lived upon what she gave it. If we rightly conclude of our end, and this poet of the youthfulness of that age of his, that other world will only enter into the light when this of ours shall make its exit: the universe will be paralytic; one member will be useless, another in vigour. I am greatly afraid that we have very much precipitated its declension and ruin by our contagion, and that we have sold it our opinions and our arts at a very dear rate. It was an infant world, and yet we have whipped and subjected it to our discipline by the advantage of our valour and natural forces; neither have we won it by our justice and goodness, nor subdued it by our magnanimity. Most of their answers, and the negociations we have had with them, witness that they were nothing behind us in pertinency and clearness of natural understanding: the astonishing magnificence of the cities of Cusco and Mexico, and, amongst many other such like things, the garden of that king, where all the trees, fruits, and plants, according to the order and stature they have in a garden, were excellently formed in gold, as in his cabinet were all the animals bred upon the land and the sea of his dominions; and the beauty of their manufactures, in jewels, feathers, cotton, and painting, gave ample proof that they were as little inferior to us in industry. But as to devotion, observance of the laws, goodness, liberality, and plain dealing, it was of main use to us that we had not so much as they; for they have lost, sold, and betrayed themselves by this advantage.

As to boldness and courage, stability, constancy against pain, hunger, and death, I should not fear to oppose the examples I find amongst them, to the most famous examples of elder times, that we find in our records on this side of the world. For as to those who have subdued them, take but away the sleights and artifices they practised to deceive them, and the just astonishment it was to those nations to see so sudden and unexpected an arrival of men with beards, differing in language, religion, shape, and countenance, from so remote a part of the world, and where they had never heard there was any habitation, mounted upon great unknown monsters, against those who had never so much as seen a horse, or any other beast, trained up to carry a man or any other loading; shelled in a hard and shining skin, with a cutting and glittering weapon in his hand against them, who, for the wonder of the brightness of a looking-glass or a knife, would truck great treasures of gold and pearl; and who had neither knowledge nor matter with which, even at leisure, they could penetrate our steel: to which may be added the lightning and thunder of our pieces and arquebusses, enough to frighten Cæsar himself, if surprised with as little experience of them; against people naked, except where the invention of a little quilted cotton was in use; without other arms, at the most, than bows, stones, staves, and bucklers of wood; people surprised, under colour of friendship and good faith, by the curiosity of seeing strange and unknown things; take but away, I say, this disparity from the conquerors, and you take away all the occasion of so many victories. When I look upon that invincible ardour wherewith so many thousands of men, women, and children have so often presented, and thrown themselves into inevitable dangers, for the defence of their gods and liberties; that generous obstinacy, to suffer all extremities and difficulties, and death itself, rather than submit to the dominion of those by whom they had been so shamefully abused; and some of them choosing rather to die of hunger and fasting than to accept of nourishment from the hands of their so basely victorious enemies; I take it that whoever would have attacked them upon equal terms of arms, experience, and number, would have had as hard, and perhaps a harder, game to play, than in any other war we have seen.

Why did not so noble a conquest fall under Alexander, or the ancient Greeks and Romans; and so great a revolution and change of so many empires and nations fall into hands that might have gently made plain and smooth whatever was rough and savage amongst them, and have cherished and assisted the good seeds that nature had there produced; mixing not only with the culture of land and the ornament of cities, the arts of this part of the world, in what was necessary, but also the Greek and Roman virtues, with those that were originals of the country! What a particular reparation had it been to them, and what a general good to the whole world, had our first examples and deportment in those parts allured those people to the admiration and imitation of virtue, and had begot betwixt them and us a fraternal society and intelligence! How easy had it been to have made advantage of souls so innocent, and so eager to learn; having for the most part naturally so good capacities! Whereas, on the contrary, we have taken advantage of their ignorance and inexperience, with the greater ease to incline them to treachery, luxury, avarice, and towards all sorts of inhumanity and cruelty, by the pattern and example of our manners: whoever put at so high a price the benefit of merchandize and traffic? So many cities levelled with the ground, so many nations exterminated, so many millions of people fallen by the edge of the sword, and the richest and most beautiful part of the world turned upside-down for the traffic of pearls and pepper! Mechanical victories! Never did ambition, never did political animosities engage men against one another, in such horrible hostilities and calamities.

Certain Spaniards, coasting the sea in quest of their mines, landed in a fruitful and pleasant and very well peopled country, and there made their usual representations to the inhabitants: "That they were peaceable men, who were come from a very remote country, and sent on the part of the King of Castile, the greatest prince of the habitable world, to whom the Pope, God's vicegerent upon earth, had given the principality of the Indies; that if they would become tributaries to him, they should be very gently and courteously used:" at the same time requiring of them victuals for their nourishment, and gold, whereof to make some pretended medicine; they moreover represented to them the belief of one only God, and the truth of our religion, which they advised them to embrace, to which they also added some threats. To which they received this answer: "That as to their being peaceable, they did not seem to be such, if they were so; as to their king, he must be necessitous and poor, since he asked; and he who had given him that grant, a man that loved dissension, to give away that to another which was none of his own, and to bring it into dispute against the ancient possessors; as to victuals, they would supply them; that of gold they had little, it being a thing they had in very small esteem, as being of no use to the service of life, their care being only to pass it happily and pleasantly; but that what they could find, except what was employed in the service of their gods, they might freely take; as to one only God, the notion had pleased them, but that they would not change their religion, because they had so happily lived in it, and that they were not used to take advice of any but their friends, and those they knew; as to their menaces, it was a sign of want of judgment, to threaten those whose nature and power was to them unknown; that therefore they had better make haste to quit their coast, for they were not used to take such civilities and remonstrances of armed men and strangers in good part; otherwise they would do by them as they had done by those others," showing them the heads of several executed men round the wall of their city. Here is one specimen of the prattle of this infancy. But so it is, that the Spaniards did, neither in this nor several other places where they did not find the merchandize they sought for, make any stay or any attempt, whatever other conveniences were there to be had; witness my Cannibals.[1]

Of two of the most puissant monarchs of that world, and perhaps of this, kings of so many kings, and the last they exterminated, that of Peru,[2] having been taken in a battle, and put to so excessive a ransom as exceeds all belief; it being faithfully paid, and he having, by his conversation, given manifest signs of a frank, liberal, and constant spirit, and of a clear and settled understanding; the conquerors, after having exacted one million three hundred and twenty-five thousand five hundred weight of gold, besides silver and other things, which amounted to no less (so that their horses were thenceforth shod with massy gold) had yet a mind to see, at the price of what disloyalty and injustice soever, what the remainder of the treasure of this king might be, and to possess themselves of that also. To which end a false accusation was exhibited against him, and false witnesses brought in to prove that he planned to raise an insurrection in his provinces, to procure his own liberty; whereupon, by the worthy sentence of those very men, who had by this treachery conspired his ruin, he was condemned to be publicly hanged, after having made him buy off the torment of being burned alive, by the baptism they gave him immediately before execution; a horrid and unheard of barbarity, which nevertheless he underwent without belying himself either in word or look, with a truly grave and royal behaviour. After which, to calm and appease the people, daunted and astonished at so strange a thing, they counterfeited great sorrow for his death, and appointed most sumptuous funerals.

The other, king of Mexico,[3] after having a long time defended his beleaguered city, and in this siege manifested the utmost of what suffering and perseverance can do, if ever prince and people did, and his misfortune having delivered him alive into his enemies' hands, upon articles of being treated like a king; neither did he in his captivity discover any thing unworthy of that title. His enemies, after their victory, not finding so much gold as they expected, when they had searched and rifled with their utmost diligence, they went about to procure discoveries by the most cruel torments they could invent, upon the prisoners they had taken; but having profited nothing that way, their courage being greater than their torments, they arrived at last to such a degree of fury as, contrary to their faith and the law of nations, to condemn the king himself and one of the principal noblemen of his court to the rack, in the presence of one another. This lord, finding himself overcome with pain, being environed with burning coals, pitifully turned his dying eyes towards his master, as it were to ask him pardon that he was able to endure no more; whereupon the king, darting at him a fierce and severe look, as reproaching his cowardice and pusillanimity, with a stern and firm voice said to him this only: "Am I in a bath? am I more at my ease than thou?" The other soon after quailed under the torment, and died upon the place. The king, half roasted, was carried thence; not so much out of pity (for what compassion ever touched such barbarous souls, who, for the doubtful information of some vessel of gold to be made a prey of, caused not only a man, but

[1] See Book i. c. 30.
[2] *Atahualpa.*
[3] *Guatimozin.*

a king, so great in fortune and desert, to be broiled before their eyes), but because his endurance rendered their cruelty still more shameful. They afterwards hanged him, for having nobly attempted to deliver himself by arms from so long a captivity, and he died with a courage becoming so magnanimous a prince.

Indian prisoners burnt alive by the Spaniards.

Another time they burned, in one and the same fire, four hundred and sixty men alive at once; the four hundred being of the common people, the sixty the principal lords of a province, mere prisoners of war. We have these narratives from themselves; for they do not only own it, but boast of it and inculcate it. Could it be for a testimony of their justice, or their zeal to religion? Doubtless these are ways too differing and contrary to so holy an end. Had they proposed to themselves to extend our faith, they would have considered that it does not amplify in the possession of territories, but in the gaining of men; and would have more than satisfied themselves with the slaughters occasioned by the necessity of war, without indifferently mixing a massacre, as upon wild beasts, as universal as fire and sword could make it; having only, by their good will, saved so many as they intended to make miserable slaves of, for the work and service of their mines: so that many of the captains were put to death upon their place of conquest, by order of the King of Castile, justly offended with the horror of their conduct, and almost all of them hated and disesteemed. God did meritoriously permit that all this great plunder should be swallowed by the sea in transportation, or by civil wars, wherewith they devoured one another, and the most of the actors in it were buried upon the place, without any fruit of their victory.

That the revenue, though in the hands of so parsimonious and so prudent a prince,[1] so little answers the expectation given to his predecessors of it, and of that first abundance of riches which was found at the first landing in those new discovered countries (for though a great deal be fetched thence, yet we see 'tis nothing in comparison of what might be expected), comes from this, that the use of money was there utterly unknown, and that consequently their gold was found all collected together, being of no other use but for ornament and shew; as furniture reserved from father to son by many puissant kings, who always drained their mines to make this vast heap of vessels and statues, for the decoration of their palaces and temples: whereas our gold is always in motion and traffic; we cut ours into a thousand small pieces, and cast it into a thousand forms, and scatter and disperse it a thousand ways. Only suppose our kings should thus hoard up all the gold they could get in several ages, and let it lie idle by them.

[1] Philip II.

Those of the kingdom of Mexico were in some sort more civilized and more ingenious than the other nations were in those parts: therefore did they judge, as we do, that the world was near its period, and looked upon the desolation we brought amongst them for a certain sign of it. They believed that the existence of the world was divided into five ages, and into the life of five successive suns, of which four had already ended their time, and that which gave them light was the fifth. The first perished, with all other creatures, by an universal inundation of water: the second, by the heavens falling upon us, which suffocated every living thing; to which age they assign the giants, and shewed bones to the Spaniards, according to the proportions of which, the stature of men amounted to twenty hands high: the third by fire, which burnt and consumed all: the fourth, by an emotion of the air and wind, which came with such violence as beat down even many mountains; wherein the men died not, but were turned into baboons: what impressions will not the weakness of human belief admit! After the death of this fourth sun, the world was twenty-five years in perpetual darkness; in the fifteenth of which a man and a woman were created, that restored the human race: ten years after, upon a certain day, the sun appeared newly created, and since, the account of their years takes beginning from that day: the third day after his creation, the ancient gods died; and the new ones are since born from day to day. After what manner they think this last sun shall perish, my author knows not; but their number of this fourth change agrees with the great conjunction of stars, that eight hundred and odd years ago, as astrologers suppose, produced great alterations and novelties in the world.

The opinions of the Mexicans.

As to pomp and magnificence, in relation to which I engaged in this discourse, neither Greece, Rome, nor Egypt, whether for utility, difficulty, or state, can compare any of their works with the road to be seen in Peru, made by the kings of the country, from the city of Quito to that of Cusco (three hundred leagues), straight, even, five-and-twenty paces wide, paved, and enclosed on both sides with high and beautiful walls, and along these, on the inside, two clear rivulets, bordered with a beautiful sort of a tree, which they call *molly*. In which work, where they met with rocks and mountains, they cut them through and made them even, and filled up pits and valleys with lime and stone to make them level. At the end of every day's journey are beautiful palaces, furnished with provisions, vestments, and arms, as well for travellers as for the armies that are to pass that way. In the estimate of this work I have reckoned the diffi-

The magnificent causeway betwixt Quito and Cusco.

culty, which is particularly considerable in that place: they did not build with any stones less than ten feet square: and had no other means of carriage than by drawing their load themselves by force of arm, and knew not so much as the art of scaffolding, nor any other way of standing to their work but by throwing up earth against the building, as it rose higher, taking it away again when they had done it.

Let us return to our coaches. In their place, and that of all other sorts of carriage, these people caused themselves to be carried by men, and upon their shoulders. This last king of Peru, the day that he was taken, was thus carried upon staves of gold, sitting in a chair of gold in the middle of his battle. As many of his chairmen as were killed, to make him fall (for they wanted to take him alive), as many others took their place, so that they could never beat him down, what slaughter soever they made of those people, till a horseman, seizing upon him, brought him down.

The last king of Peru carried in a chair of gold to the midst of the field of battle.

CHAPTER VII.

OF THE INCONVENIENCE OF GREATNESS.

SINCE we cannot attain to greatness, let us revenge ourselves by railing at it; and yet it is not absolutely railing against any thing to proclaim its defects, because they are to be found in all things, how beautiful or how much soever to be coveted. *Greatness* has in general this manifest advantage, that it can grow less when it pleases, and has very near the choice of both the one and the other condition, for a man does not fall from every height; there are several from which one may descend without falling. It does, indeed, appear to me that we value it at too high a rate, and also overvalue the resolution of those who, we have either seen or heard, have contemned it, or displaced themselves of their own accord: its essence is not so evidently commodious that a man may not, without a miracle, refuse it. I find it a very hard thing to undergo misfortunes, but to be content with a competent measure of fortune, and to avoid greatness, I think a very easy matter; 'tis methinks a virtue to which I, who am none of the wisest, could without any great endeavour arrive. What then is to be expected from them that would yet put into consideration the glory attending this refusal, wherein there may lurk worse ambition than even in the desire itself and fruition of greatness? Forasmuch as ambition never behaves itself better, according to itself, than when it proceeds by obscure and unfrequented ways.

I incite my courage to patience, but I rein it in as much as I can from desire. I have as much to wish for as another, and allow my wishes as much liberty and indiscretion; but yet it never befel me to wish for either empire or royalty, or the eminence of high and commanding fortunes; I do not aim that way; I love myself too well. When I think of growing greater, 'tis but very moderately; and by a compelled and timorous advancement, such as is proper for me, in resolution, in prudence, in health, in beauty, and even in riches too; but supreme place, or mighty authority, oppresses my imagination, and quite contrary to the other,[1] I should perhaps rather choose to be the second or third in Perigord, than the first at Paris; at least, without lying, the third at Paris than the first. I would neither dispute, a miserable unknown, with a nobleman's porter, nor make crowds open in adoration as I pass. I am trained up to a moderate condition, as well by my choice as by fortune; and have made it appear, in the whole conduct of my life and enterprises, that I have rather avoided, than otherwise, the climbing above the degree of fortune in which God placed me by my birth: all natural constitution is equally just and easy. My soul is so sneaking and mean, that I measure not good fortune by its height, but by its facility.

Montaigne was never ambitious of very high preferment.

But if my heart be not great enough, 'tis, on the other hand, open enough to make amends, by freely laying open its weakness. Should any one put me upon comparing the life of L. Thorius Balbus, a brave man, handsome, learned, healthful, understanding, and abounding in all sorts of conveniences and pleasures, leading a quiet life, and all his own, his mind well prepared against death, superstition, pains, and other incumbrances of human necessity; dying at last in battle with his sword in his hand, for the defence of his country, on the one part; and on the other part, the life of M. Regulus, so great and high as it is known to every one, and his end admirable; the one without name and without dignity, the other exemplary and glorious to a wonder; I should doubtless say what Cicero did, could I speak as well as he.[2] But if I had to decide them with reference to myself, I should then say that the first is as much according to my capacity and desire, which I conform to my capacity, as the second is far beyond it; that I could not approach the last but with venera-

[1] *Julius Cæsar.* See Plutarch, *in vitâ.*

[2] Cicero, from whom Montaigne has taken this parallel, plainly gives the preference to Regulus. Thorius, he says, wallowed in pleasures of every kind, and was a contemner of the sacrifices and temples of his country: he was a handsome man, perfectly healthy, and so valiant that he died in battle for the cause of the republic; insomuch, adds Cicero, that I dare not name the man who was preferable to him; but virtue shall speak for me, who will not hesitate a moment to give M. Regulus the preference, and to proclaim him the more happy man. *De Finib.* ii. 20.

tion; the other I would readily attain by custom.

But let us return to our temporal greatness, from which we are digressed.

Montaigne loved not to command, nor becommanded.

I disrelish all dominion, whether active or passive. Otanes, one of the seven who had right to pretend to the kingdom of Persia, did as I should readily have done; which was that he gave up to his competitors his right of being promoted to it, either by election or lot, provided that he and his might live in the empire free from all authority and subjection, that of the ancient laws excepted, and might enjoy all liberty that was not prejudicial to these; as impatient of commanding as of being commanded.[1]

That it is a troublesome and difficult employment to command.

The most painful and difficult employment in the world, in my opinion, is worthily to discharge the office of a king. I excuse more of their mistakes than men commonly do, in consideration of the intolerable weight of their function, which astonishes me; 'tis hard to keep measure in so immeasurable a power; yet so it is, that, even in those who are of the least excellent nature, it is a singular incitement to virtue to be seated in a place where you cannot do the least good that shall not be put upon record; where the least benefit goes to so many men, and where your talent, like that of preachers, principally addresses itself to the people, no very exact judge, easy to be deceived, and easily content. There are few things wherein we can give a sincere judgment, by reason that there are few wherein we have not in some sort a particular interest. Superiority and inferiority, dominion and subjection, are bound to a natural envy and contest, and must necessarily perpetually encroach upon one another. I believe neither the one nor the other touching the rights of the adverse party; let reason therefore, which is inflexible and without passion, determine. 'Tis not above a month ago that I read two Scotch authors contending upon this subject, of which he who stands for the people makes kings to be in a worse condition than a carter; and he who writes for monarchy places them some degrees above God Almighty in power and sovereignty.

The inconvenience of greatness.

Now the inconvenience of greatness, that I have made choice of to consider in this place, upon some occasion that has lately put it into my head, is this. There is not, perhaps, anything more pleasant in the commerce of men than the trials that we make against one another, out of emulation of honour and valour, whether in the exercises of the body or in those of the mind; yet herein the sovereign greatness can have no true part. And, indeed, I have often thought that, through mere force of respect, men have used princes disdainfully and injuriously in that particular; for the thing I was infinitely offended at in my childhood, that they who exercised with me forbore to do their best, because they found me unworthy of their utmost endeavour, is what we see happen to them every day, every one finding himself unworthy to contend with them; if we discover that they have the least passion to have the better, there is no one who will not make it his business to give it them, and who will not rather betray his own glory than offend theirs, and will therein employ so much force only as is necessary to advance their honour. What share have they, then, in the engagement, wherein every one is on their side? Methinks, in such cases, I see those Paladins of ancient times presenting themselves to justs, with enchanted arms and bodies. Crison running against Alexander, purposely missed his blow, and made a fault in his career;[2] Alexander chid him for it, but he ought to have had him whipped. Upon this consideration Carneades said,[3] that "The sons of princes learned nothing right but to ride; by reason that in all their other exercises every one bends and yields to them: but a horse, that is neither a flatterer nor a courtier, throws the son of a king with as little ceremony as he would that of a porter."

Homer was compelled to consent that Venus, so sweet and delicate as she was, should be wounded at the battle of Troy, thereby to ascribe courage and boldness to her; qualities that cannot possibly be in those who are exempt from danger. The gods are made to be angry, to fear, to run away, to be jealous, to grieve, and to be transported with passion, to honour them with the virtues that amongst us are built upon these imperfections. He who does not participate in the hazard and difficulty, can pretend to no interest in the honour and pleasure that are the result of hazardous actions. 'Tis pity a man should be so potent that all things must give way to him; fortune therein sets you too remote from society, and places you in too great a solitude. This easiness and mean facility of making all things bow before you, is an enemy to all sorts of pleasure; this is to slide, not to go; to sleep, not to live. Conceive man accompanied with omnipotence, you throw him into an abyss; he must beg disturbance and opposition as an alms; his being and his good is indigence. Their good qualities are dead and lost; for these are not perceived but by comparison, and we put them out of it; they have little knowledge of true praise, having their ears stunned with so continual and uniform an approbation. Have they to do with the most foolish of all their subjects? They have no means to take any advantage of him;

[1] Herod. iii. 83.
[2] Plutarch, *on Content.*
[3] Plutarch, *on the Difference between a Flatterer and a Friend.*

if he but say, "'Twas because he is my king," he thinks he has said enough to express that he therefore suffered himself to be overcome. This quality stifles and consumes the other true and essential qualities; they are buried under royalty, and leave them nothing to recommend themselves withal, but actions that directly concern it, and that merely respect the functions of their place: 'tis so much to be a king, that he only is so by being so. The strange lustre that surrounds him conceals and shrouds him from us; our sight is there broken and dissipated, being stopped and filled by this prevailing light. The senate awarded the prize of eloquence to Tiberius; he refused it, holding that, though it had been just, he could derive no advantage from a judgment so partial, and that was so little free to decide.

The prize of eloquence refused by Tiberius, and why.

As we give them all advantages of honour, so do we soothe and authorize all their vices and defects, not only by approbation, but by imitation also. Every one of Alexander's followers carried their heads awry as he did;[1] and the flatterers of Dionysius run against one another in his presence, stumbled at and overturned whatever was under foot, to make out they were as short-sighted as he.[2] Hernia has sometimes also served to recommend a man to favour; I have seen deafness affected; and because the master hated his wife, Plutarch[3] has seen his courtiers repudiate theirs, whom they loved; and, which is yet more, uncleanness and all manner of dissoluteness has been in fashion; as also disloyalty, blasphemy, cruelty, heresy, superstition, irreligion, effeminacy, and worse, if worse there be; and by an example yet more dangerous than that of Mithridates' flatterers, who, because their master pretended to the honour of a good physician, came to him to have incisions and cauteries made in their limbs;[4] for these others suffered the soul, a more delicate and noble part, to be cauterized. But to end where I began: the Emperor Adrian disputing with the philosopher Favorinus about the interpretation of some word, Favorinus soon yielded him the victory; for which his friends rebuking him: "You talk simply," said he;[5] "would you not have him wiser than I, who commands thirty legions?" Augustus wrote verses against Asinius Pollio: "And I," said Pollio,[6] "say nothing; for it is not prudent to write in contest with him who has power to proscribe." And he was in the right; for Dionysius, because he could not equal Philoxenus in poetry,[7] and Plato in discourse, condemned one to the quarries,[8] and sent the other to be sold for a slave in the island of Ægina.

CHAPTER VIII.

OF THE ART OF CONVERSATION.

'Tis a custom of our justice to condemn some for a warning to others. To condemn them for having done amiss were folly, as Plato says,[9] for what is done can never be undone; but 'tis that they may offend no more, and that others may avoid the example of their offence: we do not correct the man we hang; we correct others by him. I do the same: my errors are sometimes natural and incorrigible; but the good which virtuous men do the public in making themselves imitated, I perhaps may do in making my manners avoided;

The end of punishments, and how the vices of some men may serve for instruction to others.

> Nonne vides Albi ut male vivat filius? utque
> Barrus inops? magnum documentum, ne patriam rem
> Perdere quis velit;[10]
>
> "Behold the son
> Of Albus there, and Barrus, too, undone!
> A striking lesson is the spendthrift's fate,
> To caution youth from squandering their estate;"

while I publish and accuse my own imperfections, somebody will learn to be afraid of them. The parts that I most esteem in myself derive more honour from decrying, than from commending my own manners: which is the reason why I so often fall into and so much insist upon that strain. But, when all is summed up, a man never speaks of himself without loss. A man's accusations of himself are always believed; his praises never. There may be some of my complexion, who better instruct me by contrariety than similitude, and more by avoiding than imitating; the elder Cato had a regard to this sort of discipline, when he said that "the wise may learn more of fools than fools of the wise;"[11] and Pausanias tells us of an ancient player upon the lyre, who used to make his scholars go to hear one that lived over against him, and played very ill, that they might learn to hate his discords and false measures.

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[1] Plutarch, *of the difference between the Flatterer and the Friend.*
[2] *Id. ib.*
[3] *Id. ib.*, who only says that he knew a man who, because his friend divorced his wife, turned away his wife also, whom, nevertheless, he went to visit, and sent for sometimes privately to his house, which was discovered by the very wife of his friend.
[4] *Id. ib.*
[5] Spartian, *Life of Adrian*, c. 15.
[6] Macrobius, *Saturnal.* ii. 4.
[7] Or rather because he was not able to bear the slight opinion which Philoxenus showed of his poetry. Diodorus of Sicily, xv. 6, says, that one day, at supper-time, as they were reading some worthless poems of this tyrant, that excellent poet Philoxenus, being charged to give his opinion of them, was too free in his answer to please Dionysius, for which the tyrant was so much incensed against him that he ordered him to be sent immediately to the quarries.
[8] Montaigne and his authority Plutarch (*on Contentment of Mind*) are mistaken here with regard to Plato, who was sold a slave in the island of Ægina, by order of Dionysius the tyrant, because he had spoken too freely to him; as Diodorus of Sicily says positively, xv. cap. 2, and more particularly also Diog. Laert. *Life of Plato.*
[9] *Laws*, xi.
[10] Horace, *Sat* i. 4. 109.
[11] Plutarch, *in vita.*

The horror of cruelty more inclines me to clemency than any example of clemency could do; a good rider does not so much mend my seat as an attorney or a Venetian on horseback; and a clownish way of speaking does more to reform mine than the most elegant. Every day the foolish countenance of another is advertising and advising me; that which pricks, rouses and incites, much better than that which tickles. The present time is fitting to reform us backward; more by dissenting than agreeing, by differing than consenting. Profiting little by good examples, I make use of those that are ill, which are everywhere to be found; I endeavour to render myself as agreeable as I see others offensive; as constant as I see others fickle; as affable as I see others rough; and as good as I see others evil; but I proposed to myself impracticable measures.

The most fruitful and natural exercise of the mind, in my opinion, is conversation; I find the use of it more sweet than of any other action of life; and for that reason it is that, if I were now compelled to choose, I should sooner, I think, consent to lose my sight than my hearing and speech. The Athenians, and also the Romans, kept this exercise in great honour in their academies; the Italians retain some footsteps of it to this day, to their great advantage, as is manifest by the comparison of our understandings with theirs. The study of books is a languishing and feeble motion, that heats not, whereas conversation teaches and exercises at once. If I converse with a man of mind, and no flincher, who presses hard upon and digs at me right and left, his imagination raises up mine; jealousy, glory, and contention stimulate and raise me up to something above myself; unison is a quality altogether obnoxious in conversation, but as our minds fortify themselves by the communication of vigorous and regular understandings, 'tis not to be expressed how much they lose and degenerate by the continual commerce and frequentation we have with those that are mean and sickly; there is no contagion that spreads like that; I know sufficiently by experience what 'tis worth a yard. I love to discourse and dispute; but it is with but few men, and for myself; for to do it as a spectacle and entertainment to great persons, and to make a parade of a man's wit and power of talking is, in my opinion, very unbecoming a man of honour.

Conversation of greater advantage than the reading of books.

Folly is a scurvy quality; but not to be able to endure it, to fret and vex at it, as I do, is another sort of disease, little inferior in troublesomeness to folly itself; and this is what I would now accuse in myself. I enter into conversation and dispute with great liberty and ease, forasmuch as opinion meets in me with a soil very unfit for penetration, or taking any deep root; no propositions astonish me, no belief offends me, though never so contrary to my own; there is no fancy so frivolous and extravagant that does not seem to me a suitable product of the human mind. We, who deprive our judgments of the right of determining, look calmly at adverse opinions, and if we incline not our judgments to them, yet we easily give them the hearing. Where one scale is totally empty, I let the other waver under old wives' dreams; and I think myself excusable, if I rather choose the odd number, Thursday rather than Friday; and if I had rather be twelfth or fourteenth than thirteenth at table; if I had rather on a journey see a hare run by me than cross my way; and rather give my man my left foot than my right, when he comes to dress me. All such whimsies as are in use amongst us deserve at least to be hearkened unto: for my part, they only with me import inanity, but they import that. Moreover, vulgar and casual opinions are something more than nothing in nature; and he who will not suffer himself to proceed so far, perhaps falls into the vice of obstinacy, to avoid that of superstition.

The contradictions of judgments, then, do neither offend nor alter, they only rouse and exercise me. We evade correction, whereas we ought to offer and present ourselves to it, especially when it appears in the form of conversation, and not of dictation. At every opposition we do not consider whether or no it be just, but, right or wrong, how to disengage ourselves; instead of extending the arms, we thrust out our claws. I could suffer myself to be rudely handled by my friends: "Thou art a fool; thou knowest not what thou art talking about." I love stout expressions amongst gallant men, and to have them speak as they think: we must fortify and harden our hearing against this tenderness as to ceremonious sound of words. I love a strong and manly familiarity and converse; a friendship that flatters itself in the sharpness and vigour of its communication, as love, in biting and scratching; it is not vigorous and generous enough if it be not quarrelsome, if civilized and artificial, if it treads nicely and fears a shock; *Neque enim disputari sine reprehensione potest.*[1] "For no man can dispute without reprehending." When any one contradicts me, he raises my attention, not my anger; I advance towards him that controverts, as to one that instructs me: the cause of truth ought to be the common cause of both: what will he answer? The passion of anger has already confounded his judgment; has usurped the place of reason. It were not amiss that the decision of our disputes should be a matter of wager: that there might be a material mark of our losses, to the end we might the better remember them, and that my man might tell me: "Your ignorance and obstinacy cost you last year, at twenty times, a hundred crowns." I embrace and caress truth in what hand soever I find it,

[1] Cicero, *de Finib.* i. 8.

and cheerfully surrender myself, and extend to it my conquered arms, as far off as I can discover it; and, provided it be not too imperiously or airishly, take a pleasure in being reproved, and accommodate myself to my accusers, very often more by reason of civility than amendment, loving to gratify and nourish the liberty of admonition, by my facility of submitting to it, even at my own expense.

Nevertheless, it is hard to bring the men of my time to it: they have not the courage to correct, because they have not the courage to suffer themselves to be corrected, and speak always with dissimulation in the presence of one another. I take so great pleasure in being judged and known, that it is almost indifferent to me in which of the two forms I am so; my imagination does so often contradict and condemn itself, that 'tis all one to me if another do it, especially considering that I give his reprehension no greater authority than what I myself admit. But I break with him who carries himself so high, as I know some do, that regrets his advice if not believed, and takes it for an affront if it be not immediately followed. That Socrates always received smilingly the contradictions opposed against his arguments, it may be said that his strength of reason was the cause, and that the advantage being certain to fall on his side, he accepted them as matter of new victory; yet we see, on the contrary, that nothing in argument renders our sentiments so delicate as the opinion of the pre-eminence and disdain of the adversary; and that in reason 'tis rather for the weaker to take in good part the opposition that corrects him and sets him right. Indeed, I choose the frequenting those that ruffle me, rather than those that fear me; 'tis a dull and hurtful pleasure to have to do with people who admire us, and approve of all we say. Antisthenes[1] commanded his children "never to take it kindly or for a favour from any man that commended them." I am much prouder of the victory I obtain over myself, when, even in the ardour of dispute, I make myself submit to my adversary's force of reason, than I am pleased with the victory I obtain over him through his weakness. In short, I receive and admit all manner of hits that are direct, how weak soever: but I am too impatient of those that are made without form. I care not what the subject is, the opinions are to me all one, and I am indifferent whether I get the better or the worse. I can peaceably argue a whole day together, if the argument be carried on with order: I do not so much require force and subtlety as order; the order which we every day observe in the wrangling of shepherds and apprentices, but never amongst us. If they start from their subject 'tis an incivility, and yet we do it; but their tumult and impatience never put them out of their theme; their argument still continues its course; if they anticipate, and do not stay for one another, they at least understand one another very well. Any one answers quite well enough for me, if he answers to what I say; but when the dispute is irregular and perplexed, I leave the thing, and insist upon the form with anger and indiscretion; and fall into a wilful, malicious, and imperious way of disputation, of which I am afterwards ashamed. 'Tis impossible to deal fairly with a fool; my judgment is not only corrupted under the hand of so impetuous a master, but my conscience also.

Our disputes ought to be interdicted, and punished, as well as other verbal crimes. What vice[2] do they not raise and heap up, being always governed and commanded by passion? We first quarrel with their reasons, and then with the men. We only learn to dispute that we may contradict; and every one contradicting and being contradicted, it falls out that the fruit of disputation is to lose and nullify truth; and therefore it is that Plato, in his *Republic*,[3] prohibits this exercise to weak and ill-descended minds. To what end do you go about to enquire of him who knows nothing to purpose? A man does no injury to the subject, when he leaves it, to seek how he may treat it; I do not mean by an artificial and scholastic way, but by a natural one, with a sound understanding. What will it be in the *end*? One flies to the east, the other to the west; they lose the principal, and wander in the crowd of incidents; after an hour of tempest they know not what they seek; one is low, the other high, and a third wide; one catches at a word and a *simile*; another is no longer sensible of what is said in opposition to him, being entirely absorbed in his own notions, engaged in following his own course, and not thinking of answering you; another, finding himself weak, fears all, refuses all, and, at the very beginning, confounds the subjects, or, in the very height of the dispute, stops short, and grows silent: by a peevish ignorance affecting a proud contempt, or an unseasonable modest desire to shun debate; one, provided he strikes, cares not how much he lays himself open; another counts his words, and weighs them for reasons; another only brawls, and makes use of the advantage of his

Disputes that are ill conducted ought to be prohibited; the ill consequences of them.

[1] Plutarch, *Of False Shame*. Montaigne has confounded this Antisthenius, or Antistheneus, as the Latin translation of Plutarch calls him, with the chief of the Cynic sect, who never had the surname of Hercules, which Plutarch gives to Antisthenius, and is constantly called Antisthenes.

[2] The description which Montaigne gives, from this place to the end of the paragraph, of the faults that commonly attend our disputes, is very just, and very agreeably expressed. Père Bouhours was so pleased with it, that he has inserted it almost verbatim in book iii. of his *Art de Penser*, chap. 20, but without directly ascribing the honour of it to Montaigne, whom he only points out by the vague character of *a celebrated author*; whereas he ought most certainly to have named Montaigne expressly, especially after having just criticised him in the same chapter with great severity, to call it no worse, when he not only quotes his words, but names him without any scruple.

[3] Book vii., towards the end.

lungs; here's one that learnedly concludes against himself, and another that deafens you with prefaces and senseless digressions; another falls into downright railing, and seeks a ridiculous quarrel, to disengage himself from further contest with wits that press too hard upon his own; and a last man sees nothing in the reason of the thing, but draws a line of circumvallation about you of dialectic clauses, and the *formula* of his art.

The strange abuse that is made of science.

Now who would not enter into distrust of sciences, and doubt whether he can reap from them any solid fruit for the service of life, considering the use we put them to? *Nihil sanantibus literis.*[1] "Letters that bring no cure." Who has got understanding by his logic? Where are all her fair promises? *Nec ad melius vivendum, nec ad commodius disserendum.*[2] "It neither makes a man live better, nor reason more aptly." Is there more noise or confusion in the scolding of fish-wives, than in the public disputations of men of this profession? I had rather my son should learn to speak in a tavern, than to prate in the schools. Take a master of arts, converse with him; why does he not make us sensible of this artificial excellence? Why does he not enchant women and ignorant fellows like us with admiration at the steadiness of his reasons, and the beauty of his order? Why does he not sway and persuade us to what he will? Why does a man who has so great advantage in matter, mix railing, indiscretion, and fury, in his disputation? Strip him of his gown, his hood, and his Latin; let him not batter our ears with Aristotle, pure and crude: you will take him for one of us, or worse. Whilst they torment us with this complication and confusion of words, it fares with them, methinks, as with jugglers; their dexterity confounds and imposes upon our senses, but does not at all work upon our belief; out of this legerdemain they perform nothing that is not very ordinary and mean: for being more learned they are not the less fools. I love and honour knowledge as much as they that have it; and, in its true use, 'tis the most noble and the most powerful acquisition of men; but in such as I speak of (and the number of them is infinite), who build their fundamental sufficiency and value upon it, who appeal from their understanding to their memory, *sub aliena umbra latentes*,[3] "crouching under borrowed shade," and who can do nothing but by book; I hate it, if I may dare to say so, even worse than stupidity itself. In my country, and in my time, learning improves fortunes enough, but not minds: if it meet with those that are dull and heavy, it overcharges and suffocates them, leaving them a crude and undigested mass; if airy and fine, it purifies, clarifies, and subtleizes them, even to exinanition. 'Tis a thing of almost indifferent quality; a very useful accession to a well-born soul, but hurtful and pernicious to others; or rather, a thing of very precious use, that will not suffer itself to be purchased under value. In the hand of some 'tis a sceptre, in that of others a fool's bauble.

But let us proceed. What greater victory can you expect than to make your enemy see and know that he is not able to encounter you? When you get the better of your argument, 'tis truth that wins; when you get the advantage of order and method, 'tis then you that win. I am of opinion that, in Plato and Xenophon, Socrates disputes more in favour of the disputants, than in favour of the dispute, and more to instruct Euthydemus and Protagoras in the knowledge of their impertinence, than in the impertinence of their art. He takes hold of the first subject, like one that has a more profitable end than to explain it, namely, to clear the understandings that he takes upon him to instruct and exercise.

It is method and management that give a value to disputation.

To hunt after truth is properly our business, and we are inexcusable if we carry on the chace impertinently and ill; to fail of catching it is another thing: for we are born to inquire after truth; it belongs to a greater power to possess it: it is not, as Democritus said, hid in the bottom of the deeps, but rather elevated to an infinite height in the divine knowledge.[4] The world is but a school of inquisition: it is not who shall carry the ring, but who shall run the best courses. He may play the fool as well who speaks true, as he that speaks false; for we are upon the manner, not the matter, of speaking. 'Tis my humour as much to regard the form as the substance, and the advocate as much as the cause, as Alcibiades ordered we should; and I every day amuse myself with reading authors, without any consideration of their learning; their method is what I look after, not their subject: and just so do I hunt after the conversation of an eminent wit, not that he may teach me, but that I may know him; and, being acquainted, if I think him worthy, imitate him. Every man may speak truly; but methodically, and prudently, and with sufficiency, is a talent that few men have: thus 'tis that the falsity that proceeds from ignorance does not offend me; 'tis the folly. I have broken off several treaties that would have been of advantage to me, by reason of the irrelevancies of those with whom I treated. I am not moved once in a year at the faults of those over whom I have authority, but upon the account of the despicable absurdity and obstinacy of their allegations and excuses, we are every day going together by the ears: they neither understand what is said nor why, and answer accordingly; 'tis enough to drive a man mad. I never feel any hurt

[1] Seneca, *Epist.* 59.
[2] Epicurus, *apud* Cicero, *de Finib.* i. 19.
[3] Seneca, *Epist.* 33.
[4] Lactantius, *Divin. Instit.* iii. 28.

upon my head but when 'tis knocked against another head, and more easily forgive the vices of my servants than their boldness, importunity, and folly. Let them do less, provided they understand what they do; you live in hopes to warm their affection to you; but there is nothing to be had or to be hoped for from a log.

A great fault in a man not to be able to bear with the follies of others.

But what if I take things otherwise than they are? perhaps I do: and therefore it is that I accuse my own impatience; and hold, in the first place, that it is equally vicious both in him that is in the right, and him that is in the wrong; for 'tis always a tyrannic sourness not to endure a form contrary to one's own; and besides, there cannot in truth be a greater, more enduring or more irregular folly, than to be moved and angry at the follies of the world; for it principally makes us quarrel with ourselves; and the old philosopher[1] had never wanted occasion for his tears, whilst he considered himself. Miso,[2] one of the seven sages, of a Timonian and Democritian humour, being asked what he laughed at, being alone: "That I do laugh alone," answered he. How many ridiculous things, in my own opinion, do I say and answer every day! And surely how many more, according to the opinion of others. If I bite my own lips, what ought others to do? In fine, we must live amongst the living, and let the river run under the bridge, without our troubling ourselves, or at least without our alteration. And, in truth, why do we meet a man with a hump back, or other deformity, without being moved, yet cannot endure the encounter of an irregular mind without being angry? This vicious sourness relishes more of the judge than the crime. Let us always have this saying of Plato in our mouths: "Do not I think things unsound because I am not sound in myself? Am I not myself in fault? May not my observation reflect upon myself?" A wise and divine saying, that lashes the most universal and common error of mankind. Not only the reproaches that we throw in the faces of one another, but our reasons also, our arguments and controversies are reboundable upon us, and we wound ourselves with our own weapons: of which antiquity has left me grave examples enough. It was ingeniously and home said, by him who was the inventor of this sentence:

Stercus cuique suum bene olet:

"Every one likes the odour of his own dunghill."

We see nothing behind us: we mock ourselves a hundred times a day, when we deride our neighbour; and detest in others the defects which are more manifest in us, and wonder at them with a marvellous unconsciousness and impudence. It was but yesterday that I saw a man of understanding as pleasantly as justly scoffing at the folly of another, who did nothing but torment every body with the catalogue of his genealogy and alliances, above half of them false (for they are most apt to fall into such ridiculous discourses, whose quality is most dubious and least sure); and yet, would he but have looked into himself, he would have discerned himself to be no less intemperate and impertinent, in extolling his wife's pedigree. Oh! importunate presumption, with which the wife sees herself armed by the hands of her husband himself! Did he understand Latin, we should say to him:

Agesis, hæc non insanit satis sua sponte; instiga:[3]

"If of herself she be not mad enough,
Faith, urge her on."

I do not say that no man shall accuse another, who is not clean himself; for then no one would ever accuse, because none is absolutely clean from the same sort of spot; but I mean that our judgment, falling upon another whose name is then in question, should not at the same time spare ourselves, but sentence us, with an inward severe authority. 'Tis an office of charity, that he who cannot reclaim himself from a vice, should nevertheless endeavour to remove it from another, in whom perhaps it may not have so deep and malignant a root: neither do I think it an answer to the purpose to tell him who reproves me for my fault, that he himself is guilty of the same. What of that? The reproof is notwithstanding true, and of very good use. Had we a good nose, our own ordure ought to stink worse to us, forasmuch as it is our own: and Socrates[4] is of opinion that whoever should find himself, his son, and a stranger guilty of any violence and wrong, ought to begin with himself, to present himself first to the sentence of justice, and, to purge himself, implore the assistance of the hand of the executioner; in the next place, he should proceed to his son, and lastly to the stranger: if this precept seems of too high a flight, he ought at least to present himself the first to the punishment of his own conscience.

That which strikes our senses determines our judgments.

The senses are our proper and first judges, which perceive not things but by external accidents; and 'tis no wonder, if in all the parts of the service of our society there is so perpetual and universal a mixture of ceremonies and superficial appearances; insomuch that the best and most effectual part of our polities consist therein. 'Tis still man with whom we have to do, of whom the condition is wonderfully corporeal. Let those who, of these late years, would erect for us so contemplative and immaterial an exercise of religion, not wonder, if there be some who think it had vanished and melted through their fingers, had it not

[1] *Heraclitus.* See Juvenal, x. 32.
[2] Laertius, *in vitâ.*
[3] Terence, Andria, iv. 2. 9.
[4] Plato, *Gorgias.*

more upheld itself amongst us as a mark, title, and instrument of division and faction, than by itself. As in conversation, the gravity, robes, and fortune of him that speaks often give weight to vain arguments and idle words; it is not to be presumed, of course, but that a man so attended and feared has in him more than ordinary sufficiency; and that he to whom are given so many offices and commissions, so supercilious and proud, has not a great deal more in him than another that salutes him at so great a distance, and who has no employment at all. Not only the words, but the airish looks also of these people, are considered and put to account; every one making it his business to give them some fine and solid interpretation. If they stoop to common conference, and that you offer any thing but approbation and reverence, they then knock you down with the authority of their experience; they have heard, they have seen, they have done so and so; you are crushed with examples. I should tell them that the fruit of a surgeon's experience is not the history of his practice, and his remembering that he has cured four people of the plague, and three of the gout, unless he knows how hence to extract something whereon to form his judgment, and to make us sensible that he is become more skilful in his art: as in a concert of instruments, we do not hear a lute, a spinette, or a flute alone, but one entire harmony of all together. If travel and offices have improved them, 'tis a product of their understanding to make it appear. 'Tis not enough to reckon experiences, they must weigh and sort them, digest and distil them, to extract the reasons and conclusions they carry along with them. There were never so many historians as now; it is always good and of use to read them, for they furnish us everywhere with excellent and laudable instructions from the magazine of their memory, of great concern to the relief of life; but 'tis not that we seek for now: we examine whether these relators and collectors of things are commendable themselves.

I hate all sorts of tyranny, whether verbal or effectual: I am ever ready to oppose these vain circumstances that delude our judgments by the senses; and whilst I lie upon my guard against these extraordinary grandeurs, I find that, at best, they are but men, as others are:

> Raras enim ferme sensus communis in illa Fortuna:[1]
>
> "For rarely do we see
> Good common sense in those of his degree."

Perhaps we esteem and look upon them as far less than they are, by reason they undertake more, and more expose themselves: they do not answer to the charge they have undertaken. There must be more vigour and strength in the bearer than in the burden: he who has not lifted as much as he can, leaves you to guess that he has still a strength beyond that, and that he has not been tried to the utmost of what he is able to do; he who sinks under his load makes a discovery of his best, and the weakness of his shoulders: this is the reason that we see so many silly people amongst the learned, so many that they are the majority: they would have made good husbandmen, good merchants, and good artisans: their natural vigour was cut out to that proportion. Knowledge is a thing of great weight; they faint under it: their understanding has neither vigour nor dexterity enough to set forth and distribute, to employ, or make use of, this rich and powerful matter: it has no prevailing virtue but in a strong nature, and such natures are very rare: and the weak ones, says Socrates,[2] spoil the dignity of philosophy in the handling; it appears useless and vicious, when ill lodged. They spoil and make fools of themselves,

> Humani qualis simulatur simius oris,
> Quem puer arridens pretioso stamine serum
> Velavit, nudasque nates ac terga reliquit,
> Ludibrium mensis.[3]
>
> "Just like an ape, that in his face does bear
> Of man the counterfeited character,
> Whom wanton boys, the tables' laugh to move,
> Have dizen'd up in richest silk above;
> But, that the brute more laughable may show,
> Have left the buttocks raw and bald below."

Neither is it enough for those who govern and command us, and have all the world in their hand, to have a common understanding, and to be able to do what we can; they are very much below us if they be not infinitely above us: as they promise more, so they are to perform more.

And yet silence is to them not only a countenance of respect and gravity, but very often of good profit and policy too: for Megabysus, going to see Apelles in his painting-room, stood a great while without speaking a word, and at last began to talk of his paintings, for which he received this rude reproof: "Whilst thou wast silent thou seemedst to be something great, by reason of thy chains and pomp; but now that we have heard thee speak, there is not the meanest boy in my shop that does not despise thee."[4] Those magnificent paraphernalia, that mighty state, did not permit him to be ignorant with a common ignorance, and to speak irrelevantly of painting; he ought to have maintained, by his silence, this external and presumptive knowledge. To how many blockheads of my time has a cold and taciturn behaviour procured the credit of prudence and capacity?

Dignities and offices are of necessity conferred more by fortune than upon the account of merit; and we are to blame to condemn kings when they are misplaced: on the contrary, 'tis a wonder they

Dignities more distributed by fortune than merit.

[1] Juvenal, viii. 73.
[2] Plato, *Republic*, vi.
[3] Claud. *in Eutrop.* i. 303.
[4] Plutarch. *How to distinguish a Flatterer from a Friend.*

should have such good luck, where there is so little skill;

Principis est virtus maxima nosse suos;[1]

"Of all a prince's virtues, 'tis the chief
To know his courtiers;"

for nature has not given them a sight that can extend to so many people, to discern which excels the rest, nor to penetrate into our bosoms, where the knowledge of our wills and real value lies: they must choose us by conjecture and by groping; by the family, wealth, learning, and the voice of the people, which are all very feeble arguments. Whoever could find out a way that a man might judge by justice, and choose men by reason, would in this one thing establish a perfect form of government.

"Ay, but he brought this great affair to a very good pass." That is, indeed, to say something, but not to say enough, for this sentence is justly received: "That we are not to judge of counsels by events."[2] The Carthaginians punished the ill counsels of their captains, though the issue was successful;[3] and the people of Rome have often denied a triumph for great and very advantageous victories, because the conduct of the general was not answerable to his good fortune. We ordinarily see in the actions of the world that fortune, to show us her power in all things, and who takes a pride in abating our presumption, seeing she could not make fools wise, she has made them fortunate, in emulation of virtue, and favours those executions most the web of which is most purely her own: whence it is that we daily see the simplest amongst us bring to pass great affairs, both public and private; and, as Siramnez the Persian[4] answered those who wondered that his affairs succeeded so ill, considering that his plans were so wise: "That he was sole master of his designs, but that success was wholly in the power of fortune," these may answer the same, but with a contrary bias. Most worldly affairs are performed by themselves;[5]

Fata viam inveniunt.

"The fates find out a way."

The event often justifies a very foolish conduct: our interposition is nothing more than, as it were, a routine, and more commonly a consideration of custom and example, than of reason. Being astonished at the greatness of the execution of an affair, I have formerly been made acquainted, by those who have performed it, with the motives and plans on which they proceeded, and have found nothing in them but very ordinary counsels; and the most vulgar and common-place are also perhaps the most sure and convenient for practice, if not for show. And what if the plainest reasons are the best seated? the meanest, lowest, and most beaten, most adapted to affairs? To maintain the authority of the councils of kings, 'tis not necessary that profane persons should participate of them, nor see farther into them than the first bar. He that will husband his reputation, must be reverenced upon credit, and altogether. My consultation gives a sketch first of the matter, and considers it lightly by the first face it presents. The stress and main of the business I have ever referred to heaven:

How the authority of the counsels of kings is to be preserved.

Permitte divis cætera:[6]

"Leave to the gods the rest:"

good and ill fortune are, in my opinion, two sovereign powers: 'tis folly to think that human prudence can play the part of fortune; and vain is his attempt, who presumes to embrace causes and consequences, and to conduct by the hand the progress of his design, and most especially vain in the deliberations of war. There was never greater circumspection and military prudence than sometimes is seen amongst us; can it be that men are afraid to lose themselves by the way, that they reserve themselves to the end of the game? I moreover affirm that our wisdom itself, and wisest consultations, for the most part commit themselves to the conduct of chance: my will and my reason is sometimes moved by one breath, and sometimes by another; and many of those movements there are that govern themselves without me: my reason has uncertain and casual agitations and impulsions:

Vertuntur species animorum, et pectora motus
Nunc alios, alios, dum nubila ventus agebat,
Concipiunt.[7]

"New instincts sway, and their inconstant mind
Shifts with the clouds, and varies with the wind."

Let a man but observe who are of greatest authority in cities, and who best do their own business, we shall find that they are commonly men of the least parts. Women, children, and madmen, have had the fortune to govern great kingdoms equally well with the wisest princes; and Thucydides says,[8] that the stupid more frequently do it than those of better understandings: we attribute the effects of their good fortune to their prudence:

Ut quisque fortunâ utitur,
Ita præcellet; atque exinde sapere illum omnes dicimus:[9]

"Men, who their chances can improve, we prize,
And those whom fortune favours, we deem wise."

wherefore I say that, in all sorts of matters, events are a very poor testimony of our worth and parts.

Now I was upon this point, that there needs no more, but to see a man promoted to dignity:

[1] Martial, viii. 15.
[2] Ovid, *Heroid.* ii. 85.
[3] Livy, xxxviii. 49.
[4] Plutarch, *Apotheg. of the Ancient Kings.*
[5] "*Il mondo si governa da se stesso,*" said Pope Urban VIII.
[6] Horace, *Od.* i. 9. 9.
[7] Virgil, *Georgic.* i. 420.
[8] Book iii. 37, *Oration of Cleon.*
[9] Plautus, *Pseudol.* ii. 3. 13.

though we knew *him*, but three days before, a man of no mark, yet an image of grandeur and ability insensibly steals into our opinion, and we persuade ourselves that, growing in reputation and attendants, he is also increased in merit: we judge of him not according to his value, but, as we do by counters, according to the prerogative of his place. If it happens so that he falls again, and is mixed with the common crowd, every one enquires with wonder into the cause of his having been hoisted so high: "Is it he?" say they: "did he know no more than this when he was in place? Do princes satisfy themselves with so little? Truly we were in good hands." This is a thing that I have often seen in my time: nay, so much as the very disguises of grandeur, represented in our comedies, in some sort move and deceive us. That which I myself adore in kings is the crowd of their adorers: all reverence and submission is due to them, except that of the understanding: my reason is not to bow and bend; 'tis my knees. Melanthius, being asked what he thought of the tragedy of Dionysius: "I could not see it," said he; "it was so clouded with language:"[1] so the most of those who judge of the discourses of great men ought to say: "I did not understand his words; he was so clouded with gravity, majesty, and greatness." Antisthenes[2] one day entreated the Athenians to give order that their asses might be employed in tilling the ground as well as the horses: to which it was answered that those animals were not destined for such a service: "That's all one," replied he; "it only sticks at your command; for the most ignorant and incapable men you employ in your commands of war immediately become worthy enough, because you employ them." To which the custom of so many people who canonize the kings they have chosen out of their own body, and are not content only to honour, but adore them, comes very near. Those of Mexico, after the ceremonies of their king's coronation are finished, dare no more presume to look him in the face; but, as if they had deified him by his royalty, among the oaths they make him take to maintain their religion and laws, to be valiant, just, and mild, he moreover swears to make the sun run his course in his wonted light, to drain the clouds at a fit season, to confine rivers within their channels, and to cause all things necessary for his people to be borne by the earth.[3]

Deification and adoration of the Kings of Mexico.

I differ from this common fashion, and am more apt to suspect capacity when I see it accompanied with grandeur of fortune and public applause: we are to consider of what advantage it is to speak when he pleases, to choose the subject he will speak of, to interrupt or change other men's arguments with a magisterial authority, to protect himself from the opposition of others by a nod, a smile, or silence, in the presence of an assembly that trembles with reverence and respect. A man of a prodigious fortune, coming to give his judgment upon some slight dispute that was foolishly set on foot at his table, began in these words: "It can be only a liar or a fool that will say otherwise than so and so." Pursue this philosophical point with a dagger in your hand.

There is another observation I have made, from which I draw great advantage: which is, that, in conferences and disputes, every word that seems to be good is not immediately to be accepted. Most men are rich in borrowed words: a man may very probably say a good thing without comprehending the force of it himself. That a man does not perfectly understand all he borrows, may perhaps be verified in myself. A man must not always presently yield, what truth or beauty soever may seem to be in the argument; either a man must stoutly oppose it, or draw back, under colour of not understanding it, to try on all parts how it is lodged in the author, or it may happen that we may aid the point, and carry it beyond its proper reach. I have sometimes, in the necessity and heat of the combat, employed sudden whisks, that have gone through and through, beyond my expectation and design: I only gave them in number; they were received in weight. As when I contend with a vigorous man, I please myself with anticipating his conclusions, I ease him of the trouble of explaining himself; I strive to prevent his imagination, whilst it is yet springing and imperfect; the order and pertinency of his understanding warns and threatens me afar off; I deal quite contrary with these; I must understand and pre-suppose nothing but by them. If they determine in general words: "This is good, that is not," and that they happen to be in the right, see if it be not fortune that hits it off for them. Let them a little circumscribe and limit their judgment, why or how it is so. These universal judgments, that I see so common, signify nothing; these are men that salute a whole people in a crowd together; they who have real acquaintance take notice of and salute them particularly and by name; but 'tis a hazardous attempt; from which I have more than every day seen it fall out that weak understandings, having a mind to appear ingenious in taking notice, as they read a book, of that which is best, and most to be admired, fix their admiration upon something so very ill chosen that, instead of making us discern the excellency of the author, they make us see their own ignorance. This exclamation is safe enough: "This is fine!" after having heard a whole page of Virgil; and by that the cunning

[1] Plutarch, *On Hearing*.
[2] Laertius, *in vita*.
[3] Lopez de Gomara, *Historia General de las Indias*. ii. 77.

sort of fools save themselves; but to undertake to follow him line by line, and with an expert and approved judgment to observe where a good author excels himself, weighing the words, phrases, inventions, and various excellences, one after another: take heed of that. *Videndum est, non modo quid quisque loquatur, sed etiam quid quisque sentiat, atque etiam qua de causa quisque sentiat.*[1] "A man is not only to examine what every one says, but also what every one thinks, and for what reason every one thinks." I every day hear fools say things that are by no means foolish: they say a good thing; let us examine how far they understand it, whence they have it, and what they mean by it. We help them to make use of this fine expression, and this fine reason, which is none of theirs, they only have it in keeping; they have let it out at a venture; we bring it for them into credit and esteem. You lend them a hand: to what purpose? They do not think themselves obliged to you for it, and become more fools still. Never take their part, let them alone; they will handle the matter like people who are afraid of burning their fingers; they neither dare change its seat nor light, nor break into it; shake it never so little, it slips through their fingers; they give up their cause, be it never so strong or good soever; these are fine arms, but ill mounted. How many times have I seen the experience of this? Now, if you come to explain anything to them, and to confirm them, they presently catch at it, and rob you of the advantage of your interpretation: "It was what I was about to say; it was just my thought; and if I did not express it so, it was only for want of language." Very pretty! Malice itself must be employed to correct this proud ignorance. Hegesias's doctrine,[2] that we are "Neither to hate nor accuse, but instruct," has reason elsewhere; but here 'tis injustice and inhumanity to relieve and set him right who stands in no need on't, and is the worse for't. I love to let them step deeper into the dirt; and so deep that, if it be possible, they may at least discern their error.

Folly not to be cured by admonition.

Folly and absurdity are not to be cured by bare admonition; and what Cyrus answered to him who importuned him to harangue his army, upon the point of battle, that "men do not become valiant and warlike upon a sudden, by a fine oration, no more than a man becomes a good musician by hearing a fine song,"[3] may properly be said of such an admonition as this. These are apprenticeships that are to be served beforehand, by a long and continued education. We owe this care, and this assiduity of correction and instruction to our own; but to go preach to the first passer-by, and to lord it over the ignorance and folly of the first we meet, is a thing that I abhor. I rarely do it, even in my own particular conferences, and rather surrender my cause than proceed to these supercilious and magisterial instructions; my humour is unfit either to speak or write for beginners; but for things that are said in common discourse, or amongst other things, I never oppose them, either by word or sign, how false or absurd soever.

As to the rest, nothing vexes me so much in folly, as that it pleases itself more than any reason can reasonably please itself. 'Tis unlucky that prudence forbids us to satisfy and trust in ourselves, and always dismisses us timorous and discontented; whereas obstinacy and temerity fill those who are possessed with them, with joy and assurance. 'Tis for the ignorant to look at other men over the shoulder, always returning from the combat full of joy and triumph; and moreover, for the most part, this arrogance of speech, and gaiety of countenance, gives them the better of it in the opinion of the audience, which is commonly ignorant, and incapable of well judging, and discerning the real advantage. Obstinacy of opinion and heat in argument are the surest proofs of folly: is there any thing so assured, resolute, disdainful, contemplative, serious, and grave as an ass?

Obstinacy a testimony of folly.

May we not mix with the subject of conversation and communication, the quick and sharp repartees which mirth and familiarity introduce amongst friends, pleasantly and wittingly jesting with one another? an exercise for which my natural gaiety renders me fit enough; and if it be not so extended and serious as the other I just spoke of, 'tis no less smart and ingenious, nor of less utility, as Lycurgus thought.[4] For my part I contribute to it more liberty than wit, and have therein more of luck than invention; but I am perfect in suffering, for I endure a retort that is not only sharp, but indiscreet to boot, without being moved at all: and whatever attack is made on me, if I have not an answer immediately ready, I do not take up the time in pursuing the point with a tedious and impertinent contest, bordering upon obstinacy, but let it pass, and, laughingly lowering my flag for the time, defer my revenge for a luckier occasion: there is no merchant that always gains. Most men change their countenance and their voice where their wit fails; and, by an unseasonable fit of anger, instead of revenging themselves, accuse at once their own folly and impatience. In this pastime, we sometimes pinch the private strings of our imperfections, which, at another time, when more

[1] Cic. *Offic.* i. 41.

[2] Laertius, *in vitâ.*

[3] Xenophon, *Cyrop.* iii. 3. 23.

[4] Plutarch, *in vitâ.*

temperate, we cannot touch without offence, and profitably give one another a hint of our defects.

There are other sports, practical jokes, rude and indiscreet, after the French manner, that I mortally hate; my skin is very tender and sensible; I have in my time seen two princes of the blood interred upon that very account. 'Tis unhandsome to fall out and fight in play.

As to the rest, when I have a mind to judge of any one, I ask him how much he is satisfied with himself, to what degree his speaking or his work pleases him. I will have none of these fine excuses: "I did it only to amuse myself;

> Ablatum mediis opus est incudibus istud;[1]
>
> "This work unfinish'd from the anvil came."

I was not an hour about it; I have never looked at it since." Well, then, say I, lay these aside; and give me a perfect one, such a one as you would be measured by; and then, what do you think is the best thing in your work; is it this part or that? the grace or the matter, the invention, the judgment, or the learning? For I find that men are commonly as wide of the mark in judging of their own works, as those of others; not only by reason of the kindness they have for them, but for want of capacity to know and distinguish them. The work, by its own fairness and fortune, may second the workman, and sometimes outstrip him, beyond his invention and knowledge. For my part, I do not judge of the value of other men's works more obscurely than of my own; and prize my Essays now high, now low, with great doubt and inconstancy. There are several books that are useful upon the account of their subjects, from which the author derives no praise; and good books, as well as good works, that shame the workman. I may write the manner of our feasts, and the fashion of our clothes, and may write them ill; I may publish the edicts of my time, and the letters of princes that pass from hand to hand; I may make an abridgment of a good book (and every abridgment of a good book is a foolish abridgment), which book shall come to be lost, and so on. Posterity will derive a singular utility from such compositions; but what honour shall I have, unless by great good fortune? A great part of the most famous books are in this condition.

When I read Philip de Comines, several years ago, doubtless a very good author, I there took notice of this for no vulgar saying: "That a man must have a care of doing his master such great service that at last he will not know how to give him his just reward;" I ought to commend the inventor, not him,[2] for I met with it in Tacitus, not long since: *Beneficia eo usque læta sunt, dum videntur exsolvi posse; ubi multum antevenere, pro gratia odium redditur*;[3] "Benefits are so far acceptable, as they are in a capacity of being returned; but once exceeding that, hatred is returned instead of thanks;" and Seneca boldly says: *Nam qui putat esse turpe non reddere, non vult esse cui reddat*;[4] "For he who thinks it a shame not to requite, would not have that man live to whom he owes return;" and Cicero, more faintly: *Qui se non putat satisfacere, amicus esse nullo modo potest*.[5] "Who thinks himself behindhand in obligation, can by no means be a friend." The subject, according to what it is, may make a man be looked upon as learned, and of good memory; but to judge in him the parts more his own and more worthy, the vigour and beauty of his soul, we must first know what is his own, and what is not; and in that which is not his own, how far we are obliged to him for the choice, disposition, ornament, and language he has there presented us with. What if he has borrowed the matter, and spoiled the form, as it oft falls out!

We, who are little read in books, are in this strait, that when we meet with some fine fancy in a new poet, or some strong argument in a preacher, we dare not nevertheless commend it, till we have first informed ourselves of some learned man if it be their own, or borrowed from some other; until that, I always stand upon my guard. I lately came from reading the history of Tacitus right through (which but seldom happens to me, it being twenty years since I have stuck to any one book an hour together); and I did it at the instance of a gentleman for whom France has great esteem, as well for his own particular worth, as upon the account of a constant form of capacity and virtue, which runs through a great many brothers of them. I do not know any author that in a public narration mixes so much consideration of manners and particular inclinations; and it seems to me quite contrary to his opinion,[6] that being especially to follow the lives of the emperors of his time, so various and extreme in all sorts of forms, and so many notable actions, as their cruelty particularly produced in their subjects, he had a stronger and more attractive matter to treat of, than if he had had to describe battles and universal commotions; so that I oft find him sterile, running over those brave deaths, as if he feared to trouble us with their multitude and length. This form of histories is by much the most useful; public commotions depend most upon the conduct of fortune, private ones upon our own. 'Tis rather a judgment than a deduction

The character of Tacitus.

[1] Ovid, *Trist.* i. 6, 29.

[2] Comines does not take the merit of this apothegm to himself, but says he had it from his master (Lewis XI.), who mentioned the name of its author. *Memoirs*, iii. 12.

[3] *Annal.* iv. 18.

[4] *Epist.* 81.

[5] Q. Cicero, *de Pet. Consul*, c. 9.

[6] *Annal.* xvi. 16.

of history; there are in it more precepts than stories; it is not a book to read, 'tis a book to study and learn; 'tis so full of sentences that, right or wrong, they are everywhere in muster; 'tis a nursery of ethics and political discourses, for the use and ornament of those who have any place in the government of the world. He always pleads by strong and solid reasons, after a pointed and subtle manner, according to the affected style of that age, which was so in love with swelling periods, that, where quickness and subtlety were wanting in things, they supplied them with words. It is not much unlike the style of Seneca. I look upon Tacitus as more sinewy, and Seneca more sharp. His pen seems most proper for a troubled and sick estate, as ours at present is: you would often say that he depicts and points at us.

They who doubt of his fidelity sufficiently accuse themselves of being his enemy upon some other account. His opinions are sound, and lean for the most part towards the right side in Roman affairs. And yet I am angry at him for judging more severely of Pompey, than is borne out by the opinion of those worthy men that lived in the same time, and treated with him; and for putting him on a level with Marius and Sylla, excepting that he was more close.[1] Other writers have not acquitted his intention in the goverment of affairs. from ambition and revenge; and even his friends were afraid that his victory would have transported him beyond the bounds of reason, but not to so immeasurable a degree; there is nothing in his life that has threatened us with so express cruelty and tyranny. Neither ought we to weigh suspicion against evidence; and therefore I do not believe him here. That his narratives are ingenuous, and straight-forward, may be argued from this very thing, that they are not always applied to the conclusions of his judgments, which he follows according to the inclination he has taken, very often beyond the matter he shows us, which he will not deign to look upon with so much as one glance. He needs no excuse for having approved the religion of his time, according as the laws enjoined, and to have been ignorant of the true; this was his misfortune, not his fault.

I have principally considered his judgment, and am not very well satisfied throughout; as at these words in the letter, that Tiberius, being old and sick, sent to the senate:[2] "What shall I write to you, sirs, or how shall I write to you, or what shall I not write to you, at this time? May the gods and the goddesses lay a worse punishment upon me than I am every day tormented with, if I know." I do not see why he should so positively apply these to a sharp remorse, tormenting the conscience of Tiberius: at least, when I was in the same condition, I perceived no such thing.

And this also seemed to me a little mean in him, that having to say he had borne honourable office in Rome, he excuses himself that he does not speak it out of ostentation;[3] this seems somewhat mean for such a soul as his; for not to speak roundly of a man's self, implies some want of courage; a firm and lofty judgment, and that judges soundly and surely, makes use of his own example upon all occasions, as well as those of others; and gives evidence as freely of himself as of a third person. We are to pass by these common rules of society in favour of truth and liberty. I dare not only speak of myself, but to speak only of myself; when I write of any thing else, I miss my way, and wander from my subject. I am not so indiscreetly enamoured of myself, that I cannot distinguish and consider myself apart, as I do a neighbour or a tree; 'tis equally a fault not to discern how far a man's worth extends, and to say more than a man discovers in himself. We owe more love to God than to ourselves, and know him less; and yet speak of him as much as we will.

If the writings of Tacitus relate any thing true of his qualities, he was a great man, upright and bold, not of a superstitious but of a philosophical and generous virtue. Some may think him a little too bold in his relations; as where he tells us of a soldier, carrying a burden of wood, whose hands were so frozen, and so stuck to the load, that they there remained closed and dead, being severed from his arms.[4] I always in such things submit to the authority of such great witnesses.

What he says also, that Vespasian, by the favour of the god Serapis, cured in Alexandria a blind woman, by anointing her eyes with his spittle and some other miracle, I forget what,[5] he does by the example and duty of all good historians. He records all events of importance; and amongst public matters, also, the common rumours and opinions. 'Tis their part to recite common beliefs, not to regulate them; that part concerns divines and philosophers, who are the guides of conscience. And therefore it was that this companion of his, and as great a man as himself, very wisely said: *Equidem plura transcribo quam credo; nam nec affirmare sustineo de quibus dubito, nec subducere quæ accepi*;[6] "Truly, I set down more things than I believe, for I can neither endure to affirm things whereof I doubt, nor suppress what I have heard;" and this other: *Hæc neque affirmare, neque refellere operæ pretium est - - -; famæ rerum standum est.*[7] "'Tis neither worth the while to affirm nor to refute these things; we must stand to report." And writing in an age wherein the belief of prodi-

[1] *Hist.* ii. 38.
[2] Tacitus, *Annal.* vi. 6. Suetonius, *Life of Tiberius*, c. 67.
[3] *Annal.* xi. 11.
[4] *Annal.* xiii. 35.
[5] *Hist.* iv. 81.
[6] Quint. Curt. ix. 1.
[7] Livy, i. *Præf.* and viii. 6.

gies began to decline, he says he would not, nevertheless, forbear to insert in his annals, and to give a relation of things received by so many worthy men, and with so great reverence of antiquity; which is very well said. Let them deliver us history, more as they receive it than as they believe it. I, who am monarch of the matter whereof I treat, and who am accountable to none, do not, nevertheless, always believe myself; I often hazard sallies of my own fancy, which I very much suspect, and certain quibbles, at which I shake my ears; but I let them go at a venture. I see that others get reputation by such things; 'tis not for me alone to judge. I present myself standing, and lying on my face, my back, my right side, and my left, and in all my natural postures. Minds, though equal in force, are not equal in taste and application.

This is what my memory has presented me in gross, and with uncertainty enough; all judgments in gross are weak and imperfect.

CHAPTER IX.

OF VANITY.

THERE is not, perhaps, a more manifest vanity than to write so vainly about it.[1] That which divinity has so divinely expressed to us, ought to be carefully and continually meditated by understanding men. Who does not see that I have taken a road, in which, incessantly and without labour, I shall proceed, so long as there shall be ink and paper in the world? I can give no account of my life by my actions; fortune has placed them too low; I must do it by fancies. And yet I have seen a gentleman that only communicated his life by the workings of his belly; you might see in his house a shew of a row of basons of seven or eight days' stools; that was all his study, all his discourse; all other talk stunk in his nostrils. These here, somewhat more presentable, are the excrements of an old mind, sometimes thick, sometimes thin, and always indigested. And when shall I have done representing the continual agitation and change of my thoughts, as they come into my head, seeing that Diomedes[2] filled six thousand books upon the sole subject of grammar? What must prating produce, since prating, and the first beginning to speak, stuffed the world with such a horrible load of volumes? So many words about words only. O Pythagoras, why didst not thou allay the tempest? They accused one Galba of old for living idly; he made answer, "That every one ought to give account of his actions, but not of his leisure." He was mistaken, for justice has cognizance and jurisdiction even over those that do nothing, or only play at working.

But there should be some restraint of law against foolish and impertinent scribblers, as well as against vagabonds and idlers; which, if there was, both I and a hundred others would be banished the kingdom. I do not speak this in jest; scribbling seems to be a sign of a disordered age: when did we write so much as since our civil wars? when the Romans so much, as when they were going to ruin? Besides that the refining of wits does not make people wiser in a government; this idle employment springs from this, that every one applies himself negligently to the duty of his vocation, and debauches in it. The corruption of the age is made up by the particular contributions of every individual man; some contribute treachery, others injustice, irreligion, tyranny, avarice, and cruelty, according as they have power; the weaker sort contribute folly, vanity, and idleness; and of these I am one. It seems as if it were the season for vain things when the hurtful oppress us; in a time when doing ill is common, to do nothing but what signifies nothing, is a kind of commendation. 'Tis my comfort that I shall be one of the last that shall be called in question; and whilst the greater offenders are calling to account, I shall have leisure to amend; for it would, methinks, be against reason to punish the less troublesome whilst we are infested with the greater. As the physician Philotimus said to one who presented him his finger to dress, and who he perceived, both by his complexion and his breath, had an ulcer in his lungs: "Friend," said he, "it is not now time to concern yourself about your fingers' ends."[3]

And yet I saw, some years ago, a person whose name and memory I have in very great esteem, in the very height of our great disorders, when there was neither law nor justice put in execution, nor magistrate that performed his office, no more than there is now, publish I know not what pitiful reformations about clothes, cookery, and law chicanery. These are amusements wherewith to feed a people that are ill used, to shew that they are not totally forgotten. These others do the same, who insist upon stoutly defending the forms of speaking, dances, and games, to a people totally abandoned to all sorts of execrable vices. 'Tis no time to bathe and clean a man's self when he is seized by a violent fever; 'tis for the Spartans only to fall to combing and curling themselves, when they are just upon the point of running headlong into some extreme danger of their lives.

For my part I have yet a worse custom, that if my shoe go awry, I let my shirt and my cloak do so too: I scorn to mend myself by

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[1] "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity." *Eccles.* i. 2.

[2] *Dydimus*, not *Diomedes*; and *four thousand*, not *six thousand*. See Seneca, *Epist.* 88. The grammarian Diomedes is not known to have written more than one work, in three books, "On the Latin Language and Versification."

[3] Plutarch, *How to discern a Flatterer.*

halves: when I am out of order, I feed on mischief; I abandon myself through despair, and let myself go towards the precipice, and as the saying is, throw the helve after the hatchet. I am obstinate in growing worse, and think myself no more worth my own care; I am either good or ill throughout. 'Tis favourable to me that the desolation of this kingdom falls out in the desolation of my age. I better suffer that my ills be multiplied, than if my goods had been disturbed. The words I utter in mishap, are words of spite; my courage sets up its bristles instead of letting them down; and, contrary to others, I am more devout in good than in evil fortune, according to the precept of Xenophon,[1] if not according to his reason, and am more ready to turn up my eyes to heaven to return thanks than to crave. I am more solicitous to improve my health when I am well, than to restore it when I am sick. Prosperity is the same discipline and instruction to me, that adversity and persecution are to others. As if good fortune were a thing incompatible with good conscience, men never grow good but in evil fortune. Happiness is to me a singular spur to modesty and moderation: entreaty wins, a threat checks me; favour makes me bend, fear stiffens me.

Amongst human conditions this is common enough, to be better pleased with strange things than our own, and to love motion and change;

Change pleasing to men.

Ipsa dies ideo nos grato perluit haustu,
Quod permutatis hora recurrit equis;[2]

"The light of day itself doth chiefly please,
Because the hours those steeds have changed for these;"

I have my share of this. Those who follow the other extreme of agreeing with themselves to value what they have above all the rest, and to conclude no beauty can be greater than what they see, if they are not wiser than we, are really more happy. I do not envy their wisdom, but their good fortune.

This greedy humour of new and unknown things helps to nourish in me the desire of travel; but a great many more circumstances contribute to it. I am very willing to run away from the government of my house. There is, I confess, a kind of convenience in commanding, though it were but in a barn, and to be obeyed by one's servants; but 'tis too uniform and languishing a pleasure, and is moreover of necessity mixed with a thousand vexatious thoughts: one while the poverty and the oppression of your tenants, another, quarrels amongst your neighbours, another, the trespasses they make upon you, afflict you;

Aut verberatæ grandine vineæ,
Fundusque mendax, arbore nunc aquas
Culpante, nunc torrentia agros
Sidera, nunc hiemes iniquas;[3]

"Whether his vines be smit with hail,
Whether his promised harvests fail,
Perfidious to his toil;
Whether his drooping trees complain
Of angry winter's chilling rain,
Or stars, that turn the soil;"

and that God scarce in six months sends a season wherewith your bailiff is satisfied, or that if it serves the vines, spoils the meadows;

Aut nimiis torret fervoribus ætherius sol,
Aut subiti perimunt imbres, gelidæque pruinæ,
Flabraque ventorum violento turbine vexant:[4]

"The scorching sun, with his too busy beams,
Burns up the fruits, or clouds do drown the streams:
Or, chill'd by too much snows, they soon decay;
Or storms blow them and all our hopes away:"

to which may be added the new and neat-made shoe of the man of old, that hurts your foot;[5] and that a stranger does not understand how much it costs you, and what you contribute to maintain that shew of order that is seen in your family, and that perhaps you buy too dear.

I came late to the government of a family; they whom nature sent into the world before me long eased me of that trouble; so that I had already taken another bent more suitable to my humour. Yet, for so much as I have seen, 'tis an employment more troublesome than hard. Whoever is capable of any thing else will easily do that. Had I a mind to be rich, that way would seem too long; I had served kings, a more profitable traffic than any other. Since I pretend to nothing but the reputation of having got nothing, any more than wasted nothing, conformable to the rest of my life, improper either to do good or ill of any moment, and that I only desire to pass on, I can do it, thanks be to God, without any great attention. At the worst, evermore prevent poverty by lessening your expense; 'tis that which I make my great concern, and doubt not but to do it before I shall be compelled. As to the rest, I have sufficiently settled my thoughts to live upon less than I have, and live contentedly: *Non æstimatione census, verum victu atque cultu, terminatur pecuniæ modus.*[6] "'Tis not in the value of possessions, but in our diet and clothing, that our riches are truly limited." My real need does not so wholly take up all I have, that fortune has not whereunto to fasten her teeth without biting to the quick. My presence, as unknowing and disdainful as it is, does me great service in my domestic affairs. I employ myself in them, but it goes against

The government of a family more troublesome than hard.

[1] *Cyropædia*, i. 6, 3. Plutarch, *On Contentment of Mind*.
[2] Petronius, *Frag.* p. 678.
[3] Horace, *Od.* iii. 1, 29.
[4] Lucret. v. 216.
[5] Montaigne here probably refers to his wife, and the paraphrase alluded to in Plutarch, *Life of Paulus Æmilius*, c. 3, will explain what he means. "A Roman having repudiated his wife, his friends reproached him, remonstrating that she was fair and good, and had fine children. To which the husband replied by showing his foot, and saying: "This shoe is new, and well made; but none of you know where it pinches: I do."
[6] Cicero, *Paradox.* vi. 3.

the hair; considering moreover that I have this in my house, that though I burn my candle at one end by myself, the other is not spared.

Journies do me no harm but only by their expense, which is great and more than I am well able to bear; being always wont to travel with not only a necessary, but a handsome equipage, I must make them so much shorter and fewer, wherein I spend but the froth, and what I have reserved for such uses, delaying and deferring my motion till that be ready. I will not that the pleasure of going abroad spoil my pleasure when returned home; on the contrary, I would have them nourish and favour one another. Fortune has assisted me in this, that since my principal profession in this life was to live at ease, and rather idly than busily, she has deprived me of the necessity of growing rich to provide for the multitude of my heirs. If there be not enough for one, of that whereof I have had so plentifully enough, at his peril be it; his imprudence will not deserve that I should wish him more. And every one, according to the example of Phocion,[1] provides sufficiently for his children, who so provides for them as to leave them as much as was left him. I should by no means like Crates' way:[2] he left his money in the hands of a banker, with this condition: that if his children were fools, he should then give it to them; if witty, he should then distribute it to the greatest fools of the people. As if fools, being less capable of living without riches, were more capable of using them!

So it is that the damage which is occasioned by my absence seems not to deserve, so long as I am able to support it, that I should waive the occasions of diverting myself from that troublesome assistance.

There is always something that goes amiss. The affairs one while of one house and then of another will tear you to pieces; you pry into every thing too near; your perspicacity does you hurt here as well as in other things. I steal away from occasions of vexing myself, and turn from the knowledge of things that go amiss, and yet cannot I so order it but that every hour I jostle against something or other that displeases me, and the tricks that they most conceal from me are those that I the soonest come to know; some there are that a man does well himself to help to conceal. Vain vexations, vain sometimes, but always vexatious. The smallest and slightest impediments are the most piercing, and as small print most tires the eyes, so do little affairs the most disturb us. A rout of little ills more offends than one, how great soever. By how much these domestic thorns are numerous and loose, by so much they prick deeper, and without warning, easily surprising us when least we suspect them. I am no philosopher; evils oppress me according to their weight, and they weigh as much according to the form as the matter, and very often more. If I have therein more perspicacity than the vulgar, I have also more patience; in short, they weigh with me, if they do not hurt me. Life is a tender thing, and easily molested. Since my age has made me grow more pensive and morose: *Nemo enim resistit sibi, cum ceperit impelli*,[3] "No man resists himself after he once begins to decline," for the most trivial cause imaginable, I irritate that humour, which afterwards nourishes and exasperates itself of its own accord; attracting and heaping up matter upon matter whereon to feed:

Stillicidi casus lapidem cavat:[4]

"A falling drop at last will cave a stone:"

these continual trickling drops make ulcers in me. Ordinary inconveniences are never light; they are continual and irreparable, especially when they spring from the members of one's family, continual and inseparable. When I consider my affairs at distance and in gross, I find, because perhaps my memory is none of the best, that they have gone on hitherto improving, beyond my reason or expectation. Methinks my revenue is greater than it is; its prosperity betrays me. But when I pry more narrowly into the business, and see how all details go,

Tum vero in curâ animum diducimus omnes:[5]

"Then my breast
Is with innumerable cares oppress'd."

I find a thousand things to desire and to fear. To give them quite over is very easy for me to do: but to look after them without trouble is very hard. 'Tis a miserable thing to be in a place where every thing you see employs and concerns you, and I fancy that I more cheerfully enjoy the pleasures of another man's house, and with greater and purer relish, than those of my own. Diogenes, according to my humour, answered him well, who asked what sort of wine he liked the best, "Another man's," said he.[6]

My father took a delight in building at Montaigne, where he was born, and in all the government of domestic affairs, I love to follow his example and rules, and shall engage those who are to succeed me, as much as in me lies, to do the same. Could I do better for him, I would. I am proud that his will is still performing and acting by me. God forbid that in my hands I should ever suffer any image of life, that I am able to render to so good a father, to fail! And where I have taken in hand to finish some old piece of wall, and to complete some building, truly I have done it more out of

[1] Nepos, *in vitâ*, c. 1.
[2] Laertius, *in vitâ*.
[3] Seneca, *Epist.* 13.
[4] Lucret. i. 314.
[5] *Æneid*, v. 720.
[6] Laertius, *in vitâ*.

respect to his design than to my own satisfaction; and am angry at my own idleness that I have not proceeded further to finish the few beginnings he has left in his house; and so much the more, because I am very likely to be the last possessor of my race, and to give the last hand to it; for, as to my own particular application, neither the pleasure of building, which they say is so bewitching, nor hunting, nor gardens, nor the other pleasures of a retired life, much amuse me. And it is what I am angry at myself for, as I am for all other opinions that are incommodious to me; I do not so much care to have them vigorous and learned, as I would have them easy and convenient for life: they are true and sound enough, if they are profitable and pleasing. Such as, hearing me declare my ignorance in domestic and husbandry matters, whisper in my ear that it is disdain, and that I neglect to know the instruments of husbandry, its seasons, and order; how they order my vines, how they graft, and to know the names and forms of herbs and fruits, and the dressing the meat by which I live, with the names and prices of the stuffs I wear, because I have set my heart upon some higher knowledge, destroy me. 'Tis folly, and rather imbecility than glory; I had rather be a good horseman than a good logician:

> Quin tu aliquid saltem potius, quorum indiget usus,
> Vimlnibus mollique paras detexere junco.[1]
>
> "Rather of osiers thou, with happier care,
> Or plaited rushes useful frails prepare."

We busy our thoughts about the general concern, and about universal causes and conducts, which will very well carry on themselves without our care; and lay aside our own business and ourselves, which are more our affair than man. Now I am indeed for the most part at home; but I would be more pleased there than anywhere else:

> Sit mea sedes utinam senectæ,
> Sit modus lasso maris, et viarum,
> Militiæque![2]
>
> "May Tiber's walls, th' Argean seat,
> Afford my age a calm retreat!
> There, worn with journeys, wars, and seas,
> May I enjoy unenvied ease."

I know not whether or no I shall bring it about. I could wish that, instead of some other portion of his succession, my father had resigned to me the passionate affection he had in his old age to his household affairs; he was very happy in that he could accommodate his desires to his fortune, and satisfy himself with what he had. Political philosophy may, as much as it will, condemn the meanness and sterility of my employment, if I can once come to relish it as he did. I am quite of opinion that the most honourable calling is to serve the public, and to be useful to many: *Fructus enim ingenii et virtutis, omnisque præstantiæ, tum maximus capitur, quum in proximum quemque confertur.*[3] "We then reap the most wit, virtue, and all sorts of merit, when they are conferred upon every one of our nearest relations." For my part, I disclaim it; partly out of conscience (for where I see the weight that lies upon such employments, I perceive also the little means I have to contribute to them; and Plato, who was a master in all sorts of government, did not nevertheless forbear to abstain from them), and partly out of cowardice. I content myself with enjoying the world without bustle, only to live an irreproachable life, and such a one as may neither be a burden to myself, nor to any other.

Never did any man more faintly and negligently suffer himself to be governed by a third person than I should do, had I any one to whom to intrust myself. One of my wishes at this time should be to have a son-in-law that could comfortably cherish my old age, and to rock it asleep; into whose hands I might deposit, in full sovereignty, the management and use of all my goods, that he might dispose of them as I do, and get by them what I get, provided that he on his part were truly acknowledging, and a friend. But we live in a world where loyalty in one's own children is unknown.

He that has the charge of my purse upon travel has it purely, and without control, and might deceive me in reckoning; but, if he is not a devil, I oblige him to deal faithfully with me by so entire a trust. *Multi fallere docuerunt dum timent falli, et aliis jus peccandi suspicando fecerunt.*[4] "Many have taught others to deceive by fearing to be deceived, and by suspecting them have given them a just title to do ill." The most common security I take of my people is ignorance; I never presume any to be vicious till I have first found them so; and repose the most confidence in the younger sort, that I think are least spoiled by example. I had rather be told at two months' end that I have spent four hundred crowns, than to have my ears battered every night with "three, five, seven;" and yet I have been this way as little robbed as another. It is true I am willing enough not to see it; I intentionally, indeed, harbour a kind of perplexed, uncertain knowledge of my money; for, to a certain proportion, I am content to doubt. One must leave a little room for the infidelity or indiscretion of a servant; if you have enough left in gross to do your business, let the overplus of fortune's liberality run a little more freely at her mercy; 'tis the gleaner's portion. After all, I do not so much value the fidelity of my people as I despise their injury. Oh! what a mean and ridiculous thing it is for a man to study his money, to delight himself with handling and telling it over and over!

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[1] Virgil, *Eclog.* ii. 71.
[2] Horace, *Ode* ii. 6. 5.
[3] Cicero, *de Amicitia*, c. 19.
[4] Seneca, *Epist.* 3.

'tis by such ways that avarice makes its approaches!

Since eighteen years that I have had my estate in my own hands, I could never prevail with myself either to read over my deeds or examine my principal affairs, which ought of necessity to pass through my knowledge and inspection. 'Tis not a philosophical disdain of worldly and transitory things; my taste is not purified to that degree, and I value them at as great a rate, at least, as they are worth; but 'tis, in truth, an inexcusable and childish laziness and negligence. What would not I rather do than read a contract, tumble over a company of old musty writings, a slave to my own business, or, which is worse, to those of another man, as so many do now-a-days to get money? I have nothing dear but care and trouble, and endeavour nothing so much as to be careless and at ease. I had been much fitter, I believe, could it have been without obligation and servitude, to have lived upon another man's fortune than my own; and do not know, when I examine it nearer, whether, according to my humour, what I have to suffer from my affairs and servants, has not in it something more abject, troublesome, and tormenting, than there would be in serving a man better born than myself, that would govern me with a gentle rein and a little at my ease: *Servitus obedientia est fracti animi et abjecti, arbitrio carentis suo.*[1] "Servitude is the obedience of a subdued and abject mind, wanting its own free will." Crates did worse, who threw himself into the liberty of poverty only to rid himself of the inconveniences and care of his house. This is what I would not do; I hate poverty equally with pain; but I could be content to change the kind of life I live for another, that was meaner and had fewer affairs.

When absent from home, I strip myself of all these thoughts, and should be less concerned for the ruin of a tower, than I am, when present, at the fall of a tile. My mind is easily composed at a distance, but suffers as much as the meanest peasant when I am on the spot. The reins of my bridle being wrong put on, or a strap flapping against my leg, will keep me in check a whole day. I raise my courage well enough against inconveniences; lift up my eyes I cannot.

> Sensus! O superi, sensus!
>
> "The senses! O ye gods, the senses!"

I am at home responsible for whatever goes amiss. Few masters (I speak of those of the middling condition, such as mine), if there be any such, they are the happier, can rely so much upon another but that the greatest part of the burthen will still lie upon their own shoulders. This takes much from my grace in entertaining strangers, so that I have perhaps detained some rather out of expectation of a good dinner than by my own behaviour, and lose much of the pleasure I ought to reap at my own house from the visits and assembling of my friends. The most ridiculous carriage of a gentleman, in his own house, is to see him bustling about the business of the house, whispering one servant, and looking an angry look at another; it ought insensibly to slide along, and to represent an ordinary current; and I think it equally awkward and unhandsome to talk much to one's guests of their entertainment, whether by way of bragging or excuse. I love order and cleanliness,

> Et cantharus et lanx
> Ostendunt mihi me,[2]
>
> "Glasses well rins'd my table always grace,
> And dishes shine, in which I see my face,"

more than abundance; and at home have an exact regard to necessity, little to show. If a footman falls to cuffs at another man's house, or stumbles and throws down a dish, you only jest and make a laugh on't: you sleep, whilst the master of the house is arranging a bill of fare, with his steward, for your morrow's entertainment. I speak according as I do myself; not disesteeming, nevertheless, good husbandry in general, nor unconsidering how pleasant a quiet and thrifty management, carried regularly on, is to some natures; and not willing to annex my own errors and inconveniences to the thing, nor to controvert Plato, who looks upon it as the most pleasant employment to every one, "to do his particular affairs, without wrong to another."[3]

When I travel, I have nothing to care for but myself, and the laying out my money; which is disposed of by one single precept; too many things are required to the raking it together; in that I understand nothing. In spending it, I understand a little, and how to get some credit for my expenditure, which is indeed its principal use; but I rely too proudly upon it, which renders it unequal and out of form, and moreover immoderate, in both the one and the other point of view. If it makes a show, if it serves the turn, I indiscreetly let it run, and as indiscreetly tie up my purse-strings, if it does not shine and please me. Whatever it be, whether art or nature, that imprints in us the condition of living with reference to others, it does us much more harm than good: we deprive ourselves of our proper utilities, to accommodate appearances to the common opinion; we care not so much what our being is, as to us, and in reality, as what it is to the public observation. Even the goods of the mind, wisdom itself seems even fruitless to us, if only enjoyed by ourselves, and if it produce not itself to the view and approbation of others. There are some men whose gold runs in large streams imperceptibly under ground; while

[1] Cicero, *Paradox.* v. 1.
[2] Horace, *Epist.* i. 5, 23.
[3] Letter 9. *to Archytas.*

others expose it all in plates and branches; so that in the one farthings are worth crowns, and in the others the converse, the world esteeming its use and value, according to the show. All curious solicitude about riches smells of avarice; even the very disposing of it, with a too punctual and artificial liberality, is not worth a painful solicitude: he that will order his expense to just so much, makes it too pinched and narrow. The keeping or spending are of themselves indifferent things, and receive no colour of good or ill, but according to the application of our will.[1]

The other cause that tempts me out on these journies, is unsuitableness to the present manners of our state. I could easily console myself with this corruption, in reference to the public interest;

> Pejoraque sæcula ferri
> Temporibus, quorum sceleri non invenit ipsa
> Nomen, et a nullo posuit natura metallo;[2]
>
> "'Tis a bad age, worse than the iron times,
> Nature no metal hath to name our crimes;"

but not to my own: I am, in particular, too much oppressed; for in my neighbourhood we are of late, by the long libertinage of our civil wars, grown old in so riotous a form of state,

> Quippe ubi fas versum atque nefas,[3]
>
> "Where right and wrong in mad confusion hurl'd,"

that, in earnest, 'tis a wonder how it can subsist:

> Armati terram exercent, semperque recentes
> Convectare juvat prædas, et vivere rapto.[4]
>
> "With arms upon their backs they plough the soil,
> And their delight is to subsist by spoil."

In fine, I see, by our example, that the society of men is maintained and held together at what price soever; in what condition soever they are placed, they will still close and stick together, moving and heaping up themselves; as uneven bodies, that, shuffled together without order, find of themselves means to unite and settle, often better than they could have been disposed by art. King Philip mustered up a rabble of the most wicked and incorrigible rascals he could pick out, and put them all together into a city he had built for that purpose, which bore their name;[5] I believe that they, even from vices themselves, erected a government amongst them, and a commodious and just society.[6] I see not one action, or three, or a hundred, but manners, in common and received use, so atrocious, especially in inhumanity and treachery, which are to me the worst of all vices, that I have not the heart to think of them without horror; and almost as much admire at, as I detest them: the exercise of these signal villanies carries with it as great signs of vigour and force of soul as of error and disorder. Necessity reconciles and brings men together; and this accidental connexion afterwards forms itself into laws; for there have been as savage ones as any human opinion could produce, which nevertheless have maintained their body, with as much health and length of life, as any Plato or Aristotle could invent; and certainly all these descriptions of polities feigned by art, are found to be ridiculous and unfit to be put in practice.

These great and tedious debates about the best form of society, and the most commodious rules to bind us, are debates only proper for the exercise of our wits; as in the arts, there are several subjects which have their being in agitation and controversy, and have no life but there. Such an idea of government might be of some value in a new world; but we take a world already made, and formed to certain customs; we do not beget it, as Pyrrha or Cadmus did. By what means soever we may have the privilege to rebuild and reform it anew, we can hardly writhe it from its wonted bent, but we shall break all. Solon, being asked whether he had established the best laws he could for the Athenians; "Yes," said he,[7] "the best they would have received." Varro[8] excuses himself after the same manner: "that if he had to begin to write of religion, he would say what he believed; but being it was already received, he would write more according to custom than according to nature."

The laws of Solon.

Not by opinion, but in truth and reality, the best and most excellent government, for every nation, is that under which it has maintained itself. Her form and essential commodity depends upon custom. We are apt to be displeased at the present condition; but I do nevertheless maintain that to desire the command of a few in a republic, or another sort of government in monarchy, than that already established, is both vice and folly.

What is the best government for every nation.

> Ayme l'estat, tel que tu le vois estre:
> S'il est royal ayme la royauté;
> S'il est de peu, ou bien communauté,
> Ayme l'aussi; car Dieu t'y a fait naistre.[9]
>
> "The government approve, be't what it will,
> If it be royal, then love monarchy;
> If a republic, yet approve it still,
> For God himself thereto subjected thee."

So wrote the good M. de Pibrac, whom we

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[1] In his yearly account of his expenditure, Montaigne put down: "*Item*, for my idle humour, a thousand livres."—*Menagiana.*

[2] Juvenal, xiii. 28.

[3] Virgil, *Georgic.* i. 504.

[4] *Æneid*, vii. 748.

[5] Πονηροπολις, *the city of the wicked.* Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* i. v. 11. Plutarch, *on Curiosity.*

[6] "Si j'avais des citoyens à persuader de la necessité des lois, je leur ferais voir qu'il y'en a partout, même au jeu, qui est un commerce de fripons; même chez les voleurs. *Hanno lor Giove i mulandrini ancora.*" Voltaire, *Lettre à d'Alembert*, 1st March, 1764.

[7] Plutarch. *in vitâ.*

[8] St. Augustin, *de Civit. Dei*, v. 4.

[9] Guy du Faur, Seigneur de Pibrac. *Quatrains contenant preceptes et enseignements utiles pour la vie de l'homme.*

have lately lost,[1] a man of such excellent wit, such sound opinions, and such gentle manners. This loss, and that, at the same time, which we have had of M. de Foix,[2] are of great importance to the crown. I do not know whether there is another couple in France worthy to supply the room of these two Gascons, in sincerity and wisdom, in the King's council. They were both great men in different ways, and certainly, according to the age, rare and excellent, each of them in his kind; but what destiny placed them in these times, men so unsuited and so disproportioned to our corruption and intestine tumults?

Nothing presses so hard upon a state as innovation; change only gives form to injustice and tyranny. When any piece is out of order, it may be propped; one may prevent and take care that the decay and corruption natural to all things do not carry us too far from our beginnings and principles: but to undertake to found so great a mass anew, and to change the foundations of so vast a building, is for them to do, who, to make clean, efface; who would reform particular defects by a universal confusion, and cure diseases by death: *Non tam commutandarum, quam evertendarum rerum cupidi.*[3] "Not so desirous of changing as of overthrowing things." The world is unapt for curing itself; it is so impatient of any thing that presses it, that it thinks of nothing but disengaging itself, at what price soever. We see, by a thousand examples, that it generally cures itself to its cost. The discharge of a present evil is no cure, if a general amendment of condition does not follow; the surgeon's end is not only to cut away the dead flesh; that is but the progress of his cure; he has a care, over and above, to fill up the wound with better and more natural flesh, and to restore the member to its due state. Whoever only proposes to himself to remove that which offends him, falls short; for good does not necessarily succeed evil; another evil may succeed, and a worse, as it happened to Cæsar's killers, who brought the republic to such a pass that they had reason to repent their meddling with it. The same has since happened to several others, down to our own times; the French, my contemporaries, know it well enough. All great mutations shake and disorder a state.

Whoever would aim directly at a cure, and would consider of it before he began, would be very willing to withdraw his hands from meddling in it. Pacuvius Calavius corrected the vice of this proceeding by a notable example. His fellow-citizens were in mutiny against their magistrates; he, being a man of great authority in the city of Capua, found means one day to shut up the senators in the palace, and calling the people together in the market-place, he told them that the day was now come wherein, at full liberty, they might revenge themselves on the tyrants, by whom they had been so long oppressed, and whom he had now, all alone and unarmed, at his mercy; and advised that they should call them out one by one by lot, and should particularly determine of every one, causing whatever should be decreed to be immediately executed; with this caution, that they should at the same time depute some honest man in the place of him that was condemned, to the end there might be no vacancy in the senate. They had no sooner heard the name of one senator, but a great cry of universal dislike was raised up against him: "I see," says Pacuvius,[4] "we must get rid of him; he is a wicked fellow: let us look out a good one in his room." Immediately there was a profound silence, every one being at a stand who to choose. But one, more impudent than the rest, having named his man, there arose yet a greater consent of voices against him, a hundred imperfections being laid to his charge, and as many just reasons being presently given why he should not stand. These contradictory humours growing hot, it fared worse with the second senator and the third, there being as much disagreement in the election of the new, as consent in the putting out of the old. In the end, growing weary of this bustle to no purpose, they began, some one way and some another, to steal out of the assembly; every one carrying back this resolution in his mind, that the oldest and best known evil was ever more supportable than one that was new and untried.

To see how miserably we are torn in pieces, (for what have we not done?

> Eheu! cicatricum et sceleris pudet,
> Fratrumque: quid nos dura refugimus,
> Ætas? Quid intactum nefasti
> Liquimus? Unde manus inventus
> Metu deorum continuit? quibus
> Pepercit aris?[5]
>
> "How oft have Roman youth embru'd
> Their savage hands in social blood!
> What has this iron age not dar'd?
> What gods rever'd? What altars spar'd?"

I do not presently conclude:

> Ipsa si velit Salus,
> Servare prorsus non potest hanc familiam:[6]
>
> "Would safety's self its best care have,
> This family it cannot save:")

we are not, however, perhaps at the last gasp. The conservation of states is a thing that in all likelihood surpasses our understanding; a civil government is, as Plato says,[7] a mighty and powerful thing, and hard to be dissolved; it

[1] He died 27th May, 1584, aged 55.
[2] Privy counsellor to the King, and ambassador from France to Venice. It was to him that Montaigne dedicated his edition of Boetius' *Vers Français*.
[3] Cicero, *Offic.* ii. 1.
[4] Livy, xxiii. 3.
[5] Horace, *Od.* i. 35, 33.
[6] Terence, *Adelph.* iv. 7. 43.
[7] *Republic*, viii. 2.

endures against mortal and intestine diseases, against the injury of unjust laws, against tyranny, the corruption and ignorance of magistrates, and the licence and sedition of the people. We compare ourselves in all our fortunes to what is above us, and still look towards the better; but let us measure ourselves with what is below us, and there is no condition so miserable, wherein a man may not find a thousand examples that will administer consolation. 'Tis our vice that we more unwillingly look upon what is above, than willingly on what is below. Solon used to say,[1] that "whoever would make a heap of all the ills together, there is no one would not rather choose to bear away the ills he has, than to come to an equal division with all other men, from that heap, and take with him thence so much as would, upon the dividend, fall to his particular share." Our government is indeed very sick; but there have been others sicker, without dying. The gods play at tennis with us, and bandy us every way:

Enimvero dii nos homines quasi pilas habent.[2]

The state of Rome, and its diverse forms.

The stars have fatally destined the state of Rome for an example of what they could do in this kind: in it is comprised all the forms and adventures that affect a state; all that order or disorder, good or evil fortune can do. Who, then, can despair of his condition, seeing the shocks and commotions wherewith she was tumbled and tossed, and yet withstood them all? If the extent of dominion be the health of a state (which I by no means think it is), and Isocrates pleases me, when he instructs Nicocles not to envy princes who have large dominions, but those who know how to preserve these which have fallen to them, that of Rome was never so sound as when it was most sick. The worst of her forms was the most fortunate: one can hardly discern any image of government under the first emperors; it was the most horrible and tumultuous confusion that can be imagined; it endured it, notwithstanding, and therein continued, not only preserving a monarchy limited within its own bounds, but so many nations, so differing, so remote, so ill affected, so confusedly commanded, and so unjustly conquered:

The horrible confusion under the first emperors.

Nec gentibus illis
Commodat in populum, terræ pelagique potentem,
Invidiam fortuna suam.[3]

"But to no foreign arms would Fortune yet
Lend her own envy against Rome so great,
That over nations and mighty kings,
O'er lands and seas she stretch'd her eagle's wings."

Every thing that totters does not fall. The contexture of so great a body holds by more nails than one; it holds even by its antiquity, like old buildings, from which the foundations are worn away by time, without rough-cast or cement, which yet live and support themselves by their own weight,

Nec jam validis radicibus hærens,
Pondere tuta suo est.[4]

"Like an old lofty oak, that heretofore
Great conquerors' spoils and sacred trophies bore,
Stands firm in his own weight."

Moreover, 'tis not rightly to go to work to reconnoitre only the flank and the fosse, to judge of the security of a place; it must be examined which way approaches can be made to it, and in what condition the assailant is: few vessels sink with their own weight, and without some exterior violence. Let us every way cast our eyes; every thing about us totters; in all the great states, both of Christendom and elsewhere, that are known to us, if you will but look, you will there see evident threats of alteration and ruin:

Et sua sunt illis incommoda, parque per omnes
Tempestas.

"We all alike in the world's troubles share,
And the rude tempest rages every where."

Astrologers may very well, as they do, warn us of great revolutions and imminent mutations; their prophecies are present and palpable, they need not go to heaven to foretel this. There is not only consolation to be extracted from this universal combination of ills and menaces, but, moreover, some hopes of the continuation of our state, forasmuch as naturally nothing falls, where all does: an universal sickness is particular health; conformity is a quality antagonist to dissolution. For my part I despair not, and fancy that I perceive ways to save us:

Deus hæc fortasse benigna
Reducet in sedem vice.[5]

"God will, perchance,
Them to their seats with happy change advance."

Who knows but God will have it happen, as it does in human bodies that purge and restore themselves to a better state by long and grievous maladies, which give them a more entire and perfect health than what they took from them? That which weighs the most with me, is that, in reckoning the symptoms of our ill, I see as many natural ones, and those which heaven sends us and properly its own, as of those that our disorder and human imprudence contribute to it: the very stars seem to declare that we have already continued long enough, and beyond the ordinary term. And this, too, afflicts me, that the mischief which most threatens us is not an alteration in the entire and solid mass, but its dissipation and divulsion; the thing most to be feared.

[1] Val. Max. vii. 2. *Ext.* 2.
[2] Plautus, *Captivi*, Prologue, verse 22.
[3] Lucan, i. 82.
[4] Lucan, i. 138.
[5] Horace, *Epod* xiii. 7.

I fear, in these reveries of mine, the treachery of my memory, lest by inadvertence, it should make me write the same thing twice. I hate to examine myself, and never review, but very unwillingly, what has once escaped my pen. Now I here set down nothing new; these are common thoughts; and having peradventure, conceived them a hundred times, I am afraid I have set them down somewhere else already. Repetition is every where troublesome, though it were in Homer; but 'tis ruinous in things that have only a superficial and transitory shew. I do not love inculcation even in the most profitable things, as in Seneca; and the practice of his Stoical school displeases me, of repeating, upon every subject, and at length, the principles and pre-suppositions that serve in general, and always to re-allege anew common and universal reasons.

Repetition troublesome.

My memory grows worse and worse every day:

> Pocula Lethæos ut si ducentia somnos
> Arente fauce traxerim.[1]
>
> "As if, of Lethe drinking deep
> With thirsty lips, I'd fallen asleep."

I must be fain for the time to come (for hitherto, thanks be to God, nothing has happened much amiss), whereas others seek time and opportunity to think of what they have to say, to avoid all preparation, for fear of tying myself to some obligation upon which I must be forced to insist. To be tied and bound to a thing puts me quite out, and especially where I have to depend upon so weak an instrument as my memory. I never could read this story without being offended at it, with, as it were, a personal and natural resentment: Lyncestes, accused of conspiracy against Alexander, the day that he was brought out before the army, according to the custom, to be heard in his defence, had prepared a studied speech, of which, haggling and stammering, he pronounced some words. As he was becoming more perplexed, and struggling with his memory, and trying to recollect himself, the soldiers, that stood nearest, killed him with their spears, looking upon his confusion and silence as a confession of his guilt;[2] for having had so much leisure to prepare himself in prison, they concluded that it was not his memory that failed him, but that his conscience tied up his tongue and stopped his mouth: very fine, indeed! The place, the spectators, the expectation, would astound a man, even were there no object in his mind but the ambition to speak well; but what, when 'tis an harangue upon which his life depends?

Lyncestes killed with thrusts of pikes by Alexander's soldiers.

For my part, the very being tied to what I am to say, is enough to loose me from it. When I wholly commit and refer myself to my memory, I lay so much stress upon it that it sinks under me; and I overwhelm it with the burden. The more I trust to it, the more do I put myself out of my own power, so much as to find it in my own countenance; and have sometimes been very much put to it to conceal the slavery wherein I was bound; whereas my design is to manifest in speaking a perfect nonchalance, both of face and accent, and casual and unpremeditated motions, as rising from present occasions, choosing rather to say nothing to purpose, than to shew that I came prepared to speak well, a thing especially unbecoming a man of my profession, and of too great obligation on him that cannot retain much. The preparation begets a great deal more expectation than it will satisfy: a man often very absurdly strips himself to his doublet, to leap no further than he would have done in his gown: *Nihil est his, qui placere volunt, tam adversarium quam expectatio.*[3] "Nothing is so great an adversary to those who make it their business to please, as expectation." It is recorded of the orator Curio, that when he proposed the division of his oration into three or four parts, it often happened either that he forgot some one, or added one or two more.[4] I have always avoided falling into this inconvenience, having always hated these promises and announcements, not only out of distrust of my memory, but also because this method relishes too much of the artificial: *Simpliciora militares decent.*[5] "Simplicity becomes warriors." 'Tis enough that I have promised, to myself, never to take upon me to speak in a place where I owe respect; for as to that sort of speaking, when a man reads his speech, besides that it is very absurd, it is a mighty disadvantage to those who naturally could give it a grace by action; and to rely upon the mercy of the readiness of my invention, I will much less do it: 'tis heavy and perplexed, and such as would never furnish me in sudden and important necessities.

Permit, reader, this essay its course also, and this third sitting to finish my picture. I add, but I correct not;[6] first because I conceive that a man having once parted with his labours to the world, has no farther right to them; let him do better if he can, in some new undertaking, but not adulterate what he has already sold. Of such dealers nothing should be bought till after they are dead. Let them well consider what they do before they produce them to light,

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[1] Horace, *Epod.* xiv. 3.
[2] Quint. Curt. vii. 1.
[3] Cicero, *Acad* ii. 4.
[4] Id. *Brutus*, c. 60.
[5] Quint. *Inst. Orat.* xi. 1.
[6] Yet the various editions of the Essays, printed under the superintendence of Montaigne, present an infinite variety of readings, and the two corrected copies he left behind him have in every chapter alterations, omissions, and additions, differing not only from the printed copies, but from each other, in material respects. Indeed, he himself admits (book ii c. 11), "En mes écripts mesmes, je ne retreuve pas tousjours l'air de ma premiere imagination: je ne scais ce que j'ay voulu dire; et m'eschaulde souvent a corriger et y mettre un nouveau sens, pour avoir perdu le premier, qui valoit mieulx."

who hurries them? My book is always the same, saving that upon every new edition, that the buyer may not go away quite empty, I take leave to add, which I can easily do, for 'tis but a piece of ill-pointed mosaic-work, some few insignificant bits, over and above: these are but over weight, that do not damage the original form of these Essays, but, by a little ambitious subtlety, give a kind of particular value to every one of those that follow. Thence, however, there will easily happen some transposition of chronology; my stories taking their place according to their patness, and not always according to the age.

Secondly, because that, for what concerns myself, I fear to lose by the change; my understanding does not always go forward, it goes backward too. I do not much less suspect my fancies for being the second or the third, than for being the first, or present, or past. We often correct ourselves as foolishly as we do others. I am grown older by a great many years, since my first publication, which was in the year 1580;[1] but I very much doubt whether I am grown an inch the wiser. I now, and I anon, are two several persons; but whether the better now, or anon, I am not able to determine. It were a fine thing to be old, if we only travelled towards improvement; but 'tis a drunken, stumbling, reeling, ill-favoured motion, like that of reeds, which the air casually waves to and fro at pleasure. Antiochus in his youth vigorously wrote in favour of the Academy; in his old age he wrote against it. Would not which of these two soever I should follow, be still Antiochus? After having established the uncertainty, to go about to establish the certainty, of human opinions, was it not to establish doubt, and not certainty? and to promise that, he had yet another age to live, he would be always upon the terms of altering his judgment, not so much for the better, as for a change?

The public favour has given me a little more confidence than I expected; but what I most fear is lest I should overgorge the world: I had rather of the two nettle my reader than tire him, as a learned man of my time has done. Praise is always pleasing, let it come from whom or upon what account it will; yet ought a man to understand why he is commended, that he may know how to keep up the same reputation still. Even imperfections may meet with commendation from some one or other; the vulgar and common esteem seldom hits right; and I am much mistaken if, amongst the writings of my time, the worst are not those which have most gained the popular applause. For my part, I confess my thanks to those good-natured men who deign to take my weak endeavours in good part; the faults of the workmanship are nowhere so apparent as in a matter which of itself has no recommendation. Blame not me, reader, for those that slip in here by the fancy or inadvertency of others; every hand, every artizan, contribute their own materials. I neither concern myself with orthography (and only care to have it after the old way) nor punctuation, being very inexpert both in the one and the other. Where they wholly break the sense, I am very little concerned, for they at least discharge me; but where they substitute a false one, as they so often do, and wrest me to their conception, they ruin me. Therefore, when a sentence is not strong enough for my proportion, my readers ought, in civility, to reject it as none of mine. Whoever shall know how lazy I am, and how indulgent to my own humour, will easily believe that I had rather write as many more essays, than be bound to revise these over again for so childish a correction.

Orthography and pointing despised.

I was saying just now, that, being planted in the very depth of this new religion, I am not only deprived of any great familiarity with men of other kind of manners than my own, and of other opinions, by which they hold together, as by a tie that supersedes all other obligations; but, moreover, I do not live without danger amongst men to whom all things are equally lawful, and of whom the most part cannot offend the laws more than they have already done; whence the extremest degree of licence proceeds. All the particular circumstances respecting me being summed up together, I do not find one man of my country who pays so dear for the defence of our laws, both in costs and damages (as the lawyers say), as myself; and some there are who vapour and brag of their zeal and constancy, that, if things were justly weighed, do much less than I. My house, as one that has ever been open and free to all comers, and civil to all (for I could never persuade myself to make a garrison of war of it, a condition I would keep as far from my own neighbourhood as possible), has sufficiently merited a popular kindness, and so that it would be a hard matter to insult over me upon my own dung-hill; and I look upon it as a wonderful and exemplary thing, that it yet continues a virgin from blood and plunder during so long a storm, and so many neighbouring revolutions and tumults. For, to confess the truth, it had been possible enough for a man of my complexion to have shaken hands with any one constant and continued form whatever; but the contrary invasions and incursions, alternations and vicissitudes of fortune round about me, have hitherto rather exasperated than calmed and mollified the humour of the country, and involve me in invincible difficulties and dangers.

I escape, 'tis true, but am annoyed that it is more by chance, and something of my own prudence, than by justice, and am not satisfied to be out of the protection of the laws, and

[1] The edition of 1582 has it: "I am grown older by eight years since my first publication; but I doubt," &c.

under any other safe-guard than theirs. As matters stand, I live above one half by the favour of others, which is an untoward obligation. I do not like to owe my safety, either to the generosity or affection of great persons, who are content to allow me my liberty, or to the obliging manners of my predecessors, or my own; for what if I was another kind of man? If my deportment, and the frankness of my conversation or relationship, oblige my neighbours, 'tis cruel that they should acquit themselves of that obligation in only permitting me to live, and that they may say, "We allow him the free liberty of having divine service read in his own private chapel, when all churches round about are deserted by us, and allow him the use of his goods, and the fruition of his life, as one that protects our wives and cattle in time of need." For my house has for many descents shared in the reputation of Lycurgus the Athenian,[1] who was the general feoffee & guardian of the purses of his fellow-citizens. Now I hold that a man should live as a matter of right, and by authority, and not either by recompence or favour. How many gallant men have rather chosen to lose their lives than to abandon their duty? I hate to subject myself to any sort of obligation, but, above all, to that which binds me by the duty of honour. I think nothing so dear as what is given me, and that because my will lies at pawn under the title of gratitude, and more willingly accept of services that are to be sold, being of opinion that for the last I give nothing but money, while for the other I give myself.

Lycurgus the general trustee for all his fellow citizens.

The knot that binds me by the laws of courtesy pinches me more than that of legal constraint, and I am much more at ease when bound by a scrivener than by myself. Is it not reason that my conscience should be much more engaged when men rely simply upon it? In a bond, my faith owes nothing, because it has nothing lent it. Let them trust to the security they have taken, out of me; I had much rather break the wall of a prison, and the laws themselves, than my own word. I am nice, even to superstition, in keeping my promises, and therefore upon all occasions have a care to make them uncertain and conditional. To those of no great moment I add the jealousy of my own rule, to make them weight; it racks and oppresses me with its own interest. Even in actions that are wholly my own, and free, if I once say it, I conceive that I have bound myself, and that delivering it to the knowledge of another I have positively enjoined it my own performance; methinks I promise it if I but say it, and, therefore, I am not apt to say much in that way. The sentence that I pass upon myself is more severe than that of a judge who only considers the common obligation; but my conscience looks upon it with a more severe and penetrating eye. I lag in those duties to which I should be compelled if I did not go: *Hoc ipsum ita justum est, quod recte fit, si est voluntarium.*[2] "Even that which is well done is only just, when 'tis voluntary." If the action has not some splendour of liberty, it has neither grace nor honour:

Promises to be strictly observed.

> Quod me jus cogit, vix voluntate impetrent:[3]
>
> "That which the laws have power to constrain,
> They from my will would hardly e'er obtain:"

where necessity draws me, I love to let my will take its own course: *Quia quidquid imperio cogitur, exigenti magis quam præstanti acceptum refertur.*[4] "For whatever is compelled by power is more imputed to him that exacts than to him that performs." I know some who follow this notion even to injustice, who will sooner give than restore, sooner lend than pay, and will do them the least good to whom they are most obliged. I do not go such lengths.

I so much love to disengage and disobligate myself, that I have sometimes looked upon ingratitude, affronts, and indignities, which I have received from those to whom, either by nature or accident, I was bound in some duty of friendship, as an advantage, taking this occasion of their ill usage, for an acquittance and discharge of so much of my debt. And though I still continue to pay them all the outward offices of public reason, I, notwithstanding, find a great saving in doing that upon the account of justice which I did upon the score of affection, and in a little easing myself of the former solicitude and attention of my inward will: *Est prudentis sustinere, ut currum, sic impetum benevolentiæ,*[5] "'Tis the part of a wise man to keep a curb, as upon a swift chariot, upon the precipitation of his benevolence," which is in me too urging and pressing where I take, at least for a man who loves not to be strained at all; and this husbanding my friendship serves me for a sort of consolation in the imperfections of those in whom I am concerned. I am sorry they are not so much what I could wish they were; but so it is, that I save something in my application and engagement towards them. I admit of a man's being less fond of his child, for having a scald-head, or being crooked, and not only when he is ill-conditioned, but also when he is unfortunate and ill-formed, (for God himself has abated that from his value and natural estimation), provided he carry himself in this coldness of affection with moderation and exact justice. Proximity lessens not defects with me, but rather makes them greater.

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[1] Plutarch, *in vitâ.*
[2] Cicero, *de Offic.* i. 9.
[3] Terence, *Adelph.* iii 5. 44. The text has, *Quod vos jus cogit, vix voluntate impetret.*
[4] Val. Max. ii. 2. 6.
[5] Cicero, *de Amicit.* c. 7.

After all, according to what I understand of the science of benefit and gratitude, which is a subtle science and of great use, I know no person more free and less indebted than I am at this hour. What I do owe is simply to common and natural obligations: as to any thing else, no man is more absolutely clear;

Nec sunt mihi nota potentum
Munera.[1]

"The gifts of great men are to me unknown."

Princes give me a great deal, if they take nothing from me; and do me good enough, if they do me no harm; that's all I ask. Oh, how I am obliged to Almighty God that it has pleased him I should receive all I have immediately from his bounty, and that he has reserved all my obligation particularly to himself! How constantly do I beg of his holy compassion that I may never owe any essential thanks to any one! O happy liberty wherein I have thus far lived! May it continue with me to the last! I endeavour to have no need of any one: *In me omnis spes est mihi*;[2] "All my hope is in myself;" 'tis what every one may do in himself, but more easily they whom God has placed in a condition exempted from natural and urgent necessities. It is a wretched and dangerous thing to depend upon others. Ourselves, which is the most just and safest refuge, are not sufficiently assured. I have nothing mine but myself; and yet the possession is in part defective and borrowed. I fortify myself both in courage, which is the strongest assistant, and also in fortune, therein to have wherewith to satisfy myself, though every thing else should forsake me. Elens Hippias[3] did not merely furnish himself with knowledge, that he might at need cheerfully retire from all other company to enjoy the Muses; not merely with the knowledge of philosophy to teach his soul to be contented with itself, and bravely to dispense with outward conveniences, when fate would have it so; he was moreover so careful as to learn cookery, to shave himself, to make his own clothes, his own shoes, and drawers, to provide for all his necessities in himself, and to make himself independent of the assistance of others. One more freely and cheerfully enjoys borrowed conveniences, when it is not an enjoyment forced and constrained by need; and when one has in his own will and fortune wherewithal to live without them. I know myself very well, but 'tis hard to imagine any so pure liberality of another towards me, any so free and frank hospitality, that would not appear to me a disgrace, tyrannical, and tainted with reproach, if necessity had reduced me to it. As giving is an ambitious and authoritative quality, so is accepting a quality of submission; witness the injurious and quarrelsome refusal that Bajazet made of the presents that Temir[4] sent him; and those that were offered in the behalf of the Emperor Solyman to the Emperor of Calicut, were so much disdained by him, that he not only rudely rejected them, saying that neither he nor any of his predecessors had ever been wont to take, and that it was their office to give; but moreover caused the ambassadors sent for that purpose to be put into a dungeon. When Thetis, says Aristotle,[5] flatters Jupiter, when the Lacedæmonians flatter the Athenians, they do not put them in mind of the good they have done them, which is always odious, but of the benefits they have received from them. Such as I see so frequently employ every one in their affairs, and thrust themselves into so much obligation, would never do it, did they but relish the sweetness of a pure liberty as I do, and did they but weigh, as wise men should, the burden of obligation; 'tis sometimes, perhaps, fully returned, but 'tis never dissolved. 'Tis a miserable slavery to a man that loves to be at full liberty in every way. My acquaintance, both those above and those below me, can say whether they have ever known a man less importuning, soliciting, entreating, and pressing upon others than I. And if I am a degree beyond all modern example in this respect, 'tis no great wonder, so many parts of my manners contributing to it; a little natural pride, an impatience of being refused, the contraction of my desires and designs, inaptitude for business, and my most beloved qualities, idleness and freedom: by all these together, I have conceived a mortal hatred of being obliged to any other than myself. I readily lay out all I can rap and wring of my own, rather than employ the bounty of another, in any important or light occasion or necessity whatsoever. My friends strangely annoy me when they ask me to ask a third person any thing; and I think it costs me little less to disengage him who is indebted to me, by making use of him, than to engage myself to one that owes me nothing. This condition being removed, and this other, that they require of me nothing of any great trouble or care (for I have declared open war against all trouble), I am easily entreated, and ready to do every one the best service I can.[6] But I have still more avoided receiving, than sought occasion of giving; and this, moreover, according to Aristotle,[7] is much more easy. My fortune has allowed me but little to do others good withal; and the little it can afford is put into a pretty close hand. Had I been born a great person, I should have been ambitious to have made myself beloved, not feared or admired: shall I more impudently express it? I should as much have endeavoured to please as

[1] *Æneid*, xii. 519.

[2] Terence, *Adelph.* iii. 5, 9. The text has, *In te spes omnis, Hegio, nobis sita est.*

[3] Or rather, *Hippias of Elis.* See Cicero, *de Oratore*, iii. 32.

[4] *Timur*, or *Tamerlane.*

[5] *Ethics*, iv. 3. See also, Homer, *Iliad*, i. 503.

[6] The edition of 1588 adds here: "I have ever willingly sought every occasion to do a kindness, and to attach others to me; and methinks one cannot make a better use of the means one has: but I have still," &c.

[7] *Ethics*, ix. 7.

to do good. Cyrus very wisely, and by the mouth of a great captain and still greater philosopher,[1] prefers his goodness and well-doing much before his valour and warlike conquests; and the elder Scipio, wherever he would raise himself in people's esteem, sets a higher value upon his affability and humanity than on his prowess and victories, and has always this glorious saying in his mouth: "That he had given his enemies as much occasion to love him as his friends." I would say, then, that if a man must needs owe something, it ought to be by a more legitimate title than that whereof I am speaking, to which the necessity of this miserable war compels me; and not in so great a debt as that of my entire preservation; this overwhelms me.

I have a thousand times gone to bed in my own house, with an apprehension that I should be betrayed and murdered that very night; compounding with fortune that it might be without terror, and with quick dispatch; and after my paternoster have cried out,

Impius hæc tam culta novalia miles habebit?[2]

"Shall impious soldiers have these new-plough'd lands?"

But what remedy? 'tis the place of my birth, and of most of my ancestors; here they have fixed their affection and their name. We inure ourselves to whatever we are accustomed to; and, in so miserable a condition as ours is, custom is a great bounty of nature, which benumbs our senses to the sufferance of many evils. A civil war has this in it worse than other wars, to make each of us stand sentinel in his own house:

Quam miserum, portæ vitam muroque tueri,
Vixque suæ tutum viribus esse domus![3]

"To one's own walls and gates, 'tis wretched, sure,
To trust one's life, yet scarce to be secure."

'Tis a grievous extremity for a man to be jostled in what should be the quiet of his own house. The country where I live is always the first in arms, and the last that lays them down, and where there never is absolute peace:

Tum quoque cum pax est, trepidant formidine belli.[4]

Quoties pacem fortuna lacessit,
Hac iter est bellis - - - Melius, Fortuna, dedisses,
Orbe sub Eoo sedem, gelidaque sub Arcto,
Errantesque domos.[5]

"E'en when at peace, we're ever fearing war."

"Elsewhere, when all
The world's at peace, we are the spoil of war,
The first that are invaded; happier far
Might we have lived in farthest north or east,
Or wandering tents of Scythia."

I sometimes extract the means to fortify myself against these considerations, from carelessness and indolence, which also in some sort bring us on to resolution. It frequently happens to me to imagine and expect mortal dangers with a kind of pleasure: I stupidly plunge myself headlong into death,[6] without considering or taking a view of it, as into a silent and obscure abyss, which swallows me up at one leap, and involves me in an instant in a profound sleep, without any sense of pain. And in these short and violent deaths, the consequence that I foresee administers more consolation to me than the effect of fear. They say that as life is not the better for being long, so death is better for not being long. I do not so much evade being dead, as I enter into confidence with dying. I envelope and shelter myself in the storm, that is to blind and carry me away with fury, by a sudden and insensible attack. Moreover, what if it should fall out that, as some gardeners say, as roses and violets spring more odoriferous near garlic and onions, by reason that the last suck and imbibe all the ill odour of the earth; that these depraved natures should also attract all the malignity of my air and climate, and render me so much the better and purer by their vicinity, that I should not lose all! That cannot be; but there may be something in this, that goodness is more beautiful and attractive when it is rare; and that contrariety and diversity fortifies and shuts up well-doing within itself, and enflames it by the jealousy of opposition and glory. The robbers, of their special favour, have no particular aim at me; no more have I to them: I should have my hands too full. Like consciences are lodged under several sorts of robes, like cruelty, disloyalty, and rapine; and much the worse and baser, as more secure and concealed under the colour of the laws. I less hate an open and professed injury than one that is clandestine and treacherous; an enemy in arms than an enemy in a gown. Our fever has seized upon a body that is not much the worse for it: there was fire before, and now 'tis broke out into a flame. The noise is greater, the evil much the same. I generally answer such as ask me the reason of my travels: "That

[1] Xenophon, *Cyropæd.* viii. 4, 4.
[2] Virg. *Eclog.* i. 71.
[3] Ovid, *Trist.* iv. 1, 69. [4] Id. *ib.* iii. 10, 67.
[5] Lucan, i. 255 and 256, 251, &c.
[6] The authors of the Port Royal *Logic*, part iii. c. 20, sect. 6, in quoting this passage, are very indignant with Montaigne for his resignation amidst the dangers that surrounded him; but to comprehend the author's true meaning here, the words must be considered with regard to their necessary connection with what goes before. Montaigne represents himself as surrounded in his house by gangs of banditti, of every side, licensed by war to commit all manner of crimes with impunity. In such a situation, where he is always in danger of having his throat cut, and in a mortal dread of seeing himself every moment at the mercy of these villains, he one while fancies himself actually in their hands, and feeling a kind of pleasure to be at last delivered thereby on a sudden from the continual anguish which rendered his life insupportable. Full of these ideas he stupidly plunges himself headlong, as he says, into death, without taking a view of it, as into a dark and deep vortex, which swallows him up, &c. Which is as much as to say, that by taking his resolution he expects, when he least thinks of it, to be in that state of surprise and horror from the barbarity of those villains who shall come to knock him on the head, or cut his throat, before he has time to look about him. The images which Montaigne here makes use of are lively but innocent, and very natural, and such as no fair critic need find fault with.—*Coste.*

I know very well what I fly from, but not what I seek.' If they tell me I may be as ill among strangers, and that their manners are no better than ours, I first reply that that is hard to be believed,

Tam multæ scelerum facies![1]

"Crime in so many shapes abounds!"

secondly, that it is always gain to change an ill condition for one that is uncertain; and that the ills of others ought not to concern us so much as our own.

The commendation of Paris.

I will not here omit that I never mutiny so much against France, that I am not perfectly friends with Paris: that city has ever had my heart from my infancy; and it has fallen out, as of excellent things, that the more beautiful cities I have seen since, the more the beauty of this does still win upon my affection: I love it by itself, and more in its own native being, than in all the pomp of foreign embellishments: I love it tenderly, even to its warts and blemishes: I am not a Frenchman but by this great city, great in people, great in the felicity of her situation, but above all, great and incomparable in variety and diversity of commodities; the glory of France, and one of the most noble ornaments of the world. May God keep her free from our divisions, entire and united! I hold her to be sufficiently defended from all other violence: I give her caution, that of all sorts of parties that will be the worst that shall set her in disorder; and I have no fears for her but from herself; and certainly I have as much fear for her as for any other part of this state. Whilst she shall continue, I shall never want a retreat where I may live, sufficient to make me amends for parting with any other retreat whatever.

Montaigne considered all nations as his countrymen.

Not because Socrates said so, but because it is in truth my own humour, and perhaps not without some excess, I look upon all men as my compatriots; and embrace a Polander as heartily as a Frenchman, preferring the universal and common tie to the national tie. I am not much taken with the sweetness of a native air: acquaintance wholly new, and wholly my own, appear to me full as good as common and accidental ones with our neighbours: friendships that are purely of our own acquiring, ordinarily carry it above those to which the communication of the clime, or of blood, oblige us. Nature has placed us in the world free and unbound; we imprison ourselves in certain narrow limits, like the kings of Persia, who obliged themselves to drink no other water but that of the river Choaspes,[2] foolishly quitting claim to their right of usage of all other streams, and as to what concerned themselves, dried up all the other rivers of the world. What Socrates says towards his end, that he looked upon a sentence of banishment as worse than a sentence of death, I shall, I think, never be either so broken, or so strictly habituated to my own country, to be of that opinion: these celestial lives have images enough, that I embrace more by esteem than affection; and they have some also so elevated and extraordinary, that I cannot embrace them even by esteem, forasmuch as I cannot conceive them: this humour was very tender in a man that thought the whole world was his city; it is true that he disdained travel, and had hardly ever set his foot out of the Attic territories. That he complained of the money his friends offered to save his life, and that he refused to come out of prison by the mediation of others, not to disobey the laws, in a time when they were otherwise so corrupt: these examples are of the first kind for me; of the second there are others that I could find in the same person: many of these rare examples surpass the force of my action; but some of them, moreover, surpass the force of my judgment.

Besides these reasons, travel is, in my opinion, a very improving thing: the soul is there continually employed in observing new and unknown things; and I do not know, as I have often said, a better school wherein to model life, than by constantly setting before it the diversity of so many other lives, fancies, and customs, and to make it relish so perpetual a variety of the forms of human nature. The body is therein neither idle nor overwrought; and that moderate agitation puts it in breath. I can keep on horseback, tormented with the stone as I am, without alighting or being weary, eight or ten hours together,

Vires ultra sortemque senectæ:[3]

"Beyond the strength and common lot of age:"

no season is distasteful to me, but the parching heat of a scorching sun; for the umbrellas made use of in Italy, ever since the time of the ancient Romans, more burden a man's arm than they relieve his head. I would fain know what plan the Persians had so long ago, and in the infancy of luxury, for creating fresh air, and having shade where they would, as Xenophon reports they did. I love rain and dirt, like a duck. Change of air and climate never affects me; every sky is alike: I am only troubled with inward alterations, which I breed within myself, and those are not so frequent in travel. I am hard to be got out; but being once upon the road, I hold out as well as the best: I take as much pains in little as in great undertakings, and to equip myself for a short trip, if but to visit a neighbour, as for a regular journey. I have learned to travel after the Spanish fashion, and to make but one stage of my day's journey; and in excessive heats, I always travel by night, from sun-set to sun-

The Spanish way of travelling.

[1] Virgil, *Georg.* i. 506.
[2] Plutarch, *On Exile.* Ælian, *Hist. Var.* xii. 40. Pliny, xxxi. 3.
[3] *Æneid*, vi. 114.

rise. The other method of baiting by the way, in haste and hurry gobbling up a dinner, is, especially in short days, very inconvenient. My horses are all the better for it: never any horse failed me that was able to hold out the first day's journey: I water them at every brook I meet, and have only a care they have so much way to go before I come to my inn, as will warm the water in their bellies. My unwillingness to rise in a morning gives my servants leisure to dine at their ease before they set out: for my own part, I never eat too late; my appetite comes to me while eating, and not otherwise; I am never hungry but at table.

Some of my friends blame me for continuing this travelling humour, being married and old: but they are out there; for it is the best time to leave a man's house, when he has put it into a way of going on without him, and settled such an economy as corresponds to its former government; 'tis much greater imprudence to abandon it to a less faithful housekeeper, and who will be less solicitous to provide for the family, and look after your affairs.

The most useful and the most honourable accomplishment of a mother of a family.

The most useful and honourable knowledge and employment for the mother of a family, is the science of good housewifery. I see some that are covetous, but very few that are economical; 'tis the supreme quality of a woman, and what a man ought to seek after before any other, as the only dowry that must ruin or preserve our houses. Let men say what they will, according to the experience I have learned, I require in married women the economical virtue above all others: I put my wife to't as a concern of her own, leaving her by my absence the whole government of my affairs. I see, and am vexed to see it, in several families I know, monsieur, about midday, come home all dirt and disorder, from trotting about on his affairs; when madame is still pouncing and tricking herself up in her closet: this is for queens to do, and that's a question too: 'tis ridiculous and unjust that the laziness of our wives should be maintained with our sweat and labour. No man, as much as in me lies, shall have a more free and liberal, a more quiet and free fruition of his estate than I. If the husband bring matter, nature herself will that the wife find the form.

The conjugal friendship grows warm by absence.

As to the duties of conjugal friendship, that some think to be weakened by absence, I am quite of another opinion. It is, on the contrary, an intelligence that easily cools by too continual and assiduous exercise. Every other woman appears graceful, and we all find by experience that being continually together is not so pleasant as to part for a time and meet again. These interruptions give me renewed affection for my family, and render my own house more agreeable to me: change warms my appetite, now to the one and now to the other. I know that the arms of friendship are long enough to reach from one end of the world to the other, and especially this, where there is a continual communication of offices, that rouse the obligation and remembrance. The Stoics say, indeed, that there is so great connexion and relation amongst wise men, that he who dines in France nourishes his companion in Egypt; and that whoever does but hold out his finger, in what part of the world soever, all the wise men upon the habitable earth feel themselves assisted by it.[1] Fruition and possession principally appertain to the imagination: it more fervently and constantly embraces what it is in quest of, than what we hold in our arms. Let a man but consider, and cast up his daily thoughts, and he will find that he is most absent from his friend when in his company: his presence relaxes your attention, and gives your thoughts liberty to absent themselves, at every turn and upon every occasion. When I am at Rome, I keep and govern my house, and the conveniences I there left; I see my walls rise, my trees shoot, and my revenue increase or decrease, very near as well as when I am at home:

> Ante oculos errat domus, errat forma locorum.[2]
>
> "Still fondly I behold, with fancy's eye,
> My house and places that around it lie."[2]

If we enjoy nothing but what we touch, we may say farewell to the money in our closets, and to our sons, when they are gone a hunting. We will have them nearer to us. Are they in the garden? Is that far off? Is it half a day's journey? Is it ten leagues? Is that far or near? If near, what is eleven, twelve, or thirteen? and so by degrees. In earnest, if there be a woman who can tell her husband what step ends the near, and what step begins the remote, I would advise her to stop him between them;

> Exeludat jurgia finis . . . .
> Utor permisso; caudæque pilos ut equinæ
> Paulatim vello, et demo unum, demo etiam unum,
> Dum cadat elusus ratione ruentis acervi;[3]
>
> "I take the grant, and by degrees prevail
> (For hair by hair I pull the horse's tail),
> And while I take them year by year away,
> Their subtle heaps of arguments decay;"

and let them boldly call philosophy to their assistance; in whose teeth it may be cast that, seeing it neither discerns the one nor the other end of the junction betwixt the too much and the too little, the long and the short, the light and the heavy, the near and remote; that seeing it discovers neither the beginning nor the end, it must needs judge very uncertainly of

[1] The example of the finger stretched out is in Plutarch, *On the Common Conceptions of the Stoics*; but as to the economical arrangement for feeding two persons on one man's meal, it is apparently a fancy of Montaigne's own.

[2] Ovid, *Trist.* iii. 4. 7.

[3] Horace, *Epist.* ii. i. 38, and 45.

the middle: *Rerum natura nullam nobis dedit cognitionem finium.*[1] "Nature has given us no knowledge of the limits of things." Are they not still wives and friends to the dead, who are not at the end of this, but in the other world? We embrace not only the absent, but those who have been, and those who are not yet. We do not promise in marriage to be continually linked together, like some little animals that we see, or like those of Karenty that are bewitched, tied together like dogs:[2] and a wife ought not to be so greedily enamoured of her husband's fore-parts that she cannot endure to see him turn his back, if occasion be. But may not this saying of that excellent painter of woman's humours, be here introduced, to show the reason of their complaints?

> Uxor, si cesses, aut te amare cogitat,
> Aut tete amari, aut potare, aut animo obsequi:
> Et tibi bene esse soli, cum sibi sit male;[3]

> "Thy wife, if thou stay'st long abroad, is mov'd,
> Thinking thou either lov'st, or art belov'd;
> Drinking, or something else, thyself to please,
> And that thou'rt well, whilst she is ill at ease;"

or may it not be, that of itself, opposition and contradiction support and nourish them; and that they sufficiently accommodate themselves, provided they incommode you?

In true friendship, wherein I am skilled, I more give myself to my friend than I attract him to me. I am not only better pleased in doing him service, than if he conferred a benefit upon me; but, moreover, had rather he should do himself good than me, and he most obliges me when he does so. And if absence be either more pleasant or convenient for him, 'tis also more acceptable to me, than his presence; neither is it properly absence, when we can write to one another. I have often made good use of our separation for a time; we better filled and further extended the possession of life in being parted; he[4] lived, rejoiced, and saw for me, and I for him, as plainly as if he had himself been there; one part of us remained idle when we were together; we became confounded: the distance of place rendered the conjunction of our wills more rich. This insatiable desire of personal presence a little implies weakness in the fruition of souls.

Of the utility the absence of a friend is.

As to age, which is alledged against me, 'tis quite contrary; 'tis for youth to subject itself to common opinions, and to curb itself to please others; it has wherewithal to please both the people and itself; we have but too much ado to please ourselves alone. As natural conveniences fail, let us supply them with those that are artificial. 'Tis injustice to excuse youth for pursuing its pleasures, and to forbid old men to seek them. When young, I concealed my wanton passions with prudence; now I am old, I chase away melancholy by debauch.[5] And thus do the Platonic laws[6] forbid travel till forty or fifty years old, th men's travels might be more useful and instructive in so mature an age. I should sooner subscribe to the second article of the laws, which forbids it after threescore.

Whether old age should prevent one's travelling.

"But at such an age, you will never return from so long a journey." What care I for that? I neither undertake it to return from nor to finish it; my business is only to keep myself in motion whilst motion pleases me, and only journey for the journey's sake. They who hunt after a benefice or a hare run not; they only run that run at base, and to exercise their running. My design is divisible throughout; it is not grounded upon any great hopes; every day is complete in itself: and the journey of my life is carried on after the same manner. And yet I have seen places enough a great way off, where I could have wished to have been staid. And why not, if Chrysippus, Cleanthes, Diogenes, Zeno, Antipater, so many sages of the sourest sect, cheerfully abandoned their country,[7] without occasion of complaint, and only for the enjoyment of another air? In truth, that which most displeases me in all my travels is that I cannot resolve to settle my abode where I should best like, but that I must always propose to myself to return, to accommodate myself to the common humour.

If I feared to die in any other place than that of my birth; if I thought I should die more uneasily remote from my own family, I should hardly go out of France; I should not without fear step out of my parish; I feel death always twitching me

Montaigne preferred to die abroad rather than at home; and why.

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1 Cicero, *Acad.* ii. 29.

2 It is Saxo Grammaticus that has left us the story of these hag-ridden creatures, in the fourteenth book of his *History of Denmark*; where, speaking of the conversion of the people of Rugen, an island in the Baltic, he says that the inhabitants of Karantia, or Kerantia, one of their towns, after having renounced their worship of idols, were nevertheless still afraid of their power, remembering how often they had been punished for their lewdness, when both sexes were tied together in the action, after the manner of dogs, and even faster. Sometimes, when they were taken in the fact, they were, for the diversion of the people, hoisted upon a perch, the man on one side and the woman on the other, without being able to separate. If this fact was true, one could hardly help inferring that the devil was at that time much more severe or more mischievous than he is now.

3 Terence, *Adelph.* i. 1. 7.

4 *La Boetie.*

5 "This word *debauch*," observes M. Coste, "must be taken in a moderate sense, and such as is suitable to Montaigne's genius and character, and to the subject he here treats of; that is to say, to his passion for travel, which he is pleased to term a debauch, by an excursion which is very common to him. There is scarce any writer who has more need than Montaigne of a judicious reader, and one, especially, that is fair and candid. His style, which abounds with bold expressions and figures, is very likely to deceive a cavelling censor, or to give a handle to those ill-natured critics who, without regard to truth, boldly censure the most innocent expressions, when they think they can represent them to other persons in a criminal light."

6 Plato, *Laws*, xii.

7 Chrysippus was of Soles, Cleanthes of Assos, Diogenes of Babylon, Zeno of Citium in the isle of Cyprus, Antipater of Tarsus, *all Stoic philosophers*, who passed their lives at Athens, as Plutarch has observed in his *Treatise of Banishment*.

by the throat or by the back. But I am of another temper; 'tis in all places alike to me. Yet, might I have my choice, I think I should rather choose to die on horseback than in a bed, out of my own house, and far from my own people. There is more of heart-breaking than consolation in taking leave of one's friends: I am willing to omit that civility; for that, of all the offices of friendship, is the only one that is unpleasant; and I could with all my heart dispense with that great and eternal farewell. If there be any convenience in so many standers by, it brings a hundred inconveniences along with it. I have seen many miserably dying, surrounded with all this train; 'tis a crowd that chokes them. 'Tis against duty, and a testimony of little kindness and little care, to permit you to die in repose; one torments your eyes, another afflicts your ears, another your tongue; you have no sense or member that is not teazed by them. Your heart is wounded with compassion to hear the mourning of your real friends; and, perhaps, with spite, to hear the counterfeit condolings of those who only pretend and make a show of being so. Whoever has been delicate that way when well, is much more so in his illness; in such a necessity a tender hand is required, accommodated to his sentiments, to scratch him just in the place where he itches, or not to meddle with him at all. If we stand in need of a wise woman[1] to bring us into the world, we have need of a wiser man to help us out of it. Such a one, and a friend to boot, a man ought to purchase at any rate for such an occasion. I am not yet arrived at such a pitch of vigour as to be able so to fortify myself in my own strength that nothing can assist or offend me; I have not brought myself to that; I endeavour to evade hidingly, and to escape from this passage, not from fear, but from art. I do not intend, in this act of dying, to muster up and make a show of my constancy. For whom should I do it? All the right and title I have to reputation will then cease. I content myself with a death collected within itself, quiet, solitary, all my own, suitable to my retired and private life; quite contrary to the Roman superstition, where a man was looked upon as unhappy who died without speaking, and that had not his nearest relations to close his eyes. I have enough to do to comfort myself, without having to console others; thoughts enough in my head, not to need that circumstances should possess me with new; and matter enough to occupy myself withal without borrowing. This critical minute is out of the part of society; 'tis the act of one single person. Let us live and be merry amongst our friends; let us go die, and be sullen amongst strangers; a man may find those for his money will shift his pillow and rub his feet, and will trouble him no more than he would have them; who will present him with an indifferent countenance, and suffer him to govern himself; and to complain according to his own method.

I wean myself daily, by reason, from this childish and inhuman humour of desiring by our sufferings to move the compassion and mourning of our friends: we set forth our discomforts beyond their just weight, in order to extract tears from them, and the constancy which we commend in every one in supporting his own adverse fortune, we accuse and reproach in our friends, when the case is our own; we are not satisfied that they should be sensible of our condition only, unless they be moreover afflicted. A man should publish and communicate his joy, but, as much as he can, conceal and smother his grief. He that makes himself pitied without reason, is a man not to be pitied when there shall be real cause: to be always complaining is the way never to get sympathy; by making himself out always so miserable, he is never commiserated by any. He that makes himself dead when living, is subject to be held as though alive when he is dying. I have seen some take it ill, when they have been told that they looked well, and that their pulse was temperate; contain their smiles, because they betrayed a recovery, and be angry at their health because it did not call forth pity; and, which is a great deal more, they were not women either. I describe my infirmities at most, such as they are, and avoid all expression of ill prognostic and made-up exclamations. If not mirth, at least a temperate countenance in the standers by, is proper in the presence of a wise sick man; he does not quarrel with health, for seeing himself in a contrary condition; he is pleased to contemplate it sound and entire in others, and at least to enjoy it for company: he does not, for feeling himself melt away, abandon all thoughts of life, nor avoid to discourse of ordinary and indifferent things. I would study sickness whilst I am well; when it has seized me, it will make its impression real enough, without the help of my imagination. We prepare ourselves beforehand for the journies we undertake and resolve upon; we leave the appointment of the hour when to take horse to the company, and in their favour defer it.

Mourning very improper about sick persons.

I find this unexpected advantage in the publication of my manners, that it in some sort serves me for a rule: I have every now and then consideration of not betraying or falsifying the history of my life; this public declaration obliges me to keep my way, and not to give the lie to the picture I have drawn of my qualities, commonly less deformed and contradictory than the malignity and infirmity of the judgments of this age would have them. The uniformity and simplicity of my manners produce a face of easy interpretation; but because the fashion is a little new, and not in use, it gives too great opportunity to slander. Yet so it is, that whoever will go about justly to condemn

[1] *Sage-femme*, a midwife.

me, I do think I so sufficiently assist his malice in my known and avowed imperfections, that he may that way satisfy his ill-nature, without fighting with the wind. If I myself, to prevent this accusation and discovery, confess enough to frustrate his malice, as he conceives, 'tis but reason that he make use of his right of amplification and extension; offence has a right beyond justice; and let him make the roots of those errors I have laid open to him, shoot up into trees and branches: let him make his use not only of those I am really infected with, but also of those that only threaten me, injurious vices both in quality and number; let him cudgel me that way. I should willingly follow the example of the philosopher Bion:—Antigonus sought to annoy him by reproaching him with the meanness of his birth: he presently cut him short with this declaration: "I am," said he, "the son of a slave, a butcher, and stigmatized, and of a whore, my father married in the lowest of his fortune; both of them were whipped for offences they had committed. An orator bought me when a child, finding me a pretty and hopeful boy, and when he died left me all his estate, which I have transported into this city of Athens, and here settled myself to the study of philosophy. Let the historians never trouble themselves with inquiry after me; I tell them what I am."[1] A free and generous confession enervates reproach, and disarms slander. So it is that, one thing with another, I fancy men as often commend as undervalue me beyond reason: as methinks, also, from my infancy, in rank and degree of honour, they have given me a place rather above than below my right. I should find myself more at ease in a country where these degrees were either regulated or not regarded. Amongst men, when the difference about the precedency either of walking or sitting, exceeds three replies, 'tis uncivil. I never stick at giving or taking place out of rule, to avoid the trouble of ceremony, and never any man had a mind to go before me, but I permitted him to do it.

Besides the profit I make of writing of myself, I have also hoped for this other advantage, that if it should fall out that my humour should please or jump with those of some honest man, before I die, he would desire and seek to be acquainted with me, and come to me. I have given him a great deal of space; for all that he could have in many years acquired by a long familiarity, he has seen in three days in this register, and more surely and exactly set down. A pleasant fancy! many things that I would not confess to any one in particular, I deliver to the public; and send my best friends to a bookseller's shop, there to inform themselves concerning my most secret thoughts:

Excutiendus damus præcordia.[2]

"My entrails I lay open to men's view."

[1] Isocrates, *in vitâ.*
[2] Persius, v. 22.

Could I, by good tokens, know where to seek any one proper for my conversation, I would certainly go a great way to find him out; for the sweetness of suitable and agreeable company cannot, in my opinion, be bought too dear. Oh! what a thing is a friend! How true is that old saying, "That the use of a friend is more pleasing and necessary than the elements of water and fire!"[3] *How useful and necessary a friend is.*

To return to my subject, there is, then, no great harm in dying apart, and far from home; we conceive ourselves obliged to retire for natural actions less unseemly and less terrible than this. But moreover, such as are reduced to spin out a long and languishing life, ought not perhaps to wish to trouble a large family with their continual miseries. Therefore the Indians, in a certain province, thought it just to knock a man on the head, when reduced to such a necessity; and in another of their provinces they all forsook him, to shift for himself as well as he could. To whom do they not at last become tedious and insupportable? The common offices do not go so far. You teach your best friends to be cruel perforce; hardening both wife and children, by long custom, not to pity or even feel your sufferings. The groans forced from me by the stone are grown so familiar to my people, that nobody takes any more notice of them. And though we should extract some pleasure from their conversation, which does not always happen, by reason of the disparity of conditions, which easily begets contempt, or envy toward any one whatever, is it not too much to be troublesome all the days of a man's life? The more I should see them constrain themselves out of affection for me, the more should be sorry for their pains. We have liberty to lean, but not to lay our whole weight upon others, so as to prop ourselves by their ruin, like him who caused little children's throats to be cut, to make use of their blood for the cure of a certain disease he had; or that other, who was continually supplied with tender young girls, to keep his old limbs warm in the night, and to mix the sweetness of theirs with his sour and stinking breath. Decrepitude is a solitary quality. I am sociable even to excess; and I think it reasonable that I should now withdraw my troubles from the sight of the world, and keep them to myself; let me shrink and draw up myself in some shell like a tortoise; let me learn to see men without hanging upon them. I should endanger them in so steep a passage; 'tis now time to turn my back to company.

"But in so long a journey you may be surprised with sickness in some wretched place, where nothing can be had to relieve you." I always carry most things necessary about me; and besides, we cannot evade this for- *Montaigne's preparations with a view to death.*

[3] Cicero, *de Amicit.* c. 5.

tune, if she once resolve to attack us. I need nothing extraordinary when I am sick: I will not be beholden to a bolus to do that for me which nature cannot. At the very beginning of my fevers and the sicknesses that cast me down, whilst entire and but little disordered in health, I reconcile myself to Almighty God by the last Christian offices, and find myself by so doing less oppressed and more easy, and have got, methinks, so much the better of my disease. I have still less need of a scrivener, or counsellor, than of a physician. What I have not settled of my affairs when I was in health, let no one expect I should do it when I am sick. What I will do for the service of death, is always ready done; I durst not so much as one day defer it;[1] and if nothing be done, 'tis as much as to say, either that doubt hindered my choice (and sometimes 'tis well chosen not to choose), or that I was positively resolved not to do any thing at all.

I write my book for few men, and for few years. Had it been matter of duration, I should have put it into a better language. According to the continual variation that ours has been subject to hitherto, who can expect that the present form should be in use fifty years hence? It slips every day through our fingers, and since I was born is altered above one half. We say that it is now perfect: every age says the same of the language it speaks: I shall hardly trust to that, so long as it runs away and changes as it does.

'Tis for good and useful writings to nail and rivet it to them, and its reputation will go according to the fortune of our state. For which reason I am not afraid to insert herein several private articles, which will spend their use amongst the men that are now living, and that concern the particular knowledge of some, who will see further into them than the common reader. I will not, after all, as I often hear dead men spoken of, that men should say of me "He judged and lived so and so; he would have done this or that. Could he have spoken when he was dying, he would have said so or so, and have given this thing or the other. I knew him better than any." Now, as much as decency permits, I here discover my inclinations and affections; but I do it more willingly and freely by word of mouth, to any one who desires to be informed. So it is, that in these memoirs, if any observe, he will find that I have either told or designed to tell all. What I cannot express, I point out with my finger;

> Verum animo satis hæc vestigia parva sagaci
> Sunt, per quæ possis cognoscere cætera tute.[2]

> "But by these footsteps a sagacious mind
> May easily all other matters find."

I leave nothing to be desired or guessed at concerning me. If people must be talking of me, I would have it to be justly and truly. I would come again with all my heart from the other world, to give any one the lie that should report me other than I was, though he did it to honour me. I perceive that people represent even living men quite another thing than what they really are; and had I not stoutly defended a friend whom I have lost,[3] they would have torn him into a thousand different pieces.

What kind of death he relished best.

To conclude the account of my frail humours, I confess that, in my travels, I seldom get to my inn but that it comes into my mind to consider whether I could there be sick and die at my ease. I would be lodged in some convenient part of the house, remote from all noise, ill scents, and smoke. I endeavour to flatter death by these frivolous circumstances, or rather to discharge myself from all other incumbrances, that I may have nothing to do but to wait it; it will lie heavy enough upon me, without any other load. I would have my death share in the ease and comfort of my life; 'tis a great part of it, and of the greatest importance, and I hope it will not contradict what went before it. Death hath some forms that are more easy than others, and receives diverse qualities, according to every one's fancy. Amongst the natural ones, those that proceed from weakness and insensibility I think the most favourable; amongst those that are violent, I can worse endure to think of a precipice than the fall of a house, that will crush me flat in a moment; and a wound with a sword than a harquebuss shot; and should rather have chosen to poison myself with Socrates than stab myself with Cato; and, though it be the same thing, yet my imagination makes as great a difference as betwixt death and life, betwixt throwing myself into a burning furnace, and plunging into the channel of a river. So idly does our fear more concern itself in the means than the effect: it is but an instant, 'tis true, but 'tis withal an instant of such weight, that I would willingly give a great many days of my life to pass it over after my own fashion. Since every one's imagination renders it more or less terrible, and since every one has some choice amongst the several forms of dying, let us try a little further to find some one that is wholly clear from all offence. Might not one render it moreover voluptuous, as the Commorientes of Antony and Cleopatra?[4] I leave aside the brave and

[1] What Montaigne here says is fully confirmed by an anecdote related by Bernard Anthone, in his *Commentaire sur la Coutume de Bordeaux*:—"The late Montaigne," he says, "author of the Essays, feeling the approach of death, got out of bed in his shirt, and putting on his dressing-gown, opened the door of his chamber, and calling all his servants, and others to whom he had left legacies, together, paid them the sums he had respectively bequeathed them in his will, foreseeing the difficulty they might have in obtaining the amount from his heirs."

[2] Lucret., i. 403.

[3] *La Boëtie.* See book i. chap. 27, *On Friendship.*

[4] *Commorientes* was the title of a comedy that Plautus imitated from the Συναποθνήσκοντες of Diphilus. (Terence, *Adelph. prol.* verse 7.) Montaigne alludes to the brotherhood of the Synapotanoumenes, a band of those that would die together, formed by Antony and Cleopatra, after the battle of Actium. See Plutarch, *Life of Antony*, c. 15.

exemplary efforts produced by philosophy and religion; but amongst men of little note, such as a Petronius and a Tigillinus at Rome,[1] condemned to dispatch themselves, who have, as it were, rocked death asleep with the delicacy of their preparations; they have made it slip and steal away in the height of their accustomed diversions, amongst wenches and good fellows; not a word of consolation, no mention of making a will, no ambitious affectation of firmness, no talk of their future condition; amidst sports, feasts, wit, and mirth, common and indifferent discourses, music, and amorous verses. Were it not possible for us to imitate this resolution after a more decent manner? Since there are deaths that are fit for fools and fit for the wise, let us find out such as are fit for those who are betwixt both. My imagination suggests to me one that is easy, and, since we must die, to be desired. The Roman tyrants thought they did in a manner give a criminal life, when they gave him a choice of his death. But was not Theophrastus, that so delicate, so modest, and so wise philosopher, compelled by reason, when he durst repeat this verse, thus translated by Cicero:

The manner of dying left to the choice of criminals by the tyrants.

Vitam regit fortuna, non sapientia.[2]

"Fortune, not wisdom, human life doth sway."

Fortune is assisting to the facility of the bargain of my life, having placed it in such a condition that for the future it can be neither advantage or hindrance to those that are concerned in me. 'Tis a condition that I would have accepted at any time of my age; but in this occasion of trussing up my baggage, I am particularly pleased, that in dying I shall neither do them pleasure nor displeasure; she has so ordered it, by a cunning compensation, that they who may pretend to any considerable advantage by my death, will at the same time sustain a material loss. Death sometimes is more grievous to us, in that it is grievous to others, and interests us in their interest as much as in our own, and sometimes more.

In this conveniency of lodging that I desire, I mix nothing of pomp and splendour, I hate it rather; but a certain plain neatness, which is often found in places where there is less of art, and that nature has adorned with some grace that is all her own: *Non ampliter, sed munditer convivium; plus salis, quam sumptus.* "A repast where neatness reigns, not abundance; pleasure, not expense." And, besides, 'tis for those whose affairs compel them to travel in the depth of winter through the Grisons, to be surprised upon the way with great inconveniences. I, who for the most part travel for my pleasure, do not order my affairs so ill. If the way be bad on my right hand, I turn on my left; if I find myself unfit to ride, I stay where I am; and proceeding thus, in truth, I see nothing that is not as pleasant and commodious as my own house. 'Tis true that I always find superfluity superfluous, and observe a kind of trouble even in abundance itself. Have I left any thing behind me unseen, I go back to see it; 'tis still my way; I trace no certain line, either straight or crooked.[3] Do I not find in the place to which I go what was reported to me (as it oft falls out that the judgments of others do not jump with mine, and that I have found those reports for the most part false)? I never complain of losing my labour; I have informed myself that what was told me was not true.

His method of travelling.

I have a constitution of body as free, and a palate as indifferent, as any man living; the diversities of fashions of divers nations no further concern me than by the pleasure of variety: every custom has its reason. Let the plate and dishes be pewter, wood, or earth, my meat be boiled or roasted, let them give me butter or oil, nuts or olives, hot or cold, 'tis all one to me; indeed, so much so, that, growing old, I accuse this generous faculty, and have need that delicacy and choice should correct the indiscretion of my appetite, and sometimes relieve my stomach. When I have been abroad out of France, and the people out of civility have asked me if I would be served after the French manner, I laughed at the question, and always frequented tables the most filled with foreigners. I am ashamed to see my countrymen besotted with this foolish humour of quarrelling with forms contrary to their own; they seem to be out of their element when out of their own village; wherever they go they keep strictly to their own fashions, and abominate those of strangers. Do they meet with a countryman in Hungary? Oh, the happy adventure! They are thenceforward inseparable; they cling together, and their whole discourse is to condemn the barbarous manners they see there; and why not barbarous, since they are not French? And those have made the best use of their travels who have observed most to speak against; for most of them go for no other end but to return; they proceed in their travel with great gravity and circumspection, with a silent and incommunicable prudence, preserving themselves from the contagion of an unknown air. What I am saying of them puts me in mind of something like it: I have observed in some of our young courtiers, they will not mix with any but men of their own sort, and look upon

[1] Tacitus, *Annal.* xvi. 19.

[2] Cicero, *Tusc. Quæs.* v. 9.

[3] "Nous ne voyageons point tristement assis et comme emprisonnés dans une petite cage bien fermée -- On observe le pays; on se détourne à droite, à gauche; on examine tout ce qui flatte; on s'arrête à tous les points de vues. Apercois-je une riviere? Je la cotoie; une bois touffu? Je vais sous son ombre --- Je n'ai pas besoin de choisir les chemins tout faits, les routes commodes; je passe partout ou un homme peut passer." Rousseau, *Emile*, liv. v.

us as men of another world, with disdain or pity. Put them upon any discourse but the intrigues of the Court, and they are utterly at a loss, as very owls and novices to us as we are to them. 'Tis truly said, that a well-bred man is of a compound education. I, for my part, travel very much sated with our own fashions; not to look for Gascons in Sicily, I have left them at home: I rather seek for Greeks and Persians; they are the men I endeavour to be acquainted with, and the men I study; 'tis there that I bestow and employ myself; and, which is more, I fancy that I have met with but few customs that are not as good as our own: I have not, I confess, travelled very far; scarce out of the sight of the vanes of my own house.

As to the rest, most of the accidental company a man falls into upon the road give him more trouble than pleasure; I waive them as much as I civilly can, especially now that age seems in some sort to privilege and sequester me from the common forms. You suffer for others, or others suffer for you; both of which inconveniences are troublesome, but the latter appears to me the most so. 'Tis a rare fortune, but of inestimable pleasure, to have a worthy man, one of a sound judgment, and of manners conformable to your own, who takes a delight to bear you company. I have been at an infinite loss for that upon my travels; but such a companion should be chosen and acquired from your first setting out. There is no pleasure to me without communication; there is not so much as a sprightly thought comes into my mind, that it does not grieve me to have produced alone, and that I have no one to tell it to: *Si cum hac exceptione detur sapientia, ut illam inclusam teneam, nec enunciem, rejiciam.*[1] "If wisdom were conferred with this proviso, that I must keep it to myself, and not communicate it to others, I would have none of it." This other has strained it one note higher: *Si contigerit ea vita sapienti, ut in omnium rerum affluentibus copiis, quamvis omnia, quæ cognitione digna sunt, summo otio secum ipse consideret, et contempletur; tamen, si solitudo tanta sit ut hominem videre non possit, excedat è vita.*[2] "If such a condition of life should happen to a wise man, that in the greatest plenty of all conveniences he might at the most undisturbed leisure consider and contemplate all the things worth the knowing, yet if his solitude must be such that he must not see a man, he had much better die." Architas was of my opinion when he said, "That it would be unpleasant, even in heaven itself, to wander in those great and divine celestial bodies without a companion."[3] But yet it is much better to be alone than in foolish and troublesome company. Aristippus loved to live as a stranger in all places:

Worthy men of great pleasure in travel.

> Me si fata meis paterentur ducere vitam
> Auspiciis,[4]
>
> "But if the fates would so propitious be,
> To let me live at my own liberty,"

I should choose to pass away the greatest part of my life on horseback,

> Visere gestiens,
> Qua parte debacchentur ignes,
> Qua nebulæ, pluviique rores.[5]
>
> "Where endless summers parch the plain,
> Or where the clouds o'erflow with endless rain."

"Have you not more easy diversions at home? What do you there want? Is not your house situated in a sweet and healthful air, sufficiently furnished, and more than sufficiently large? The royal majesty has more than once been entertained there with all his train. Has not your family left more below it in good government than it has above it in eminence? Is there any novel, extraordinary, and indigestible thought that afflicts you;

> Quæ te nunc coquat et vexet sub pectore fixa?[6]
>
> "That now lies broiling in thy troubled breast,
> And ne'er will suffer thee to be at rest?"

"Where do you think to live without disturbance? *Nunquam simpliciter fortuna indulget.*[7] 'The favours of fortune are never without a mixture of evil.' You see then it is only you that trouble yourself, and everywhere complain; for there is no satisfaction here below, but either for brutish or divine souls. He who, with so just reasons, has no contentment, where will he think to find it? How many millions of men terminate their wishes in such a condition as yours? Do but reform yourself, for that is wholly in your own power; whereas you have no other right but patience towards fortune: *Nulla placida quies est, nisi quam ratio composuit.* 'True tranquillity is that alone which reason prepares for us.'"

I see the correctness of this advice, and I see it perfectly well; but my adviser might sooner have done, and have spoken more pertinently, in bidding me in two words; "Be wise." This resolution is after wisdom: 'tis her work and product; thus the physician goes preaching to a poor languishing patient: "Be cheerful;" but he would advise him a little more discreetly in bidding him: "Be well." For my part, I am but a man of the common sort. 'Tis a wholesome precept, certain, and easy to be understood: "Be content with what you have," that is to say, with reason; and yet to follow this advice is no more in the power of the wise men of the world than in me. 'Tis a common saying, but of a terrible extent; what does it

1 Seneca, *Epist.* 6.
2 Cicero, *de Offic.* . 43.
3 Id. *de Amicitia*, c. 23.
4 *Æneid*, iv. 340.
5 Horace, *Od.* iii. 3. 54.
6 Ennius, *apud* Cicero, *de Senect.* c. 1.
7 Quint. Curtius, iv. 14.

not comprehend? All things come under discretion and qualification. I know very well that, to take it to the letter, this pleasure in travelling is a testimony of uneasiness and irresolution; but these two are our governing and predominating qualities. Yes, I confess it, I see nothing, not so much as in a dream and in a wish, whereon I could set up my rest: variety only, and the possession of diversity, can satisfy me, if anything can. In travelling, it pleases me that I may stay where I like, without inconvenience, and that I have wherewithal commodiously to divert myself. I love a private life, because 'tis my own choice that I love it, not by any particular distaste or unfitness for public life, which, perhaps, is as much according to my complexion; I serve my prince more cheerfully, because it is by the free election of my own judgment and reason, without any particular obligation; and that I am not compelled so to do, for being rejected or disliked by the other party; and so of all the rest. I hate the morsels that necessity carves me; I should think that the greatest convenience upon which I only had to depend, had me by the throat:

Alter remus aquas, alter mihi radat arenas.[1]

"Let me in water plunge one oar,
And with the other rake the shore."

One cord will never hold me fast enough. You will say there is vanity in this way of living. But where is there not? Both these fine precepts are vanity, and all wisdom is vanity: *Dominus novit cogitationes sapientium, quoniam vanæ sunt:*[2] "The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain." These exquisite subtleties are only fit for sermons; they are discourses that will send us all cut and dry into the other world. Life is a material and corporal motion; an action imperfect and irregular of its own proper essence: I make it my business to serve it according to itself.

Quisque suos patimur manes.[3]

"We are all punished for our proper crimes."

Sic est faciendum, ut contra naturam universam nihil contendamus; ea tamen conservata, propriam sequamur.[4] "We must so order it as by no means to contend against universal nature; but yet, that rule being observed, to follow our own." To what end are these elevated points of philosophy, upon which no human being can rely? And those rules that exceed our use and our strength?

I often observe that we have rules of life set before us, which neither the proposer nor those that hear him have any manner of hope, nor which is more, any inclination, to follow. Of the same sheet of paper whereon the judge has but just written a sentence against an adulterer, he steals a piece whereon to write a love-letter to his companion's wife. She whom you have but just now entertained in your embraces will presently, even in your own hearing, more loudly inveigh against the same fault in her companion than would Porcia.[5] And such there are who will condemn men to death for crimes that they do not themselves repute so much as faults. I have in my youth seen a gentleman with one hand present the people with verses that excelled both in wit and debauchery, and with the other, at the same time, the most straight-laced and quarrelsome theological reformation that the world has been treated with these many years.[6] Men proceed in this way: they let the laws and precepts follow their road, but themselves keep another course, not only from debauchery of manners, but oft times by judgment and contrary opinion. Do but hear a philosophical lecture; the invention, eloquence, and pertinency immediately strike upon your mind, and move you; there is nothing that either flatters or repreheads your conscience; 'tis not that they address. Is not this true? This made Aristo say, "that neither a bath nor a lecture were of use, unless they scoured and made men clean."[7] One may stop at the outward skin, but 'tis after the marrow is picked out; as after having quaffed off the wine out of a fine cup, we consider the graving and workmanship. In all the courts of ancient philosophy this is to be found, that the same lecturer there publishes the rules of temperance, and at the same time discourses of love and wantonness; and Xenophon, even in the bosom of Clinias, wrote against the Aristippic virtue.[8] 'Tis not that there is any miraculous conversion in it that makes them thus wavering, but 'tis as Solon represents himself, sometimes in his own person, and sometimes in that of a legislator; one while he speaks for the crowd, and another for himself; taking the free and natural rules for his own share, assuring himself of a firm and established health and vigour:

Philosophical precepts as much despised by the authors of them as by the person to whom they are addressed.

Curentur dubii medicis majoribus ægri.[9]

"A desperate case needs ablest hands."

Antisthenes[10] allowed a sage to love, and to do whatever he saw opportune, without regard to the laws; foras-

A sage permitted to love.

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1 Prop. iii. 3. 23.
2 Corinthians, i. 3. 20.
3 *Æneid*, vi. 743.
4 Cicero, *de Offic.* i. 31.
5 Daughter of Cato of Utica, and wife of Brutus.
6 Montaigne probably refers to Theodore de Beza, who at one and the same time, in 1550, published his amorous poems, *Juvenilia*, and his intolerant apology for the trial and execution of Servetus.
7 Plutarch, *How to hear, &c.*
8 Laertius, *Life of Xenophon.*
9 Juvenal, xiii. 121.
10 Laertius, *in vitâ.*

much as he was better advised than they, and had a greater knowledge of virtue. His disciple, Diogenes, said:[1] that men to perturbations were to oppose reason, to fortune courage, and to the laws, nature. For tender stomachs, constrained and artificial recipes must be prescribed; good and strong stomachs serve themselves simply with the prescriptions of their own natural appetite: after this manner do our physicians proceed, who eat melons, and drink iced wines, whilst they confine their patients to syrops and sops. "I know not," said the courtezan Laïs, "what they talk of books, wisdom, and philosophy; but these men knock as often at my door as any others."[2] At the same rate that our licence always carries us beyond what is lawful and allowed, men have, often beyond universal reason, narrowed the precepts and rules of life:

Nemo satis credit tantum delinquere, quantum Permittas.[3]

"None sin by rule; none heed the charge precise;
'Thus, and no farther, may ye step in vice,'
But leap the bounds prescrib'd, and with free grace
Secu: far and wide the interdicted space."

It were to be wished that there were more proportion betwixt the command and the obedience; and the mark seems to be unjust to which one cannot attain. There is no man so good, who, were he to submit all his thoughts and actions to the laws, would not deserve hanging ten times in his life; nay, and such a one, too, as it were great pity to make away with, and very unjust to punish:

Ole, quid ad te,
De cute quid faciat ille, vel illa sua?[4]

"Olus, what is't to thee
What with themselves does he or she?"

and such a one there may be as hath no way offended the laws, who nevertheless would not deserve the character of a virtuous man, and that philosophy would justly condemn to be whipped; so unequal and perplexed is this relation! We are so far from being good men, according to the laws of God, that we cannot be so according to our own: human wisdom never yet arrived at the duty that it had itself prescribed; and could it arrive there, it would still prescribe itself others beyond it, to which it would ever aspire and pretend: so great an enemy to consistency is our human condition. 'Tis man enjoins himself to be necessarily in fault; he is not very discreet to cut out his duty by the measure of any other being than his own; to whom does he prescribe that which he does not expect any one should perform? Is he unjust in not doing what it is impossible for him to do? The laws which condemn us not to be able, condemn us for not being able.

At the worst, this disform liberty of presenting themselves two several ways, the doing after one manner, and the saying after another, may be allowed to those who only speak of things; but it cannot be allowed to them who speak themselves, as I do; I must march my pen as I do my feet. The common life ought to have communication with other lives: the virtue of Cato was vigorous beyond the reason of the age he lived in; and for a man whose province it was to take part in the governing others, dedicated to the public service, it might be called a justice, if not unjust, at least vain and out of season.[5] Even my own manners, which have not above an inch of singularity in them above those that are current amongst us, render me nevertheless a little odd and unsociable to the age I live in. I know not whether it be that I am disgusted without reason with the world I frequent; but I know very well that it would be without reason, should I complain of its being disgusted with me, seeing I am so with it. The virtue that is assigned to the affairs of the world is a virtue of many wavings, corners, and elbows, to join and adapt itself to human frailty; mixed and artificial, not straight, clean, constant, nor purely innocent. Our annals to this very day reproach one of our kings for suffering himself implicitly to be carried away by the conscientious persuasions of his confessor; affairs of state hold bolder precepts;

Exeat aula
Qui vult esse pius.[6]

"Let him who will be good from court retire."

I have formerly tried to employ, in the management of public affairs, opinions and rules of living, as rude, new, unpolished or unpolluted, as were either born with me, or brought away from my education, and wherewith I serve my turn, if not so commodiously, at least as securely, in my own particular concerns: but I have found this scholastic and novice virtue foolish and dangerous in those matters. He that goes into a crowd, must now go one way, and then another, keep his elbows close, retire, or advance, and quit the direct way, according to what he encounters; and must live, not so much according to his own method as that of others; not according to what he purposes to himself, but according to what is proposed to him, according to the time, according to men, according to occasions. Plato says that whoever escapes the world's handling with clean breeches, escapes by miracle; and says, too, that when he appoints his philosopher the head of a government, he does not mean a corrupt one like that of Athens,[7] and much less such a one as this of ours, wherein wisdom itself would

[1] Laertius, *in vita*.
[2] Ant. Guevara, *Golden Epistles*, book i.
[3] Juvenal, xiv. 233.
[4] Martial, vii. 9. 1.
[5] Cicero, too, says of him (*Epist. ad Atticum*, ii. 1.);—"Dicit enim tanquam in Platonis πολιτεια, non tanquam in Romuli fæce, sententiam."
[6] Lucan, viii. 493.
[7] *Republic*, vi.

be to seek: a good herb, transplanted into a soul very contrary to its own nature, much sooner conforms itself to the soil, than it reforms the soil to it. I feel, if I were wholly to apply myself to such employments, it would require a great deal of change and new modelling in me, before I could be any way fit for it. And though I could so far prevail upon myself (and why might I not with time and diligence), I would not do it. What little I have had to do with public employments has been so much disgust to me; I feel betimes some temptations toward ambition rising in my soul, but I obstinately oppose them:

At tu, Catulle, obstinatus obdura.[1]

"But thou, Catullus, hold out to the last."

I am seldom called to it, and as seldom offer myself uncalled: liberty and laziness, the qualities most predominant in me, are qualities diametrically contrary to that trade. We cannot distinguish the faculties of men; they have divisions and limits hard and delicate to choose: to conclude, from the discreet conduct of a private life, a capacity for public affairs, is to conclude ill: a man may govern himself well, that cannot govern others so, and compose Essays that cannot work effects: such a one may be who can order a siege well, that would ill marshal a battle, and that can speak well in private, who would ill harangue a people or a prince: nay, 'tis peradventure rather a testimony in him who can do the one, that he cannot do the other, than otherwise. I find that elevated souls are not much more proper for low things, than mean souls are to high ones. Could it be imagined that Socrates[2] should have given occasion of laughter, at the expense of his own reputation, to the Athenians, for having never been able to sum up the votes of his tribe, to deliver it to the council? Doubtless, the veneration I have for the perfections of this great man, deserves that fortune should furnish for the excuse of my principal imperfections, so magnificent an example. Our sufficiency is cut out into small parcels: mine has no latitude, and is also very contemptible in number. Saturninus,[3] to those who had conferred upon him the command in chief: "Comrades," said he, "you have lost a good captain, to make him an ill general."

Whoever boasts, in so sick a time as this, to employ a true and sincere virtue in the world's service, either knows it not, opinions growing corrupt with manners (and in truth to hear them describe it, to glorify themselves in their deportments, and to lay down their rules; instead of painting virtue, they paint pure vice and injustice, and so represent them false in the education of princes): or, if he does know it, boasts unjustly, and, let him say what he will, does a thousand things of which his own conscience must necessarily accuse him. I should willingly take Seneca's word of the experience he made upon the like occasion, provided he would deal clearly and sincerely with me. The most honourable mark of goodness, in such a necessity, is freely to confess both his own fault and those of others; with the power of his virtue to stop the inclination towards evil; unwillingly to follow this propensity, to hope better, and to desire better. I perceive that in these unhappy divisions wherein we are miserably involved in France, every one does his best to defend, and by argument to make good his cause; but even the very best with dissimulation and disguise: he that would write roundly of the true state of the quarrel, would write boldly and viciously. What is the most party, other than a member of a decayed and worm-eaten body? But of such a body, the member that is least affected is said to be found, and with good reason, forasmuch as our qualities have no title but in comparison: civil innocence is measured according to time and place. I should love to read in Xenophon this commendation of Agesilaus:[4] being entreated by a neighbouring prince, with whom he had formerly had war, to permit him to pass through his country; he granted his request, giving him free passage through Peloponnesus, and not only did not imprison or poison him, being at his mercy, but courteously received him, according to the obligation of his promise, without doing him the least injury or offence. To such humours as theirs, this was an act of no great lustre; elsewhere, and in another age, the frankness and magnanimity of such an action will be in high esteem. Our childish Capettes would have laughed at it, so little does the Spartan innocence resemble that of France.[5] We are not without virtuous men:

Virtue which is genuine and sincere cannot be employed in the management of a corrupt state.

The students of Montaigu College, in Paris.

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1 Catullus, *Carm.* viii. 19.

2 In the *Gorgias* of Plato.

3 One of the thirty tyrants, who rose in the time of the Emperor Gallienus. See Trebellius Pollio. *Trigint. Tyranni*, c. 23.

4 *Greek History*, iv. 1; where, however, Xenophon speaks not of a passage through Peloponnesus, but of an interview in the camp of Agesilaus.

5 *Capette* properly means a scholar of Montaigu College at Paris. In 1480 John Sandoncht, of Malines, a doctor of the Sorbonne, settled a fund for maintaining in this college 24 scholars, in honour of the 12 apostles, and the 72 disciples of Jesus Christ. These scholars were called *Capettes* from short cloaks they wore, called *capes*. And as *they were treated very harshly*, both with regard to their *table* and to their discipline, they were commonly such low geniuses that the word *capette* was made use of to signify a scholar of the most contemptible character, a fool, an impertinent. "Montaigne, by the use of the term," observes M. Coste, "intends the bulk of his cotemporaries, who would not have failed to ridicule the frank and generous spirit of Agesilaus. In the same predicament may be placed those Flemish historians who, having accused Charles V. of imprudence in relying on the good faith of Francis I. when his imperial majesty passed through France in 1540, have thereby signified their opinion that Francis was very weak in slipping so fair an opportunity of making himself master of his most formidable enemy."

but 'tis according to our standard. Whoever has his manners established in regularity above the standard of the age he lives in, let him either wrest or blunt his rules; or, which I would rather advise him to, let him retire, and not meddle with us at all: What will he get by it?

> Egregium sanctumque virum si cerno, bimembri
> Hoc monstrum puero, et miranti jam sub aratro
> Piscibus inventis, et fœtæ comparo mulæ.[1]
>
> "If such a man I see, of pious worth,
> I straight compare him to a monstrous birth:
> To pregnant mules, or fish unheard-of, found
> Ploughed by the wond'ring share from out the ground."

A man may regret the better times, but cannot fly from the present: we may wish for other magistrates, but we must, notwithstanding, obey those we have; and peradventure 'tis more laudable to obey the bad than the good. So long as the image of the ancient and received laws of this monarchy shall shine in any corner of the kingdom, there will I be: If they unfortunately happen to thwart and contradict one another, so as to produce two factions of doubtful and difficult choice, I will willingly choose to withdraw from the tempest; in the mean time nature, or the hazards of war, may lend me a helping hand. Betwixt Cæsar and Pompey, I should soon and frankly have declared myself; but amongst the three robbers that came after,[2] a man must needs have either hid himself, or have gone along with the current of the time; which I think a man may lawfully do, when reason no longer rules.

> Quo diversus abis?[3]
>
> "Whither dost thou wandering go?"

The reason why Montaigne sometimes deviated from his subject as he does here.

This medley is a little from my subject: I go out of my way; but 'tis rather by licence than oversight: my fancies follow one another, but sometimes at a great distance; and look towards one another, but 'tis with an oblique glance. I have read a dialogue of Plato,[4] of such a motley and fantastic composition: the beginning about love, and all the rest about rhetoric: they stick not at these variations, and have a marvellous grace in letting themselves be carried away at the pleasure of the winds; or at least to seem as if they were.

The titles of my chapters do not always comprehend the whole matter; they often denote it by some mark only, as these other titles, Andria, Eunuchus;[5] or these, Sylla, Cicero, Torquatus. I love a poetic march, by leaps and skips; 'tis an art, as Plato says, light, nimble, and a little demoniacal.[6] There are pieces in Plutarch where he forgets his theme; where the proposition of his argument is only found incidentally, and stuffed throughout with foreign matter: do but observe his meanders in the *Demon of Socrates*. Good God! how beautiful are his variations and digressions; and then, most of all, when they seem to be fortuitous, and introduced for want of heed. 'Tis the indiligent reader that loses my subject, not I; there will always be found some words or other in a corner that are to the purpose, though it lie very close. I ramble about, indiscreetly and tumultuously: my style and my wit wander at the same rate. A little folly is desirable in him that will not be guilty of stupidity, say the precepts, and much more the examples, of our masters. A thousand poets flag and languish after a prosaic manner; but the best old prose, and I strew it here up and down indifferently for verse, shines throughout with the vigour and boldness of poetry, and represents some air of its fury. Certainly prose must yield the pre-eminence in speaking. The poet, says Plato,[7] when set upon the muses' tripod, pours out with fury whatever comes into his mouth, like the pipe of a fountain, without considering and pausing upon what he says; and things come from him of various colours, of contrary substance, and with an irregular torrent: himself is all over poetical: and all the old theology, as the learned inform us, is poetry, and the first philosophy is the original language of the gods. I would have the matter distinguish itself; it sufficiently shows where it changes, where it concludes, where it begins, and where it resumes, without interlacing it with words of connection, introduced for the relief of weak or negligent ears, and without commenting myself. Who is he that had not rather not be read at all, than after a drowsy or cursory manner? *Nihil est tam utile quod in transitu prosit.*[8] "Nothing can be so profitable as to be so when negligently read." If to take a book in-hand were to read it, if to look upon it were to consider it, and to run it slightly over were to make it a man's own, I were then to blame to make myself of so ignorant as I say I am. Seeing I cannot fix the attention of my reader by the weight of what I write, *manco male*, if I should chance to do it by my intricacies. "Nay, but he will afterwards repent that he ever occupied himself about it." True, but he will still have occupied himself. And besides, there are some humours in which intelligence produces disdain, who will think better of me for not understanding what I say: they will conclude the depth of my meaning by the obscurity; which, to speak sincerely, I mortally hate, and would avoid it if I could. Aristotle boasts somewhere[9] that he affected it: vicious affectation! The short chapters that I made my method in the beginning of my book, having since seemed to me to

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1 Juvenal, xiii. 64.
2 *Octavius, Marc-Antony*, and *Lepidus*.
3 *Æneid*, v. 166.
4 The *Phædra*.
5 The names of two of Terence's comedies.
6 Or rather divine, δαιμονικη. Montaigne quotes the *Ion*.
7 *Laws*, vi.
8 Seneca, *Epist.* 2.
9 See Aulus Gellius, xx. 5; Plutarch, *Life of Alexander*.

break and dissolve the attention before it was raised, as making it disdain to settle itself to so little, I upon that account have made the rest longer, such as require proposition and assigned leisure. In such an employment, to whom you will not give an hour you will give nothing; and you do nothing for him for whom you only do whilst you are doing something else. To which may be added, that I have perhaps some particular obligation to speak only by halves, to speak confusedly and discordantly. I am therefore angry at this kind of perplexing reason, and these extravagant projects that trouble a man's life, and those opinions so fine and subtle; though they be true, I think them too dear bought. On the contrary, I make it my business to bring vanity itself in repute, and folly too, if it bring me any pleasure; and let myself follow my own natural inclinations, without carrying too strict a hand upon them.

I have seen elsewhere palaces in ruins, and statues, both of gods and men, defaced, and yet there are men still. All this is true; and yet for all that I cannot so often review the ruins of that so great, and since so holy, city,[1] that I do not admire and reverence it. The care of the dead is recommended to us: besides, I have been bred up from my infancy with these people; I had knowledge of the affairs of Rome long before I had any of those of my own house. I knew the Capitol and its plan before I knew the Louvre; and the Tiber before I knew the Seine. The qualities and fortunes of Lucullus, Metellus, and Scipio, have ever run more in my head than those of any of my own country; they are all dead, and so is my father as absolutely dead as they, and is removed as far from me and life in eighteen years as they in sixteen hundred; whose memory, nevertheless, friendship and society, I do not cease to hug and embrace with a very perfect and lively union. Nay, of my own inclination, I render myself more attentive to the dead; they no longer help themselves, and therefore, methinks, they more require my assistance: 'tis there that gratitude appears in its full lustre; benefits are not so generously placed where there is retrogradation and reflection. Arcesilaus[2] going to visit Ctesibius, who was sick, and finding him in a very poor condition, privately conveyed some money under his pillow; and, by concealing it from him, acquitted him moreover from the acknowledgment due to such a benefit. Such as have merited from me friendship and gratitude, have never lost them by being no more; I have better and more carefully paid them when gone, and ignorant of what I did: I speak more kindly and affectionately of my friends when they can no longer know it. I have had a hundred quarrels in defending Pompey, and upon the account of Brutus; this acquaintance does yet continue betwixt us: I have no other hold even of present things but by my fancy. Finding myself of no use to this age, I throw myself back upon that other; and am so childishly enamoured of the free, just, and flourishing state of ancient Rome (for I neither love it in its birth nor old age), that I interest myself in it to a degree of passion; and therefore cannot so often review the situation of their streets and houses, and ruins as profound as the antipodes, but that it always puts me into the dumps. Is it by nature, or through error of fancy, that the sight of the places which we know have been frequented and inhabited by persons whose memories are recommended in story, does in some sort work more upon us than to hear a recital of their acts, or to read their writings? *Tanta vis admonitionis inest in locis!---Et id quidem in hac urbe infinitum; quacumque enim ingredimur, in aliquam historiam vestigium ponimus.*[3] "So great a power of admonition is in places; and truly in this city so infinite, that which way soever we go we tread upon some history." It pleases me to consider their face, port, and vestments: I ruminate those great names betwixt my teeth, and make them ring in my own ears: *ego illos veneror, et tantis nominibus semper assurgo.*[4] "I reverence them, and rise up in honour of so great names." Of things that are in some part great and admirable, I admire even the common parts: I could wish to see her people talk, walk, and sup together. It were ingratitude to contemn the relics and images of so many worthy and valiant men as I have, as it were, seen live and die, and who, by their example, give us so many good instructions, knew we how to follow them.

His particular liking to the city of Rome.

Gratitude towards the dead.

And moreover, this very Rome that we now see, deserves to be beloved: so long, and by so many titles, confederate to our crown; the only common and universal city. The sovereign magistrate that commands there is equally acknowledged and obeyed elsewhere: 'tis the metropolitan city of all the Christian nations; the Spanish and French are there at home; to be a prince of this state there needs no more but to be a prince of Christendom, no matter of what part. There is no place upon earth that heaven has embraced with such an influence and constancy of favour; her very ruins are glorious and great.

Rome the common and universal city.

Laudandis pretiosior ruinis:[5]

"More glorious by her ruins made:"

she yet in her very tomb retains the marks and image of empire: *ut palam sit, uno in loco gaudentis opus esse naturæ.*[6] "That it may be

1 *Rome.*
2 Laertius, *in vitâ.*
3 Cicero, *de Finib.* 5. 1 and 2.
4 Seneca, *Epist.* 64.
5 Sidonius Apoll., *Carm.* xxiii. Narbo, v. 62.
6 Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* iii. 5.

manifest that nature is in one place enamoured of her own work." Some would blame and be angry at themselves to perceive themselves tickled with so vain a pleasure: our humours are never too vain, that are pleasant; let them be what they would, that did constantly content an honest man of common understanding, I could not have the heart to pity him.

How Montaigne is obliged to fortune.

I am very much obliged to fortune in that to this very hour, she has offered me no outrage beyond what I was able to bear. May it not be her custom to let those live in quiet by whom she is not importuned?

Quanto quisque sibi plura negaverit,
A diis plura feret: nil cupientium
Nudus castra peto - - -
Multa petentibus
Desunt multa.[1]

"The more a man himself denies,
The more indulgent heaven supplies.
I, to no wild desires a slave,
Join with the few that nothing crave;
He that, repining, covets more,
Is ever wanting, ever poor."

If she continues so, she will dismiss me very well satisfied:

Nihil supra.
Deos lacesso.[2]

"Nor for aught more
The Gods implore."

But beware the shock! There are a thousand that perish in the port. I easily comfort myself for what shall happen here when I am gone; present things trouble me enough:

Fortunæ cætera mando:[3]

"To fortune I leave all the rest:"

besides, I have not that strong obligation that they say ties men to the future, by the children that succeed to their name and honour; and perhaps ought less to covet them if they are to be so much desired. I am but too much tied to the world, and to this life of myself; I am content to be in fortune's power by circumstances properly necessary to my being, without otherwise enlarging her jurisdiction over me, and have never thought that to be without children was a defect that ought to render life less complete, or less contented. Sterility has its conveniences too. Children are of the number of things that are not so much to be desired, especially now that it would be so hard to make them good: *Bona jam nec nasci licet, ita corrupta sunt semina.*[4] "The seed of all things is so corrupt that nothing worthy can be born thence," and yet they are justly to be lamented by such as lose them when they have them.

Children not much to be coveted, and why.

He who left me my house in charge, foretold that I was like to ruin it, considering my humour so little inclined to look after household affairs. But he was mistaken. For I am in the same condition now as when I first entered into it, if not better; and yet without office, or any place of profit.

As to the rest, if fortune has never done me any violent or extraordinary injury, neither has she done me any particular favour. Whatever we derive from her bounty, was there above an hundred years before my time. I have, as to my own particular, no essential and solid good, that I stand indebted for to her liberality. She has indeed done me some airy honours, and titular favours without substance, and those in truth she has not granted, but offered me, who, God knows, am all material, and who take nothing but what is real and massy too for current pay; and who, if I durst confess so much, would hardly think avarice less excusable than ambition, or pain less to be avoided than shame, or health less to be coveted than learning, or riches than nobility.

Amongst those empty favours of hers, there is none that so much pleases the vain humour natural to me as a genuine bull of Roman citizenship, that was granted me when I was last there,[5] pompous in seals and gilded letters; and granted with all courtesy and liberality. And because these things are couched in a mixed style, more or less favourable, and that before I myself saw it, I should have been glad to have seen a copy of one, I will, to satisfy such as are sick of the same curiosity, transcribe it here in form:

Quod Horatius Maximus, Martius Cecius, Alexander Mutus, almæ urbis conservatores, de illustrissimo viro Michaele Montano, equite Sancti Michaelis, et a cubiculo regis christianissimi, romana civitate donando, ad Senatum retulerunt; S. P. Q. R. de ea re ita fieri censuit.

Cum, veteri more et instituto, cupide illi semper studioseque suscepti sint, qui virtute ac nobilitate præstantes, magno reipublicæ nostræ usui atque ornamento fuissent, vel esse aliquando possent: nos, majorum nostrorum exemplo atque auctoritate permoti, præclaram hanc consuetudinem nobis imitandam ac servandam fore censemus. Quamobrem cum illustrissimus Michael Montanus, eques sancti Michaelis, et a cubiculo regis christianissimi, romani nominis studiosissimus, et familiæ laude atque splendore, et propriis virtutum meritis dignissimus sit, qui summo senatus populique romani judicio ac studio in Romanam civitatem adsciscatur; placere senatui P. Q. R. illustrissimum Michaelem Montanum, rebus omnibus ornatissimum, atque huic inclyto populo carissimum, ipsum posterosque in romanam civitatem adscribi, ornarique omnibus et præmiis et honoribus, quibus

[1] Horace, *Od.* iii. 16, 21, and 42.
[2] Id. *ib* ii. 18, 11.
[3] Ovid, *Metam.* ii. 140.
[4] Tertullian, *de Pudicitia.*
[5] *At Rome.*

illi fruuntur, qui cives patriciique romani nati, aut jure optimo facti sunt. In quo censere senatum P. Q. R., se non tam illi jus civitatis largiri, quam debitum tribuere, neque magis beneficium dare, quam ab ipso accipere, qui, hoc civitatis munere accipiendo, singulari civitatem ipsam ornamento atque honore effecerit. Quam quidem S. C. auctoritatem iidem conservatores per senatus P. Q. R. scribas in acta referri, atque in Capitolii curia servari, privilegiumque hujusmodi fieri, solitoque urbis sigillo communiri curarunt. Anno ab urbe condita IICCXXCCCXXXI. Post Christum natum M. D.LXXXI., III idus martii.

HORATIUS FUSCUS,
sacri S. P. Q. R. *scriba*,
VINCENT. MARTHOLUS,
sacri S. P. Q. R. *scriba*.[1]

Being before burgess of no city at all, I am glad to be made one of the most noble that ever was, or ever will be. If other men would consider themselves attentively, as I do, they would, as I do, discover themselves to be full of inanity and foppery; rid myself of which I cannot, without making away with myself. We are all leavened with it, as well one as another; but they who are not aware *on't* have the better bargain, and yet I know not whether they have or no.

Why man does not love to know and observe himself.

This opinion and common custom to observe others more than ourselves, has very much relieved us that way. 'Tis a very displeasing object; we can there see nothing but misery and vanity. Nature, that we may not be dejected with the sight of our own deformities, has wisely thrust the action of seeing outward. We go forward with the current, but to turn back towards ourselves is a painful motion. Thus is the sea moved and troubled when the waves are driven back against one another. Observe, says every one, the motion of the heavens, the revolution of public affairs; observe the quarrel of such a person, take notice of such a one's pulse, of such another's last will and testament; in sum, be always looking high or low, on one side, before or behind you. It was a paradoxical command, anciently given us by the god at Delphos: "Look into yourself, discover yourself, keep close to yourself; call back your mind and will, that elsewhere consume themselves, into yourself; you run out, you spill yourself, carry a more steady hand. Men betray you, men spill you, men steal you from yourself. Dost not thou see that this world keeps all its sight confined within, and its eyes open to contemplate itself? 'Tis always vanity for thee, both within and without; but 'tis less vanity when less extended. "Excepting thee, O man," said that god, "every thing studies itself first, and has bounds to its labours and desires, according to its need." There is nothing so empty and necessitous as thou, who embracest the universe. *Thou* art the explorator without knowledge, the magistrate without jurisdiction; and, in short, the fool in the play."

CHAPTER X.

OF MANAGING ONE'S WILL.

FEW things, in comparison of what commonly affect other men, move, or, to say better, possess me; for 'tis but reason they should concern a man, provided they do not take possession of him. I am very solicitous, both by study and reasoning, to enlarge this privilege of insensibility, which is naturally raised to a pretty high degree in me; so that consequently I espouse or am very much moved with very few things. I have my sight clear enough, but I fix it upon very few objects; my sense delicate and tender enough, but an apprehension and application stubborn and negligent. I am very unwilling to engage myself; as much as in me lies, I employ myself wholly upon myself; and in this very subject should rather choose to curb and restrain my affection from plunging itself over head and ears into it, it being a subject that I possess at the mercy of others, and over which fortune has more right than I; so that even so much as to health, which I so much value, it were necessary for me not so passionately to

[1] "Upon the report made to the Senate by Orazio Massimi, Marzio Cecio, Alessandro Muti, conservators of the city of Rome, touching the admission to the citizenship of Rome of the most illustrious Michael de Montaigne, knight of the order of St. Michael, and gentleman of the bed-chamber of his Most Christian Majesty, the senate and people of Rome have thus decreed:

"Considering that, by ancient usage, those have ever been eagerly adopted amongst us who, excelling in virtue and nobility, have served and done honour to the republic, or might probably be expected to do so; we, full of respect for the example and authority of our ancestors, deem that it becomes us to imitate and keep up this laudable custom. Wherefore, the most illustrious Michael de Montaigne, knight of St. Michael, and gentleman of the chamber of his Most Christian Majesty, being desirous of receiving the title of Citizen of Rome, and being, from the rank and lustre of his family and his own personal qualities, fully worthy, in the supreme judgment of the Senate and people of Rome, of being enrolled among the citizens of Rome; therefore the senate and people of Rome are pleased to decree that the most illustrious Michael de Montaigne, as a man rich in all great qualities, and very dear to the sacred city, be, for himself and his posterity, inscribed a Roman citizen, entitled to all the honours and advantages which belong to those who are either born citizens and patricians of Rome, or become such by reason of their peculiar merits. And herein the senate and people of Rome deem that they are paying a just debt, rather than granting a mere favour; that they are receiving, rather than conferring a benefit on one, who, in accepting the citizenship of Rome, singularly honours and adorns the city. The conservators have caused this decree to be transcribed by the secretaries of the senate and people of Rome, that it may be deposited among the archives of the Capitol; and have caused this act to be sealed with the city seal. Given in the year of Rome 2331; and of Christ 1581, this 13th of March,

"ORAZIO FOSCO, secretary to the senate and people of Rome,

"VINCENTIO MARTOLI, secretary to the senate and people of Rome."

covet and desire it as to find diseases insupportable. A man ought to moderate himself betwixt the hatred of pain and the love of pleasure, and Plato[1] sets down a middle path of life betwixt both. But against such affections as wholly carry me away from myself and fix me elsewhere, against these, I say, I oppose myself with my utmost force and power. 'Tis my opinion that a man should lend himself to others, and only give himself to himself. Were my will easy to lend itself out, and to be swayed, I should not stick there; I am too tender, both by nature and custom:

Fugax rerum, securaque in otia natus.[2]

"Born and bred up in negligence and ease,
I fly from business as from disease."

The hot and obstinate disputes wherein my adversary would at last have the better, the issue that would render my heat and obstinacy disgraceful, would perhaps vex me to the last degree. Should I set myself to it at the rate that others do, my soul would never have the force to bear the emotions and alarms that attend those who pursue and grasp at so much; it would immediately be disordered by this inward agitation. If sometimes I have been put upon the management of other men's affairs, I have promised to take them in hand, but not into my lungs and liver; to take them upon me, not to incorporate them; to take pains for, but not to be impassioned about, them. I have a care of them, but I will not brood upon them. I have enough to do to order and govern the domestic tumults that I have in my own veins and bowels, without introducing a crowd of other men's affairs, and am sufficiently concerned about my own proper and natural business, without meddling with the concerns of others. Those who know how much they owe to themselves, and how many offices they are bound to of their own, find that nature has given them this commission, full enough to keep them from being ever idle: "Thou hast business enough at home, look to that."

Men let themselves out to hire; their faculties are not for themselves, but to be employed for those to whom they have enslaved themselves; their hirers are in their houses, not themselves. This common humour pleases not me. We must be thrifty of the liberty of our souls, and never let them out but upon just occasions, which are very few, if we judge aright. Do but observe such as have accustomed themselves to be at every one's call, they do it indifferently upon all, as well upon little as upon great occasions, in that which nothing concerns them, as much as in what imports them most; they intrude themselves indifferently wherever there is business and obligation, and are without life, when not in the bustle of affairs: *In negotiis sunt negotii causa*;[3] they only seek business for business sake. It is not so much that they will go, as that they cannot stand still; like a rolling stone that does not stop till it can go no farther. Business, by a certain sort of men, is thought a mark of capacity and honour; their souls seek repose in motion, as children do by being rocked in a cradle; they may pronounce themselves as serviceable to their friends as troublesome to themselves. No one distributes his money to others, but every one distributes his time and his life.[4] There is nothing of which we are so prodigal as of these two things, of which to be thrifty would be both commendable and useful. I am of a quite contrary humour; I look to myself, and commonly covet with no great ardour what I do desire, and desire little, and employ and busy myself but rarely and temperately in the same way. Whatever they take in hand, they do it with their utmost power and vehemence. There are so many dangerous steps, that, for the more safety, we must a little lightly and superficially slide through the world, and not rush through it. Pleasure itself is painful in its depth:

Incedis per ignes
Suppositos cineri doloso.[5]

"Thou upon glowing coals dost tread,
Under deceitful ashes hid."

Montaigne obliged to serve the office of mayor of Bourdeaux.

The citizens of Bordeaux chose me mayor of their city at a time when I was at a distance from France,[6] and still more remote from any such thought. I begged to be excused, but I was told that I had committed an error in so doing, and the greater, because the king had moreover interposed his command in the affair. 'Tis an office that ought to be looked upon so much more honourable, as it has no other pay nor advantage than the bare honour of its execution. It continues two years, but may be extended by a second election, which very rarely happens. It was so to me,[7] and had never been so but twice before, some years ago to Monsieur Lansac, and lately to Monsieur de Biron, marshal of France, in whose place I succeeded, and left mine to Monsieur de Matignon, marshal of France also. Proud of so noble a fraternity,

Uterque bonus pacis bellique minister.[8]

"Both fit for governing in peace and war."

Fortune would have a hand in my promotion,

[1] *Laws*, vii.
[2] Ovid. *Trist.* iii. 2. 9.
[3] Seneca, *Epist.* 22.
[4] Id. *de Brevitate vitæ*, c. 3.
[5] Horace, *Od.* ii. 1. 7.

[6] When he was at the baths of Della Villa, near Lucca, September, 1581.
[7] A very clear proof that the people of *Bordeaux* were satisfied with his administration, though Balzac (*Dissert.* 19.) insinuates the contrary, without assigning any ground for the imputation.
[8] *Æneid*, xi. 668.

by this particular circumstance, which she put in of her own, not altogether vain; for Alexander disdained the ambassadors of Corinth, who came to make him a tender of the burgess-ship of their city; but when they proceeded to lay before him that Bacchus and Hercules were also in the register, he thankfully accepted the offer.[1]

The character he gave of himself to the magistrates of Bordeaux.

At my arrival, I faithfully and conscientiously represented myself to them for such as I find myself to be; a man without memory, without vigilance, without experience, and without vigour; but withal without hatred, without ambition, without avarice, and without violence. That they might be informed and know what they were to expect from my service, and being that the knowledge they had had of my father, and the honour they had for his memory, had been the only motives to confer this upon me, I plainly told them that I should be very sorry any thing should make so great an impression upon me, as their affairs and the concerns of their city had done upon him, whilst he had the same government to which they had preferred me. I very well remember, when a boy, to have seen him in his old age, tormented with and solicitous about the public affairs, neglecting the soft repose of his own house, to which the declension of his age had attached him for several years before, the management of his own affairs, and his health, and certainly despising his own life, which was in great danger of being lost, by being engaged in long and painful journeys on their behalf. Such was he, and this humour of his proceeded from a marvellous goodness of nature. Never was there a more charitable and popular spirited man. Yet this which I commend in others, I do not love to follow myself, and am not without excuse.

He had heard that a man must forget himself for his neighbour, and that particular individuals were in no manner of consideration in comparison with the general concern. Most of the rules and precepts of this world run this way, to drive us out of ourselves into the world, for the benefit of public society: they thought to do a great feat, to divert us from ourselves, presuming we were but too much fixed at home, and by a too natural inclination, and have said all they could to that purpose; for 'tis no new thing for wise men to preach things as they serve, not as they are. Truth has its obstructions, inconveniences, and incompatibilities with us: we must be often deceived, that we may not deceive ourselves, and shut our eyes, and stupify our understandings, to redress and amend them: *Imperiti enim judicant, et qui frequenter in hoc ipsum fallendi sunt, ne errent.*[2] "For the ignorant judge, and therefore are oft to be deceived, lest they should err." When they prescribe us to love three, four, fifty degrees of things above ourselves, they do like archers, who, to hit the mark, take their aim a great deal higher than the butt: to set a crooked stick straight, we bend it the contrary way.

Why the sages recommended it to men to neglect themselves for the sake of the public.

I take it that in the temple of Pallas, as we see in all other religions, there were apparent mysteries to be shown to the people, and others, more secret and high, that were only to be shown to such as were professed: 'tis likely that in these the true point of friendship that every one owes to himself is to be found; not a false friendship, that makes us embrace glory, knowledge, riches, and the like, with a principal and immoderate affection, as members of our being, nor an indiscreet and effeminate friendship, wherein it happens, as with ivy, that decays and ruins the walls it embraces; but a sound and regular friendship, equally useful and pleasant. Who knows the duties of this friendship, and practises them, is truly of the cabinet council of the muses, and has attained the summit of human wisdom and our happiness: such a one, exactly knowing what he owes to himself, will in his part find that he ought to apply the use of the world and of other men to himself, and, to do this, to contribute to the public society the duties and offices appertaining to him. Who does not in some sort live to others, does not live much to himself: *Qui sibi amicus est, scito hunc amicum omnibus esse.*[3] "He who is his own friend is a friend to everybody else." The principal charge we have is, to every one his own conduct, and 'tis for this that we are here. As he who should forget to live a virtuous and holy life, and should think he acquitted himself of his duty in instructing and training up others to it would be a fool; even so he who abandons his own particular healthful and pleasant living to serve others, takes, in my opinion, a wrong and an unnatural course.

He that is too eager in the exercise of an office cannot manage it with prudence or equity.

I would not that men should refuse, in the employments they take upon them, their attention, pains, their eloquence, and their sweat and blood, in time of need:

> Non ipse pro caris amicis,
> Aut patria, timidus perire:[4]
>
> "And for his friend or country's good
> Would never fear to spill his blood:"

but 'tis only as a loan, and incidentally; his mind being always in repose and in health; not without action, but without vexation, without passion. To be simply doing costs him so little that he acts even sleeping; but he must

[1] Seneca, *de Beneficiis*, i. 13. and Plutarch, *Of the Three Forms of Government*, in relating this anecdote, do not mention Bacchus. Plutarch names the *Megarians*, instead of the *Corinthians*.

[2] Quintilian, *Instit. Orat.* ii. 17.

[3] Seneca, *Epist.* 6.

[4] Horace, *Od.* 4. 9. 51.

set on the motion with discretion; for the body receives the offices imposed upon it, just according to what they are; the mind often extends, and makes them heavier at its own expense, giving them what measure it pleases. Men perform like things with several sorts of endeavour, and different contentions of the will: the one does well enough without the other; for how many people hazard themselves every day in war, without any concern which way it goes, and thrust themselves into the dangers of battles, the loss of which will not break their next night's sleep? And such a man may be at home, out of danger, which he durst not have looked upon, who is more passionately concerned for the issue of this war, and whose soul is more anxious about events, than the soldier who stakes his life and blood in the quarrel. I could have engaged myself in public employments, without quitting myself a nail's breadth, and have given myself to others without abandoning myself. This sharpness and violence of desires more hinders than it advances the execution of what we undertake,[1] fills us with impatience against slow or contrary events, and with heat and suspicion against those with whom we have to do. We never carry on that thing well by which we are prepossessed and led:

Male cuncta ministrat
Impetus.[2]

"For over heat doth carry on things ill."

He who therein employs only his judgment and address proceeds more cheerfully; he counterfeits, he gives way, he defers all things at his ease, according to the necessities of occasions; he fails in his attempts, without trouble and affliction, ready and entire for a new effort; he always rides bridle in hand. In him who is drunk with violent and tyrannic intention, we see of necessity much imprudence and injustice: the impetuosity of his desire carries him away; these are rash motions, and, if fortune does not very much assist, of very little fruit. Philosophy wills that in the revenge of injuries received we should strip ourselves of choler, not that the chastisement should be less, but, on the contrary, that the revenge may be the better and more heavy, which it conceives will be by this impetuosity hindered. For anger does not only trouble, but of itself does also weary, the arm of those who chastise; this fire benumbs and wastes their force: as in precipitation, *festinatio tarda est*,[3] "haste fetters itself: *Ipsa se velocitas implicat*.[4] For example, according to what I commonly see, avarice has no greater impediment than itself; the more bent and vigorous it is, the less it rakes together, and commonly sooner grows rich, when disguised in a vizor of liberality.

That the chastisement of offences ought to be performed without anger.

A very honest gentleman, and a particular friend of mine, had like to have cracked his brains by a too passionate attention and affection to the affairs of a certain prince, his master;[5] which master has thus set himself out to me:—"That he foresees the weight of accidents as well as another; but that in those for which there is no remedy he presently resolves upon suffering; in others, having taken all the necessary precaution, which, by the vivacity of his understanding, he can presently do, he quietly awaits what may follow." And, in truth, I have accordingly seen him maintain a great nonchalance and liberty of action, and serenity of countenance, in very great and difficult affairs; I find him much greater and of greater capacity in adverse than prosperous fortune; his losses are to him more glorious than his victories, and his mourning than his triumph.

Do but consider that, even in vain and frivolous actions, as at chess, tennis, and the like, this eager and ardent engaging with an impetuous desire immediately throws the mind and members into indiscretion and disorder; a man confounds and hinders himself: he that carries himself the most moderately, both towards gain and loss, has always his wits about him; the less peevish and passionate he is at play, he plays much more advantageously and surely.

It is an advantage in gaming to keep one's temper, both in gain and loss.

As to the rest, we hinder the mind's seizure and hold, in giving it so many things to seize upon: some things we are only to offer to it, to tie others to it, and others to incorporate with it; it can feel and discern all things, but ought to feed on nothing but itself, and should be instructed in what properly concerns itself, that is properly of its own having and substance. The laws of nature teach us exactly what we need. After the sages have told us that, according to nature, no one is indigent, and that every one is so according to opinion,[6] they very subtly distinguish betwixt the desires that proceed from her and those that proceed from the disorder of our own fancy: those of which we can see the end are hers; those that fly before us, and of which we can see no end, are our own. Want of goods is easily repaired; poverty of soul is irreparable:

Nam si, quod satis est homini, id satis esse potesset,
Hoc sat erat; nunc, quum hoc non est, qui credimus porro
Divitias ullas animum mi explere potesse?[7]

"If what's for man enough enough could be,
It were enough; but as we plainly see
That won't suffice, how I can e'er believe
That any wealth my mind content can give?"

[1] "Omnis fere cupiditas ipsa sibi in id, in quod properat, opponitur."—Seneca, *de Ira*, i. 12.
[2] Statius, *Thebaid*, x. 704.
[3] Quintus Curtius, ix. 9 12.
[4] Seneca, *Epist.* 44., whose words are slightly different.
[5] Probably the King of Navarre, afterwards Henry IV. of France.
[6] Seneca, *Epist.* 16.
[7] Lucil. *lib.* v. *apud Nonium Marcellum*, v. § 99.

Socrates seeing a great quantity of riches, jewels, and furniture of great value, carried in pomp through the city: "How many things," said he, "do I not desire!"[1] Metrodorus lived on twelve ounces a day; Epicurus upon less;[2] Metrocles slept in winter abroad among sheep; in summer in the cloisters of churches:[3] *Sufficit ad id natura, quod poscit.*[4] "Nature provides for its own exigences." Cleanthes lived by the labour of his own hands, and boasted, "That Cleanthes, if he would, could maintain yet another Cleanthes."[5]

Why his necessities may be extended a little beyond the necessary demands of nature.

If that which nature exactly and originally requires of us for the conservation of our being be too little (as, in truth, what it is and how very cheap life may be maintained cannot be better made out than by this consideration; that it is so little that by its littleness it escapes the gripe and shock of fortune), let us dispense with a little more; let us call every one of our habits and conditions nature; let us tax and treat ourselves by this measure; let us stretch our appurtenances and accounts so far; for so far I fancy we have some excuse. Custom is a second nature, and no less powerful. What is wanting to my custom I hold to be wanting to me; and I should be almost as well content that they took away my life, as take me far from the way wherein I have so long lived. I am no more in a condition for any great change, nor to put myself into a new and unwonted course, though never so much to my advantage. 'Tis past the time for me to become other than what I am; and as I should complain of any great adventure that should now befal me, that it came not in time to be enjoyed:

> Quo mihi fortuna, si non conceditur uti?[6]
>
> "For what are fortune's gifts, if I'm denied
> Their cheerful use?"

so should I complain of any inward acquest. It were almost better never, than so late, to become an honest man, and well understanding in living, when a man has no longer to live. I, who am going, would readily resign to any new comer all the wisdom I have acquired for the world's commerce: "after meat comes mustard." I want no goods of which I can make no use; of what use is knowledge to him that has lost his head? 'Tis adding insult to injury for fortune to offer us presents that will only inspire us with a just despite that we had them not in their due season. Guide me no more, I can no longer go. Of so many parts as make a perfect man, patience suffices. Give an excellent treble to a chorister that has rotten lungs, and eloquence to a hermit exiled in the deserts of Arabia. There needs no art to further a fall; the end finds itself of itself, at the conclusion of every affair. My world is at an end, my form expired; I belong to the past, and am bound to authorise it, and to conform my end to it. I will here mention, by way of example, that the recent eclipse by the pope of ten days,[7] has taken me so low that I cannot well get used to it; I belong to the years wherein we kept another kind of account. So ancient and so long a custom challenges and calls me back to it; I am constrained to be somewhat heretical in this point: impatient of any, even though a corrective innovation. My imagination, in spite of my teeth, always pushes me ten days forward or backward, and is ever murmuring in my ears, "This rule concerns those who are going to be." If health itself, sweet as it is, returns to me by fits, 'tis rather to give me cause of regret than fruition of itself; I have no place left to keep it in. Time leaves me, without which nothing can be possessed. Oh, what little account should I make of those great elective dignities that I see in such esteem in the world, that are never conferred but upon men who are taking leave of it, in whom they do not so much regard how well he will discharge his trust, as how short his administration will be; from the very entry they look at the exit. In short, I am about to finish this man, and not to rebuild another. By long habit this form is, in me, turned into substance, and fortune into nature.

I say, therefore, that every one of us feeble creatures is excusable in thinking that to be his own which is comprised under this measure; but withal, beyond these limits, 'tis nothing but confusion; 'tis the largest extent we can grant to our own claim. The more business we create ourselves, the more we amplify our possession, so much more do we expose ourselves to the blows and adversities of fortune.[8] The career of our desires ought to be circumscribed, and restrained to a short limit of near and contiguous conveniences; and ought moreover, to perform their course, not in a right line, that ends elsewhere, but in a circle, of which the two points by a short wheel meet and terminate in ourselves. Actions that are carried on without this reflection (a near and essential reflection I mean), such as those of ambitious and avaricious men, and many more who run point blank, and whose career always carries them before themselves, such actions, I say, are erroneous and sickly.

Most of our business is farce: *Mundus uni-*

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[1] Cicero, *Tusc. Quæs.* v. 32.

[2] Seneca, *Epist.* 18.

[3] Plutarch, *That Vice alone is sufficient to make a man unhappy.*

[4] Seneca, *Epist.* 90.

[5] It was Zeno who said this of Cleanthes, his disciple. See Laertius, *Life of Cleanthes.*

[6] Horace, *Epist.* i. 5, 12.

[7] Gregory XIII., who in 1582 had the calendar altered by Louis Lilio, Peter Chacon, and Christopher Clavius. In France they made the alteration by skipping at once from the 9th to the 20th of December, 1582.

[8] "L'homme tient par ses vœux à mille choses: plus il augmente ses attachemens, plus il multiplie ses peines."—Rousseau, *Emile*, liv. v.

An honest man is not corrupted by the employment he exercises.

versus exercet histrioniam. "All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players." We must play our part well, but withal as the part of a borrowed personage; we must not make a real essence of a mask and outward appearance, nor of a strange person our own; we cannot distinguish the skin from the shirt; 'tis enough to meal the face without mealing the breast. I see some who transform and transubstantiate themselves into as many new shapes and new beings as they undertake employments, and who prelate themselves even to the heart and liver, and carry their office along with them, even to the close stool; I cannot make them distinguish the salutations that are made to them from those made to their commission, their train, or their mule: *Tanquam se fortunæ permittunt, etiam ut naturam dediscant*;[1] "They so much give themselves up to fortune as even to forget nature;" they swell and puff up their souls, and their natural way of speaking, according to the height of their magisterial place. The mayor of Bordeaux and Montaigne have ever been two, by very manifest separation. To be an advocate or a treasurer, a man must not be ignorant of the knavery of such callings; an honest man is not accountable for the vice or folly of his business, and yet ought not to refuse to take the calling upon him; 'tis the custom of his country, and there is money to be got by it; a man must live by the world, and make his best of it, such as it is. But the judgment of an emperor ought to be above his empire, and view and consider it as an accident; and he ought to know how to enjoy himself apart from it, and to communicate himself as James and Peter, to himself at least.

I cannot engage myself so deep and so entire; when my will gives me to a party, 'tis not with so violent an obligation that my judgment is infected with it. In the present broils of this kingdom, my interest in the one side has not made me forget either the laudable qualities of some of our adversaries, nor those that are reproachable in my own party. People generally adore all of their own side; for my part I do not so much as excuse most things in those of mine; a good book has never the worse grace for being written against me. The knot of the controversy excepted, I have always kept myself in equanimity and pure indifference: *Neque extra necessitates belli præcipuum odium gero*:[2] "And have no express hatred beyond the necessity of war:" for which I am pleased with myself, and the more, because I see others commonly fail in the contrary way. Such as extend their anger and hatred beyond the dispute in question, as most men do, shew that they spring from some other occasion and particular cause; like one who, being cured of an ulcer, has yet a fever remaining, by which it appears that the ulcer had another more concealed beginning. It is because they are not concerned in the common cause, because it is wounding to the state and common interest, but are only nettled by reason of their private and particular concern: this is why they are so especially animated, beyond justice and public reason: *Non tam omnia universi, quam ea quæ ad quemque pertinerent, singuli carpebant.*[3] "Every one was not so much angry against things in general, as against those that particularly concerned himself." I would have matters go well on our side; but if they do not, I shall not run mad. I am heartily for the right party; but I do not affect to be taken notice of for an especial enemy to others, and beyond the general quarrel. I am a mortal enemy to this vicious form of censure: "He is of the league, because he admires the Duke of Guise. He is astonished at the king of Navarre's valour and diligence, and therefore he is a Huguenot. He finds such and such faults in the king, and therefore he is seditious in his heart;" and I would not grant to the magistrate that he did well in condemning a book, because it had placed a heretic[4] among the best poets of the time. Shall we not dare to say of a thief that he has a handsome leg? Because a woman is a strumpet, must it needs follow that she has a stinking breath? Did they, in the wiser ages, revoke the proud title of Capitolinus, they had before conferred upon Marcus Manlius, as the preserver of religion and the public liberty; did they damn the memory of his liberality, his feats of arms, and the military recompense granted to his virtue, because he afterwards aspired to the sovereignty, to the prejudice of the laws of his country? If they take a hatred against an advocate, he will not be allowed the next day to be eloquent. I have elsewhere spoken of the zeal that pushes on worthy men to the like faults. For my part I can say: "such an one does this ill, and that well and virtuously." So, in the prognostics or sinister events of affairs, they will have every one, in his own party, blind or a blockhead; and our persuasion and judgment be subservient, not to truth, but to the project of our desires. I should rather incline towards the other extreme, so much do I fear being suborned by my desire; to which may be added, that I am a little tenderly distrustful of things that I wish.

Montaigne, by espousing a party, did not espouse its fury, injustice, and ridiculous whimsies.

I have in my time seen wonders in the way of an indiscreet and prodigious facility in people to suffer their hopes and belief to be led and governed which way has best pleased and served their leaders, through a

The indiscreet facility of people in suffering themselves to be imposed upon by the

[1] Petronius, *apud* John of Salisbury, *Policratic.* iii. 8.

[2] Quintus Curtius, iii. 2. 18.

[3] Livy, xxxiv. 36.

[4] Theodore Beza, whose poems have already been referred to.

Leaders of a party.

hundred mistakes upon another, and through dreams and phantasms. I no more wonder at those who have been blinded and led by the nose by the ape's tricks of Apollonius and Mahomet. Their sense and understanding is absolutely taken away by their passion: their discretion has no longer any other choice than that which smiles upon them, and supports their cause. I principally observed that in the beginning of our intestine distempers: this other, which is sprung up since, in imitation, has surpassed it: by which I am satisfied that it is a quality inseparable from popular errors; after the first that sets out, opinions drive on one another like waves with the wind; you are not part of the body, if you utter a word of objection, and do do not follow the common run. But doubtless they wrong the just side, when they go about to assist it with frand; I have ever been against that practice: 'tis only fit to work upon weak heads; for the sound, there are surer and more honest ways to keep up their courage, and to excuse adverse accidents.

Difference betwixt Cæsar and Pompey's war and that betwixt Marius and Sylla.

Heaven never saw a greater animosity than that betwixt Cæsar and Pompey, nor ever will; and yet I observe, methinks, in those fine souls a great moderation towards one another; it was a jealousy of honour and command, which did not transport them to a furious and indiscreet hatred, and that was without malignity and detraction: in their hottest exploits upon one another, I discover some traces of respect and good-will; and therefore am of opinion that, had it been possible, each of them would rather have done his business without the ruin of the other, than with it. Take notice how different matters were with Marius and Sylla.

We must not precipitate ourselves so headlong after our affections and interest. As, when I was young, I opposed the progress of love, which I perceived to advance too fast upon me, and had a care lest it should at last become so pleasing as to force, captivate, and wholly reduce me to its mercy, so I do the same upon all other occasions, where my will is running on with too warm an appetite; I lean opposite to the side it inclines too, as I find it going to plunge and make itself drunk with its own wine: I evade nourishing its pleasure so far, that I cannot recover it without infinite loss. Souls that, through their own stupidity, only discern things by halves, have this happiness, that they smart the less with hurtful things: 'tis a spiritual leprosy that has some shew of health, and such a health as philosophy does not altogether contemn; but yet we have no reason to call it wisdom, as we often do. And after this manner a man mocked Diogenes, who, in the depth of winter, and stark naked, went hugging an image of snow for a trial of his patience; seeing him in this exercise: "Art thou very cold?" said he; "Not at all," replied Diogenes; "Why, then," said the other, "what great and exemplary thing dost thou think thou art doing now?"[1] To estimate a man's firmness, we must know what his suffering is.

But souls that are to meet with adverse events, and the injuries of fortune in their depth and sharpness, that are to weigh and taste them according to their natural weight and sharpness, let such shew their skill in avoiding the causes, and diverting the blow. What did King Cotys do? He paid liberally for the rich and beautiful service of porcelain that had been brought him; but, seeing it was exceedingly brittle, he immediately broke it, in order to prevent so easy a matter of displeasure against his servants.[2] In like manner, I have willingly avoided all confusion in my affairs, and never coveted to have my estate contiguous to those of my relations, and those with whom I coveted a strict friendship; whence matter of unkindness and fallings-out often proceed. I formerly loved cards and dice, but have long since left them off, only for this reason, that though I carry my losses as handsomely as another, I was not quiet within. Let a man of honour, who ought to be sensible of the lie, and who will not take a scurvy excuse for satisfaction, avoid occasions of dispute. I shun melancholic and sour-natured men as I would the plague; and in matters I cannot talk of without emotion and concern, I never meddle, if not compelled by duty: *Melius non incipient quam desinent*;[3] "'Tis better not to begin, than to desist." The surest way, then, is to prepare one's-self before the occasion.

How Montaigne endeavoured to prevent accidents in the management of his affairs & actions.

I know very well that some wise men have taken another way, and have not feared to grapple and engage to the utmost upon several subjects: these are confident of their own strength, under cover of which they protect themselves in all ill successes, making their patience wrestle and contend with disaster:

> Velut rupes, vastum quæ prodit in æquor,
> Obvia ventorum furiis, expostaque ponto,
> Vim cunctam atque minas perfert cœlique marisque,
> Ipsa immota manens.[4]
>
> "He, like a solid rock by seas inclosed,
> To raging winds and roaring waves opposed,
> From his proud summit, looking down, disdains
> Their empty menace, and unmoved remains."

Let us never attempt these examples; we shall never come up to them. They set themselves resolutely, and without trouble, to behold the ruin of their country, to which all the good they can contrive or perform is due: this is too much and too rude for our common souls to

[1] Laertius, *Life of Diogenes*. Plutarch, *Apothegms of the Lacedæmonians*.
[2] Plutarch, *Apothegms of the Kings*.
[3] Seneca, *Epist.* 72.
[4] *Æneid*, x, 693.

undergo. Cato gave up the noblest life that ever was upon this account; but it is for us smaller men to fly from the storm as far as we can; we ought to shun pain, instead of cultivating patience, and dip under the blows we cannot parry. Zeno seeing Chremonides, a young man whom he loved, draw near to sit down by him, suddenly started up, and Cleanthes asking him the reason why he did so: "I hear," said he, "that physicians especially order repose, and forbid emotion, in all excitements."[1] Socrates does not say: "Do not surrender to the charms of beauty; stand your ground, and do your utmost to oppose it." "Fly it," says he, "shun the sight and encounter of it, as of a powerful poison, that darts and wounds at a distance."[2] And his good disciple,[3] either feigning or reciting, but in my opinion rather reciting than feigning, the rare perfections of that great Cyrus, makes him distrustful of his own strength to resist the charms of the divine beauty of the illustrious Panthea, his captive, and committing the visiting and keeping of her to another, who could not have so much licence as himself. And the Holy Spirit, in like manner: "Lead us not into temptation."[4] We do not pray that our reason may not be combated and overcome by concupiscence, but that it should not be so much as tried by it; that we should not be brought into a state wherein we should have so much as to suffer the approaches, solicitations, and temptations of sin; and we beg of Almighty God to keep our consciences quiet, fully and perfectly delivered from all commerce of evil.

Such as say that they have reason for their avenging passion, or any other sort of troublesome agitation of mind, do often say true, as things now are, but not as they were; they speak to us when the causes of their error are nourished and advanced by themselves: but look back, recal these causes to their beginning, and there you will put them to a nonplus. Will they have their fault less, for being of longer continuance; think they of an unjust beginning the sequel can be just? Whoever desires the good of his country, as I do, without fretting and pining, will be troubled, but will not swoon to see it threatened either with its own ruin, or a not less ruinous continuance: poor vessel, that the waves, the wind, and the pilot, toss and steer to so contrary designs!

> In tam diversa, magister,
> Ventus, et unda, trahunt.[5]

He who does not gape after the favour of princes, as after a thing he cannot live without, does not much concern himself at the coldness of their reception and countenance, nor at the inconstancy of their wills. He who does not brood over his children or his honours with a slavish propension, ceases not to live commodiously enough after their loss. He who does good principally for his own satisfaction will not be much troubled to see men judge of his actions contrary to his merit. A quarter of an ounce of patience will provide sufficiently against such inconveniences. I find ease in this receipt, redeeming myself in the beginning as cheap as I can; and find that by this means I have escaped much trouble and many difficulties. With very little effort I stop the first sally of my emotions, and quit the subject that begins to be troublesome, before it carries one away. He who stops not the start will hardly ever be able to stop the career: he who cannot keep them out will never get them out, when they are once in; he who cannot crush them at the beginning, will never do it after; nor ever keep himself from falling, if he cannot recover himself when first he begins to totter: *Etenim ipsæ se impellunt, ubi semel a ratione discessum est; ipsaque sibi imbecillitas indulget, in altumque provehitur imprudens, nec reperit locum consistendi.*[6] "For they throw themselves headlong, when once they lose their reason; and frailty so far indulges itself that it is unawares carried out into the deep, and can find no port wherein to come to an anchor." I am betimes sensible of the little breezes that begin to sing and whistle in the shrouds, the forerunners of a storm:

> Ceu flamina prima
> Cum deprensa fremunt silvis, et cæca volutant
> Murmura, venturos nautis prodentia ventos:[7]
>
> "So winds, when yet unfledged in woods they lie,
> In whispers first their tender voices try;
> Then issue on the main with bellowing rage,
> And storms to trembling mariners presage."

How often have I done myself a manifest injustice, to avoid the hazard of having yet a worse done me by the judges, after an age of vexations, dirty and vile practices, more enemies to my nature than fire or the rack? *Convenit à litibus, quantum licet, et nescio an paulò plus etiam, quàm licet, abhorrentem esse: est enim non modo liberale, paululum nonnunquam de suo jure decedere, sed interdum etiam fructuosum.*[8] "A man should be an enemy to all contention as much as he lawfully may, and I know not whether or not something more: for 'tis not only handsome, but sometimes also advantageous too, a little to recede from one's right." Were we wise, we ought to rejoice and boast, as I one day heard a young gentleman of a good family very innocently do, that his mother had lost her suit, as if it had been a cough, a fever, or something very troublesome to keep. Even the favours

With what care he avoided law-suits.

[1] Laertius, *Life of Zeno.*
[2] Xenophon, *Memoir upon Socrates*, i. 3. 1.
[3] Id. *Cyropædia*, i. 3. 3. &c.
[4] *St. Matthew*, vi. 13.
[5] Montaigne has translated the q[illegible]on before giving it. I know not who the author is. Some of the editions mention Buchanan, but without referring us to any particular work of that poet.
[6] Cicero, *Tusc. Quæs.* iv. 18.
[7] *Æneid*, x. 97.
[8] Cicero, *de Offic.* ii. 18.

that fortune might have given me through relationship, or acquaintance with those who have sovereign authority in our affairs, I have conscientiously waived, and very carefully avoided employing them to the prejudice of others, and of advancing my pretensions above their true right. In fine, I have so much prevailed by my endeavours (happy 'tis for me I can say), that I am to this day a virgin from all suits at law, though they have made me very fair offers, and with very just ground, would I have hearkened to them; and a virgin from quarrels too; I have almost passed over a long life without any offence of moment, either active or passive, or without ever hearing myself called by a worse word than my own name; a rare favour of heaven!

The most violent passions raised from trifling causes.

Our greatest agitations have ridiculous motives and causes; what ruin did our last Duke of Burgundy run into about a cart-load of sheepskins![1] And was not the engraving of a seal the first and principal cause of the greatest commotion that this machine of the world ever underwent?[2]—for Pompey and Cæsar were but the off-sets and continuation of the two others; and I have in my time seen the wisest heads in this kingdom assembled with great ceremony, and at the public expense, about treaties and agreements, of which the real decision in the mean time absolutely depended upon the ladies' cabinet council, and the inclination of some woman body. The poets very well understood this, when they put all Greece and Asia to fire and sword for an apple. Enquire why that man hazards his life and honour upon the fortune of his rapier and dagger: let him acquaint you with the occasion of the quarrel; he cannot do it without blushing, 'tis so idle and frivolous!

The necessity of deliberation before we engage in affairs, especially quarrels.

A little thing will engage you in't, but being once embarked, all cords draw; greater considerations are then required, more hard and more important. How much easier is it not to enter in, than it is to get out? We should proceed contrary to the reed, which at its first spring produces a long and straight shoot, but afterwards, as if tired and out of breath, runs into thick and frequent joints and knots, as so many pauses, which demonstrate that it has no more its first vigour and constancy: 'twere better to begin fair and calmly, and to keep a man's breath and vigour for the height and stress of the business. We guide and govern affairs in their beginnings, and have them then in our own power; but afterwards, when they are once at work, 'tis they that guide and govern us, and we have to follow them.

Yet do I not pretend by this to say that this plan has relieved me of all difficulty, and that I have not often had enough to do to curb and restrain my passions; they are not always to be governed according to the measure of occasions, and often have their entries very sharp and violent. Yet good fruit and profit may thence be reaped, except by those who in well-doing are not satisfied with any benefit, if reputation be wanting; for, in truth, such an effect is of no account, but by every one in himself; you are better contented, but not more esteemed, seeing you reformed yourself before you came into play, or that any vice was discovered in you. Yet not in this only, but in all other duties of life also, the way of those who aim at honour is very different from that they proceed by, who propose to themselves order and reason. I find some who rashly and furiously rush into the lists, and cool in the race. As Plutarch says,[3] that as those who, through awkwardness, are soft and facile to grant whatever is desired of them, are afterwards as frail to break their word and to recant; so likewise he who enters lightly into a quarrel, is subject to run as lightly out of it. The same difficulty that keeps me from entering into it would, when once hot and engaged in it, incite me to maintain it with resolution. 'Tis, perhaps, wrong; but when a man is once engaged, he must go through with it or die. "Undertake coldly," said Bias,[4] "but pursue with ardour." For want of prudence, men fall into want of courage, which is still more intolerable.

Most accommodations of our quarrels now-a-days are discreditable and false: we only seek to save appearances, and in the mean time betray and disavow our true intentions; we salve over the fact. We know very well how we said the thing, and in what sense we spoke it, and all the company, and all our friends with whom we would appear to have the advantage, understand it well enough too; 'tis at the expense of our frankness, and the honour of our courage, that we disown our thoughts, and seek subterfuge in falsehood to make friends; we give ourselves the lie, to excuse the lie we have given another. You are not to consider whether your word or action may admit of another interpretation; 'tis your own real and sincere interpretation, your real meaning, that you are thenceforward to maintain, whatever it cost you. Men address themselves to your virtue and your conscience, which are neither of them to be disguised; let us leave these pitiful ways and expedients to the tricksters of the law. The excuses and satisfactions that I see every day made and given to repair indiscretion, seem to me more scandalous than the indiscretion itself. It were better to affront your adversary a second time, than to offend yourself by giving him such satisfaction. You have braved him in your heat and anger, and you go

[1] See the *Mem. of Philip de Comines*, v. 1.
[2] Referring to the civil war between Marius and Sylla. See Plutarch, *Life of Marius*, c. 3.
[3] *On False Shame.*
[4] Laertius *in vitâ*

to appease him in your cooler and better sense; and by that means lay yourself lower, and at his feet, whom before you pretended to overtop. I do not find any thing a gentleman can say so rude and vicious in him, as unsaying what he has said is infamous, when that unsaying is authoritatively extracted from him; forasmuch as obstinacy is more excusable in him than pusillanimity. Passions are as easy for me to evade, as they are hard for me to moderate: *Exscinduntur facilius animo quam temperantur.* "'Tis easier to tear them altogether from the mind, than to moderate them." He who cannot attain unto that noble stoical impassibility, let him secure himself in the bosom of this popular stupidity of mine: what those great souls performed by their virtue, I inure myself to do by complexion. The middle region harbours storms and tempests; the two extremes of philosophers and rustics concur in tranquillity and happiness:

> Felix, qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas,
> Atque metus omnes et inexorabile fatum
> Subjecit pedibus, strepitumque Acherontis avari!
> Fortunatus et ille, deos qui novit agrestes,
> Panaque, Silvanumque senem, Nymphasque sorores![1]
>
> "How blest the sage! whose mind can pierce each cause
> Of changeful nature, and her wond'rous laws;
> Who tramples fear beneath his foot, and braves
> Fate, and stern death, and hell's resounding waves!
> Blest too, who knows each god that guards the swain,
> Pan, old Sylvanus, and the Dryad train."

The birth of all things is weak and tender; and therefore we are to have an eye to beginnings; for as then, in their infancy, the danger is not perceived, so, when it is grown up, neither is the remedy to be found. I had every day encountered a million of crosses, harder to digest, in the progress of ambition, than it has been difficult for me to curb the natural propension that inclined me to it:

> Jure per horrui
> Latè conspicuum tollere verticem.[2]
>
> "For well might I be shy,
> To raise my head so high."

All public actions are subject to various and uncertain interpretations, for too many heads judge of them. Some say of this city employment of mine[3] (and I am willing to say a word of it, not that it is worth so much, but to exhibit my conduct in such things), that I have behaved myself in it like a man not easy to be moved, and with a languishing affection; and they have some colour for what they say. I endeavour to keep my mind and my thoughts in repose; *Cum semper natura, tum etiam ætate jam quietus;*[4] "As being always quiet by nature, so also now by age;" and if they sometimes lash out on some rude and sensible impression, 'tis, in truth, without my advice. Yet, from this natural heaviness of mine, men ought not to conclude a total inability in me (for want of care and want of sense are two very different things), and much less any ingratitude towards that city, who employed the utmost means they had in their power to oblige me, both before they knew me and after, and did much more for me in choosing me anew, than conferring that honour upon me at first. I wish them all the good that can befal them, and certainly, had occasion offered, there is nothing I would have spared for their service. I did for them as I would have done for myself. 'Tis a good, warlike, and generous people, but capable of obedience and discipline, and of whom the best use may be made, if well guided. They say also that my administration was passed over without mark or thing worthy of record. Very good! They accuse my cessation in a time when every body almost was convicted of doing too much. I am impatient to be doing where my will spurs me on; but this point is an enemy to perseverance. Let whoever will make use of me according to my own way, employ me in affairs where vigour and liberty are required; where a direct, short, and moreover a hazardous conduct is necessary; I may do something: but if it must be long, subtle, laborious, artificial, and intricate, they would do better to call in somebody else. All important offices are not hard: I came prepared to work a little more, had there been great occasion; for it is in my power to do something more than I do, or than I love to do; I did not to my knowledge omit any thing that my duty really required. I easily forget those offices that ambition mixes with duty, and shelters under that title; these are they that, for the most part, fill the eyes and ears, and give men the most satisfaction: not the thing, but the appearance contents them; they think men sleep, if they hear no noise. My humour is no friend to tumult; I could appease a riot without emotion, and chastise a disorder without alteration. If I stand in need of anger and inflammation, I borrow it and put it on; my manners are heavy, rather faint than sharp. I do not condemn a magistrate that sleeps, provided the people under his charge sleep as well as he: the laws in that case sleep too. For my part I commend a gliding, quiet, and silent life, *Neque submissam et abjectam, neque se efferentem:* "Neither abject nor overbearing:" my fortune will have it so. I am descended from a family that has lived without lustre or tumult, and time out of mind, particularly ambitious of the character of truth and honesty.

Montaigne's account of his conduct in office.

Our people now-a-days are so bred up to bustle and ostentation, that goodness, moderation, equability, and such quiet and obscure qualities, are no more regarded: rough bodies make themselves felt, the smooth are imperceptibly handled; sickness is felt; health little, or not at all; no more than the oils that fo-

[1] Virgil, *Georgic*, ii. 490.
[2] Horace, *Od.* iii. 16, 18.
[3] His mayoralty of Bordeaux.
[4] Cicero, *de Petit. Consul. c.* 2.

ment us, in comparison of the pain for which we are fomented. 'Tis acting for a man's reputation and particular profit, not for the public good, to refer that to be done in the public place which a man may as well do in the council-chamber, and to noon-day what might have been done the night before; and to be jealous to do that himself which his colleague can do as well as he. So some surgeons of Greece used to perform their operations upon scaffolds, in the sight of the people, to draw more practice and profit. They think that good orders cannot be understood but by the sound of trumpet. Ambition is not a vice of little people, and of so mean abilities as ours. One said to Alexander: "Your father will leave you a great dominion, easy and pacific;" but this youth was envious of his father's victories, and the justices of his government, and would not have enjoyed the empire of the world in ease and peace.[1] Alcibiades, in Plato, had rather die young, beautiful, rich, noble, and learned, and all this *par excellence*, than stop in the state of such a condition;[2] this disease is perhaps excusable in so strong and so full a soul. When these wretched and dwarfish little souls gull and deceive themselves, and think to spread their fame, for having given right judgment in some affair, or kept up the discipline of the guard of the city gate, the more they think to exalt their heads, the more they show their tails. This little well-doing has neither body nor life; it vanishes in the first mouth, and goes no farther than from one street to another. Talk of it, in God's name, to your son or your servant; like that old fellow who, having no other auditor of his praises, nor approver of his valour, boasted to his chambermaid, crying out: "O, Peretta, what a brave man hast thou to thy master!" At the worst, talk of it to yourself; like a counsellor of my acquaintance, who, having disgorged a whole cart-load of paragraphs with great heat, and as great folly, coming out of the council-chamber to make water, was heard very conscientiously to mutter betwixt his teeth: "*Non nobis, Domine, non nobis, sed nomini tuo da gloriam.*[3] He who can get it of nobody else, let him pay himself out of his own purse.

Fame is not prostituted at so cheap a rate; rare and exemplary actions, to which it is due, would not endure the company of this prodigious crowd of little every-day performances. Marble may exalt your titles as much as you please, for having repaired a rod of a ruinous wall, or cleansed a public sewer, but not men of sense. Renown does not follow all good deeds, if novelty and difficulty be not conjoined; nay, so much as mere estimation, according to the Stoics, is not due to every action that proceeds from virtue; neither will they allow him bare thanks who, out of temperance, forbears to meddle with any old bleareyed hag. Such as have known the admirable qualities of Scipio Africanus deny him the glory that Panætius attributes to him, of being abstinent from gifts, as a glory not so much his as that of the age he lived in.[4] We have pleasures suitable to our fortunes; let us not usurp those of grandeur. Our own are more natural, and by so much more solid and sure, as they are more low. If not for that of conscience, yet at least for ambition's sake, let us reject ambition; let us disdain that thirst of honour and renown, so low and mendicant, that it makes us beg it of all sorts of people (*quæ est ista laus, quæ possit è macello peti?*[5] "What praise is that which is to be got in the market?), by abject means, and at what cheap rate soever. 'Tis dishonour to be so honoured. Let us learn to be no more greedy of honour than we are capable of it. To be puffed up with every action that is innocent, or of use, is only for such with whom such things are extraordinary and rare; they will value it as it costs them. How much the more a good effect makes a noise, so much I abate of the goodness of it, as I enter into suspicion that it was more performed for noise than upon the account of goodness: being exposed upon the stall, it is half sold. Those actions have much more grace and lustre that slip from the hand of him that does them negligently and without noise, and that some honest man after chooses out and raises from the shade, to produce it to the light upon its own account: *Mihi quidem laudabiliora videntur omnia, quæ sine venditatione, et sine populo teste fiunt,*[6] "All things, truly, seem more laudable to me that are performed without ostentation and without the testimony of the people," says the most vain-glorious man in the world.

I had no care but to conserve and to continue, which are silent and insensible effects. Innovation is of great lustre, but 'tis interdicted in this time, when we are pressed upon, and have nothing to defend ourselves from but novelties. To forbear doing is often as noble as to do; but 'tis less in the light: and the little good I have in me is almost all of this kind. In fine, occasions in this employment of mine have been confederate with my humour, and I thank them for it. Is there any one who desires to be sick that he may see his physician at work? And would not that physician deserve to be whipped who should wish the plague amongst us, that he might put his art in practice? I have never been of that wicked, though common enough, humour, to desire that the trouble and disorders of this city should elevate and honour my government: I have ever willingly contributed all I could to their tranquillity and ease. He who

[1] See Plutarch, *Life of Alexander*.
[2] See the first *Alcibiades*.
[3] "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name be the glory."—*Psalm* 113.
[4] Cicero, *de Offic.* ii. 22.
[5] Id. *de Fin.* ii. 15.
[6] Id. *Tusc. Quæs.* ii. 26.

will not thank me for the order, gentle and silent calm, that has accompanied my administration, cannot, however, deprive me of the share that belongs to me by the title of my good fortune. And I am of such a composition that I would as willingly be happy as wise; and had rather owe my successes purely to the favour of Almighty God than to any industry or operation of my own. I had sufficiently published to the world my unfitness for such public offices. But I have something in me yet worse than incapacity, which is that I am not much displeased at it, and, that I do not much go about to cure it, considering the course of life that I have proposed to myself. Neither have I satisfied myself in this employment, but I have very near arrived at what I expected from myself, and have much surpassed what I promised them with whom I had to do; for I am apt to promise something less than what I am able to do, and than what I hope to make good. I am sure that I have left no impressions of offence or hatred behind me; and as to leaving regret or desire of me amongst them, I at least know very well that I never much affected it:

Mene huic confidere monstro!
Mene salis placidi vultum, fluctusque quietos
Ignorare!!

"Wouldst thou I should a quiet sea believe,
To this inconstant monster credit give?"

CHAPTER XI.

OF CRIPPLES.

The year cut ten days shorter.

'Tis now two or three years ago that they made the year ten days shorter in France. How many changes may we expect should follow this reformation! This was properly moving heaven and earth at once. And yet nothing for all that stirs from its place; my neighbours still find their seasons of sowing and reaping, the opportunities of doing their business, the hurtful and propitious days, just at the same time where they had, time out of mind, assigned them. There was no more error perceived in our old custom, than there is amendment found in this alteration. So great an uncertainty there is throughout; so gross, obscure, and dull is our perception. 'Tis said that this regulation might have been carried out with less inconvenience by subtracting, after the example of Augustus, the bissextile, which is in some sort a day of hindrance and confusion, till we had exactly satisfied the debt;[2] which, after all, is not paid by the correction, and we yet remain some days in arrear; and, by the same means, order might be taken for the future, providing that after the revolution of such a year, or such a number of years, the supernumerary day should be always thrown out, so that we could not henceforward err above four and twenty hours in our computation. We have no other account of time but years; the world has for many ages made use of that only, and yet it is a measure that to this day we are not agreed upon; such a one, that we still doubt what form other nations have variously given to it, and what was the true use of it. What do some say? "That the heavens, in growing old, bow themselves down nearer towards us, and put us to an uncertainty even of days and months." And what does Plutarch say?[3] "That astrology had not, in his time, determined the motion of the moon." See what a fine condition are we in to keep records of things past!

The vanity of the human understanding, which often seeks for the causes of a fact, before there is a certainty of such fact.

I was just now ruminating, as I often do, upon this; what a free and roving thing human judgment is. I ordinarily see that men, in things proposed to them, more willingly study to find out the reason than to find out the truth of them; they slip over pre-suppositions, but are curious in examination of consequences; they leave the things, and fly to the causes. Pleasant praters! the knowledge of causes only concerns him who has the conduct of things, not us, who are only to undergo them, and who have the perfectly full and accomplished use of them, according to our need, without penetrating into their origin and essence; wine is none the more pleasant to him that knows its first faculties. On the contrary, both the body and soul alter and interrupt the right they have of the use of the world and of themselves, by mixing with it the opinion of learning. Effects concern us, but the means not at all. To determine and to distribute appertain to superiority and command, as it does to subjection to accept. Let me reprehend our custom: we commonly begin thus:—"How is such a thing done?" whereas, we should say: "Is such a thing done?" Our reason is able to create a hundred other worlds, and to find out the beginnings and contexture: it needs neither matter nor foundation. Let it run on; it builds as well in the air as on the earth; and with inanity as well as with matter;

Dare pondus idonea fumo.[4]

"And can give weight to smoke."

[1] *Æneid*, v. 849.

[2] Pope Gregory XIII. having remarked that the error of eleven minutes, which occurred in the Julian year, had given the world ten days more than it was entitled to, paid off the debt to time by at once cutting out ten days from the year 1582, proceeding at once from the 5th to the 15th of October in that year. The new mode of reckoning years is called, after his holiness, the Gregorian calendar, or New Style, while the Julian calendar is termed Old Style, which latter is still followed by the Russians and other members of the Greek Church.

[3] *Roman Questions.*

[4] Persius, v. 20.

I find that almost throughout we should say: "There is no such thing;" and should myself often make use of this answer, but I dare not; for they cry: "It is a defect produced from ignorance and weakness of understanding;" and I am forced, for the most part, to juggle for company, and prate of frivolous and idle subjects, which I don't believe a single word of. Besides that, in truth, 'tis a little rude and quarrelsome, flatly to deny a proposition; and few people but will affirm, especially in things hard to be believed, that they have seen them, or at least will name witnesses whose authority will stop our mouths from contradiction. By this mode we know the foundations and means of things that never were; and the world scuffles about a thousand questions, of which the *pro* and *con* are both false: *Ita finitima sunt falsa veris - - - ut in præcipitem locum non debeat se sapiens committere.*[1] "False things are so like the true, that a wise man should not trust himself upon the precipice."

Truth and lies are faced alike; their port, taste, and proceedings are the same. We look upon them with the same eye. I hold that we are not only remiss in defending ourselves from deceit, but that we seek and offer ourselves to be gulled. We love to entangle ourselves in vanity, as a thing conformable to our being.

What credit false miracles have gained in the world.

I have seen the birth of several miracles of my time. Although they died in the birth, yet have we not failed to foresee what they would have come to, had they lived their full age; for 'tis but finding the end of the clue, and one may wind off as much as one will; and there is a greater distance betwixt nothing and the least thing in the world, than there is betwixt that and the greatest. Now, the first that are imbued with this beginning of novelty, when they set out and sow their history, find, by the oppositions they meet with, where the difficulty of persuasion lies, and so caulk that place with some false piece.[2] Besides that, *insita hominibus libidine alendi de industria rumores*,[3] "men having a natural desire to nourish reports," we naturally make a conscience of restoring what has been lent us, without some usury and access of our substance. Particular error first makes the public error; and afterwards, in turn, the public error makes the particular error.[4] Thus all this vast fabric goes on founding and confounding itself from hand to hand, so that the remotest testimony is better instructed than those that are nearest, and the last informed better than the first. 'Tis a natural progress; for whoever believes any thing, thinks it a work of charity to persuade another into the same opinion, which the better to do, he will make no difficulty of adding as much of his own invention as he conceives necessary to encounter the resistance or want of conception he meets with in others. I myself, who make a great conscience of lying, and am not very solicitous of giving credit and authority to what I say, do yet find that, in the arguments I have in hand, being heated with opposition of another, or by the proper heat of my own narration, I swell and puff up my subject by voice, motion, vigour, and force of words, and, moreover, by extension and amplification, not without some prejudice to the naked truth; but I do it conditionally withal, that to the first who brings me to myself, and who asks me the plain truth, I presently surrender my effort, and deliver it to him without exaggeration, without emphasis, or any larding of my own. A quick and earnest way of speaking, as mine is, is apt to run into hyperbole. There is nothing upon which men commonly are more intent than to make way for their own opinions. Where the ordinary means fail us, we add command and force, fire and sword. 'Tis sad work to be at that pass, that the best trial of truth must be the multitude of believers, in a crowd where the number of fools so much exceeds that of the wise: *Quasi vero quidquam sit tam valde, quam nil sapere, vulgare.*[5] *Sanitatis patrocinium est insanientium turba.*[6] "As if any thing were so common as ignorance. The multitude of fools is a protection to the wise." 'Tis hard to resolve a man's judgement against the common opinions. The first persuasion, taken from the subject itself, possesses the simple; and from them diffuses itself to the wise, under the authority of the number and antiquity of witnesses. For my part, what I should not believe from one, I should not believe from a hundred and one; and do not judge opinions by the years.

A priest that cured all sorts of diseases by words and gestures.

'Tis not long since one of our princes, in whom the gout had spoiled an excellent nature and sprightly disposition, suffered himself to be so far persuaded with the report that was made of the wonderful operations of a certain priest, who, by words and gestures, cured all sorts of diseases, as to go a long journey to seek him out; and by the force of his apprehension, for some hours so persuaded and laid his legs asleep, as to obtain that service from them they had a long time forgotten. Had fortune heaped five or six such like adventures, it had been enough to have brought this

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1 Cicero, *Acad.* ii. 21.

2 "Que d'erreurs monstrueuses accreditées par la science, même qui aurait dû les détruire! On commence par une fausse charte, par un diplôme supposé; on le montre en secret à quelques personnes interessées à le faire valoir; sa reputation s'établit avant même qu'il soit connu. Commence-t-il à percer; les honnêtes gens, les esprits sensés se recrient contre l'imposture; on les fait taire; on rectifie une erreur, on déguise habilement un mensonge; on corrompt le sens du texte par des commentaires. Ecoutons Montaigne, il dira mieux que moi: 'Les premiers qui sont abbruvés de ce commencement d'estrangeté,' &c Qui veut apprendre a douter doit lire ce chapitre entier de Montaigne, le moins methodique de philosophes, mais le plus sage et le plus aimable." Voltaire, *Melanges Historiques.*

3 Livy, xxviii. 24.

4 "Et quum singulorum error publicum fecerit, singulorum errorem facit publicus." Seneca, *Ep.* 81.

5 Cicero, *de Divinat* ii. 30.

6 St. Augustin, *de Civit. Dei*, vi. 10.

miracle into nature. There was afterwards discovered so much simplicity and so little art in the architect of such operations, that he was thought too contemptible to be punished. As would be thought of most such things, were they well examined: *Miramur ex intervallo fallentia*:[1] "We admire at distant things that deceive." So does our sight often represent to us strange images at distance, that vanish as we approach near: *Nunquam ad liquidum fama perducitur*.[2] "Fame is never brought to be clear."

'Tis wonderful from how idle beginnings, and frivolous causes, such famous impressions commonly proceed! This it is that obstructs the information; for whilst we seek out the causes, and the great and weighty ends worthy of so great a name, we lose the true one; they escape our sight by their littleness; and, in truth, a prudent, diligent, and subtle inquisition, indifferent and not prepossessed, is required in such searches. To this very hour all these miracles and strange events have concealed themselves from me. I have never seen a greater monster or miracle in the world than myself. A man grows familiar with all strange things by time and custom; but the more I frequent and the better I know myself, the more does my own deformity astonish me, and the less I understand myself.

What Montaigne thought the clearest of miracles.

The principal right of advancing and producing such accidents is reserved to fortune. Riding the day before yesterday through a village, about two leagues from my house, I found the place yet hot with a miracle which had lately exploded there, wherewith the neighbourhood had been several months amused, so that the neighbouring provinces had begun to take up the excitement, and to run thither in great companies of all sorts of people. A young fellow of the town had one night counterfeited the voice of a spirit in his own house, without any other design at present, but only for sport; but this having succeeded with him a little better than he expected, to illustrate his farce with more actors, he took a stupid silly country girl into the scene, and at last there were three of the same age and understanding; and from domestic lectures, proceeded to public preaching, hiding themselves under the altar of the church, never speaking but by night, and forbidding any light to be brought. From words which tended to the conversion of the world, and threatened the day of judgment (for these are subjects under the authority and reverence of which imposture most securely lurks), they proceeded to some visions and movements so simple and ridiculous, that nothing could hardly be so gross and contemptible amongst little children. Yet had fortune never so little favoured the design, who knows to what height this juggling might have at last arrived? These poor devils are at present in prison, and are like to pay for the common folly, and I know not whether some judge may not make them smart for his share in it. We see clearly through this, which is discovered; but in many things of the like nature, that exceed our knowledge, I am of opinion that we ought to suspend our judgment, both as to rejecting, and as to receiving.

Many abuses in the world are begotten, or, to speak more boldly, all the abuses of the world are begotten, by our being afraid of acknowledging our ignorance, and that we hold ourselves bound to accept all things we are not able to refute: we speak of all things by precepts and resolution. The style at Rome was, that even that which a witness deposed to have seen with his own eyes, and that which a judge determined on his most certain knowledge, was couched in this form of speaking: "It seems to me."[3] They make me hate things that are likely, when they would impose them upon me for infallible: I love these words which mollify and moderate the temerity of our propositions: "Perhaps, in some sort, 'tis said, I think," and the like: and had I had to train up children, I had so put this way of answering into their mouths, inquiring, and not resolutive: "What does this mean? I understand it not; it may be; is it true?" that they should rather have retained the form of pupils at threescore years old, than to go out doctors, as they now do, at ten. He who would cure ignorance, must confess it.

The foundation of all imposture.

Iris is the daughter of Thaumantis:[4] wonder is the foundation of all philosophy; enquiry the progress; ignorance the end. Ay, but there is a sort of ignorance, strong and generous, that yields nothing in honour and courage to knowledge; a knowledge which to conceive requires no less knowledge than knowledge itself. I saw in my younger days a report of a process that Corras,[5] a counsellor of Thoulouse, put in print, of a strange accident of two men, who presented themselves the one for the other. I remember (and I hardly remember any thing else), that he seemed to have rendered the imposture of him whom he judged to be guilty so wonderful, and so far exceeding both our knowledge and his who was the judge, that

[1] Seneca, *Epist.* 118.
[2] Quint. Curt. ix. 2.
[3] Cicero, *Acad.* ii. 47.
[4] That is to say of wonder (*θαῦμα θαυματος*). "Est enim pulcher (the rainbow, *Iris*) et ob eam causam, quia speciem habet *admirabilem*, *Thaumante* dicitur esse natus." Cicero, *de Nat. Deor.* iii. 20. Readers will see that in the text of Montaigne they must read *Thaumas*, not *Thaumante*.
[5] Or rather Coras, a learned jurisconsult, born at Toulouse, 1513, and assassinated at the same place, with three other Protestants, on the 4th October, 1572, shortly after the St. Bartholomew. His works were published, in two volumes, folio, at Lyons, 1556, 1558, and afterwards reprinted at Wittemberg, 1603; and his life was written in Latin by James Coras, the poet, a member of the same family. The trial of which Montaigne speaks is the celebrated affair of the false Martin Guerre, of which Coras published the account referred to, Paris, 1565.

I thought it a very bold sentence that condemned him to be hanged. Let us take up some form of arrest that shall say: "The court understands nothing of the matter:" more freely and ingenuously than the Areopagites did, who, finding themselves perplexed with a cause they could not unravel, ordered the parties to appear again in a hundred years.[1]

As to witches.

The witches of my neighbourhood run a hazard of their lives, upon the formation of every new author that will give a body to their dreams. To accommodate the examples that holy writ gives us of such things, most certain and irrefragable examples, and to tie them to our modern events, being we neither see the causes nor the means, will require another sort of wit than ours. It perhaps only belongs to that sole all-powerful testimony to tell us: "This is, and that is, and not that other." God ought to be believed; that certainly is good reason: but not one amongst us, who is astonished at his own narration (and he must of necessity be astonished, if he be not out of his wits), whether he employ it about other men's affairs, or against himself.

I am plain and dull, and stick to the main point, and that which is likely, avoiding those ancient reproaches: *Majorem fidem homines adhibent eis quæ non intelligunt.— Cupidine humani ingenii, libentius obscura creduntur.*[2] "Men are most apt to believe what they least understand. Through the lust of human wit, obscure things are more easily credited." I see very well that men are angry, and forbid me to doubt upon pain of insults and injuries: a new way of persuading! Mercy, for God's sake; I am not to be cuffed into belief. Let them be angry with those that accuse their opinion of falsity; I only accuse it of difficulty and boldness, and condemn the opposite affirmation equally with them, if not so imperiously. Who will establish his argument by overbearing and huffing, discovers his reason to be weak. For a verbal and scholastic altercation, let them have as much appearance as their contradictors; *Videantur sane, non affirmentur modo*.[3] "Let them suggest things as probable, but not affirm them:" but in the real consequence they draw from it, these have much the advantage. To kill men, a clear and shining light is required; and our life is too real and essential to warrant these supernatural and fantastic accidents.

As to drugs and poisons, I throw them out of my account; they are homicides, and of the worst sort: yet even in this, 'tis said, that we are not always to rely even upon the confessions of these people themselves; for they have sometimes been known to accuse themselves of the murder of persons who have afterwards been found living and well. In these other extravagant accusations, I should be apt to say that it is sufficient for a man, what recommendation soever he may have, to be believed in human things; but of what is beyond his conception and of supernatural effect, he ought then only to be believed when authorized by a supernatural approbation. The privilege it has pleased God to give to some of our witnesses, ought not to be lightly communicated and made cheap. I have my ears battered with a thousand such flim-flams as these: "Three saw him such a day in the east; three the next day in the west; at such an hour, in such a place, in such a habit:" in truth, I should not believe myself. How much more natural and likely do I find it that two men should lie, than that one man, in twelve hours' time, should fly with the wind from east to west! How much more natural, that our understanding should be carried from its place, by the volubility of our disordered minds, than that one of us should be carried by a strange spirit upon a broom-stick, flesh and bones as we are, up the funnel of a chimney! Let us not seek illusions from without and unknown, who are perpetually agitated with illusions domestic, and our own. Methinks a man is pardonable in disbelieving a miracle, as much at least as he can divert and elude the verification of it by ways other than marvellous; and I am of St. Augustin's opinion, "that 'tis better to lean towards doubt than assurance, in things hard to prove and dangerous to believe."

'Tis now some years ago that I travelled through the territories of a foreign prince, who, in my favour, and to abate my incredulity, did me the honour to let me see in his own presence and in private, ten or twelve prisoners of this kind; and amongst others an old hag, a real witch in foulness and deformity, who long had been famous in that profession. I saw both proofs and free confessions, and I know not what insensible mark upon the miserable creature; I examined and talked with her, and the rest, as much and as long as I would, and made the best and soundest observations I could, and I am not a man to suffer my judgment to be captivated by prepossession; and, in the end, should in conscience sooner have prescribed them hellebore than hemlock: *Captisque res magis mentibus, quam conscleratis, similis visa*.[4] "The thing was rather to be attributed to madness than malice:" justice has correction proper for such maladies. As to the oppositions and arguments that honest men have made me, both there, and often in other places, I have met with none that have convinced me, and that have not admitted a more likely solution than their conclusions. It is true, indeed, that the proofs and reasons that are founded upon experience and matter of fact, I do not go about to untie; neither have they any end: I often cut them, as Alexander did the gordian-knot. After all, 'tis setting a man's conjectures at a

[1] Val. Max. viii. 1. Aulus Gellius, xii. 7.

[2] The second of these paragraphs is from Tacitus, *Hist.* i. 22. I know not whence Montaigne borrowed the other.

[3] Cicero, *Acad.* ii. 27.

[4] Livy, viii. 18.

very high price, to cause a man to be roasted alive upon them.

We are told by several examples (and particularly Prestantius of his father[1]), that being more profoundly asleep than men usually are, he fancied himself to be a mare, and that he served the soldiers for a sumpter; and what he fancied himself to be, he was.[2] If sorcerers dream so materially, if dreams can sometimes so incorporate themselves with effects of life, I cannot believe that therefore our will should be accountable to justice; which I say, as a man, who am neither judge nor privy councillor, nor think myself by many degrees worthy so to be, but a man of the common sort, born and vowed to the obedience of the public realm, both in words and acts. He that should record my idle talk, to the prejudice of the most paltry law, opinion, or custom of his parish, would do himself a great deal of wrong, and me too; for in what I say, I warrant no other certainty but that 'tis what I had then in my thought, a thought tumultuous and wavering. All I say is by way of discourse: *Nec me pudet ut istos, fateri nescire quod nesciam*:[3] "Neither am I ashamed, as they are, to confess my ignorance of what I do not know:" I should not speak so boldly if it were my due to be believed; and so I told a great man, who complained to me of the tartness and contention of my advice. Perceiving you to be ready and prepared on one part, I propose to you the other, with all the care I can to clear your judgment, not to enforce it. God has your hearts in his hand, and will furnish you with choice. I am not so presumptuous as to desire that my opinions should so much as give an inclination in a thing of so great importance: my fortune has not trained them up to so potent and elevated conclusions. Truly, I have not only a great many humours, but also a great many opinions; that I would endeavour to make my son dislike, if I had one. The truest are not always the most commodious to man: he is of too wild a composition.

Whether it be to the purpose or not, 'tis no great matter; 'tis a common proverb in Italy, that he knows not Venus in her perfect sweetness, who has never lain with a lame mistress. Fortune, or some particular accident, has long ago put this saying into the mouths of the people; and the same is said of the men as well as of women; for the queen of the Amazons answered the Scythian, who courted her to love, ἄριστα χωλὸς οἰφεῖ,[4] lame men perform best. In this feminal republic, to evade the dominion of the males, they lamed them in their infancy, arms, legs, and other members that gave them advantage over them, and only made use of men in that wherein we in the other parts of the world make use of women. I should be apt to think that the irregular movement of the lame mistress added some new pleasure to the work, and some extraordinary titillation to those who were at the sport; but I have lately learnt that ancient philosophy has itself determined it:[5] it says that the legs and thighs of lame women not receiving, by reason of their imperfection, their due aliment, it falls out that the genital parts above are fuller, and better supplied, and more vigorous; or else that this defect hindering exercise, they who are engaged in it less disperse their strength, and come more entire to the sports of Venus; which also is the reason why the Greeks decried the women weavers, as being more hot than other women, by reason of their sedentary trade, which is carried on without any great exercise of the body. What is it we may not reason of at this rate? I might also say of these, that the jogging which their work causes while they are sitting, rouses and provokes their desire, as the swinging and motion of coaches does that of our ladies.

Lame people best at the sport of Venus.

Women weavers more lustful than other women.

Do not these examples serve to make good what I said at first: that our reasons often anticipate the effect, and have so infinite an extent of jurisdiction, that they judge and exercise themselves, even in inanity and where there is no being? Besides, the flexibility of our invention to forge reasons for all sorts of dreams, our imagination is equally facile to receive impressions of falsity, by very frivolous appearances; for, by the sole authority of the ancient and common use of this proverb, I have formerly made myself believe that I had more pleasure with a woman, by reason she was not straight, and reckoned that deformity amongst her graces.

Torquato Tasso, in the comparison he makes between France and Italy,[6] says he has observed that our legs are generally smaller than those of the Italian gentlemen, and attributes the cause of it to our being continually on horseback; which is the very same from which Suetonius draws a quite different conclusion; for he says, on the contrary, that Germanicus had made his legs bigger by continuation of the same exercise.[7] There is nothing so supple and erratic as our

The French gentlemen's legs smaller than those of the Italians, and why.

[1] St. Augustin, *De Civit. Dei*, xviii. 18. The holy father opines, that "in cases of this sort the devil presents to the spectators a visionary body which they take for a real animal, a horse, an ass, &c., and that the man who imagines himself to be that ass, or that horse, thinks he carries a real burden, as much as it was possible for him to fancy it in a dream; so that if such phantom of an animal carries real bodies, they are the demons who carry them in order to deceive men, who then see real bodies on the back of a sumpter-horse, which is a mere phantom."

[2] "Quod ita, ut narravit, factum fuisse compertum est." —St. Aug. *ut supra*.

[3] Cicero, *Tusc. Quæs.* i. 25.

[4] Michael Apostolius, *Proverb. Centur.* 4, num. 43. It was doubtless this opinion that induced the ancients to assign the lame Vulcan as the husband of Venus.

[5] Aristotle, *Problem.* sect. 10, prob. 26.

[6] *Paragone dell' Italia alla Francia*, page 11. *Nella parte prima delle Rime e prose del Sign.* Torquat. Tasso, *in Ferrara, Ann.* 1585.

[7] *Life of Caligula.*

understanding; 'tis like the shoe of Theramenes, fit for all feet;[1] 'tis double and various; and the matters are double and diverse too. "Give me a drachm of silver," said a Cynic philosopher to Antigonus. "That is not a present befitting a king," replied he. "Give me then a talent," said the other. "That is not a present befitting a Cynic."[2]

Seu plures calor ille vias et cæca relaxat
Spiramenta, novas veniat qua succus in herbas:
Seu durat magis, et venas astringit hiantes;
Ne tenues pluviæ, rapidive potentia solis
Acrior, aut Boreæ penetrabile frigus adurat.[3]

"Whether earth gain fresh strength or richer food,
Or noxious moisture, forced by fire, exude;
Whether it draw through many an opening vein,
Juices to fresh plants that clothe anew the plain;
Or brace the pores that, pervious to the day,
Felt the prone sun's intolerable ray;
To piercing showers th' expanded fissure close,
And the chill north that blisters as it blows."

Ogni medaglia ha il suo reverso. "Every medal has its reverse." This is why Climotachus said of old, that Carneades had outdone the labours of Hercules, in having taken from man consent, that is to say, opinion and the temerity of judging.[4] This so strong fancy of Carneades sprung, in my opinion, anciently from the impudence of those who made profession of knowledge, and their immeasurable self-conceit. Æsop was set for sale with two other slaves; the buyer asked the first what he could do; he, to enhance his own value, promised mountains and miracles, saying he could do this, and that, and I know not what; the second said as much of himself, and more; when it came to Æsop's turn, and that he was also asked what he could do: "Nothing," said he, "for these two have taken up all before me; they can do every thing."[5] So has it happened in the school of philosophy; the pride of those who attributed the capacity of all things to human wit, created in others, out of spite and emulation, this opinion, that it is capable of nothing: the one maintain the same extreme in ignorance that the others do in knowledge, in order to make it undeniable that man is immoderate throughout, and can give no other positive sentence but that of necessity, and the want of ability to proceed farther.

CHAPTER XII.

OF PHYSIOGNOMY.

ALMOST all the opinions we have are derived from authority, and taken upon trust; and 'tis not amiss: we could not choose worse than by ourselves, in so weak an age. That image of the discourses of Socrates, which his friends have transmitted to us, we approve upon no other account but from the reverence to public approbation; 'tis not according to our own knowledge; they are not after our way; if any thing of this kind should spring up now, few men would value them. We discern not the graces, otherwise than by certain features, touched up and illustrated by art; such as glide on in their own purity and simplicity easily escape so gross a sight as ours; they have a delicate and concealed beauty; there needs a clear and purified sight to discover so secret a light. Is not simplicity, according to our notions, cousin-german to folly, and a quality of reproach? Socrates makes his soul move a natural and common motion; a peasant said this, a woman said that; he never has any thing in his mouth but carters, joiners, cobblers, and masons; these are deductions and similitudes drawn from the most common and known actions of men; every one understands them. Under so vile a form we should never have entertained the nobility and splendour of his admirable conceptions; we who think all things low and flat that are not elevated by learning, and who discern no riches but in pomp and show. This world of ours is only formed for ostentation; men are only puffed up with wind, and are bandied to and fro like foot-balls. That man proposed to himself no vain and idle fancies; his design was to furnish us with precepts and things that really and more fitly serve to the use of life;

We admire the discourses of Socrates out of pure respect to the public approbation, without discerning the true value of them.

Servare modum, finemque tenere,
Naturamque sequi.[6]

"To keep a mean, his end still to observe,
And from the laws of nature ne'er to swerve."

He was also always one and the same,[7] and raised himself, not by starts, but by complexion, to the highest pitch of vigour; or, to say it better, he exalted nothing, but rather brought down and reduced to his original, and natural condition, all asperities and difficulties; for, in Cato, 'tis most manifest that it is a proceeding extended far beyond the common ways; in the brave exploits of his life, and in his death, we find him always mounted upon the high horse; whereas this man[8] always creeps upon the ground, and with a slow and ordinary pace, treats of the most useful discourses, and bears himself, both at his death, and in the most thorny traverses that could present themselves, in the ordinary course of human life.

It has fallen out well, that the man most worthy to be known, and to be presented to the world for example, should be he of whom we have the most certain knowledge; he has been

The character of Socrates.

[1] Erasmus, Adagia, *in verbo*.
[2] Seneca, *de Benef.* ii. 17.
[3] Virgil, *Georgic*, i. 89.
[4] Cicero, *Acad.* ii. 24.
[5] Plinud. *in vitâ*.
[6] Lucan ii. 381, speaking of Cato.
[7] Cicero, *de Offic.* i. 26.
[8] *Socrates.*

made dear to us by the most clear-sighted men that ever were; the testimonies we have of *him* are admirable, both in fidelity and capacity. 'Tis a great thing that he was able so to order the pure imaginations of a child, that, without altering or wresting them, he has thereby produced the most beautiful effects of a human soul; he presents it neither elevated nor rich, he only represents it sound, but certainly with a pure and sprightly health. By these common and natural springs, by these ordinary and vulgar fancies, without being moved or making any bustle, he set up, not only the most regular but the most high and vigorous beliefs, actions, and manners that ever were. 'Tis he who brought back from heaven, where she was losing her time, human wisdom, to restore her to man, with whom her most just and greatest business lies.[1] See *him* plead before his judges; observe by what reasons he rouses his courage to the hazards of war; with what arguments he fortifies his patience against calumny, tyranny, death, and the shrewishness of his wife; you will find nothing in all this borrowed from the arts and sciences; the simplest may there discover their own means and power; 'tis not possible more to retire, or to creep more low. He has done human nature a great kindness in showing it how much it can do of itself.

We are all of us richer than we think for; but we are taught to borrow and to beg, and brought up more to make use of what is another's, than of our own. Man can in nothing fix and conform himself in his mere necessity; of pleasure, wealth, and power, he grasps at more than he can hold; his greediness is incapable of moderation. And I find that in curiosity of knowing he is the same; he cuts himself out more work than he can do, and more than he needs to do, extending the utility of knowledge as far as its matter: *Ut omnium rerum, sic litterarum quoque, intemperantia laboramus*;[2] "As of every thing else, we are also afflicted with intemperance in letters;" and Tacitus has reason to commend the mother of Agricola for having restrained her son in his too violent appetite for learning.[3]

Man incapable of moderation.

'Tis a good, if duly considered, which has in it, as the other goods of men have, a great deal of vanity, and of proper and natural weakness, and that costs very dear. The acquisition of it is more hazardous than that of any other meat or drink; for in other things, what we have bought we carry home in some vessel, and there have liberty to examine our purchase, and consider when and how much of it we will take; but the sciences we can, at the very first, bestow into no other vessel than the soul; we swallow them as we buy them, and return from the market, either already infected or amended; there are some that only burden and overcharge the stomach instead of nourishing; and others that, under colour of curing, poison us. I have been pleased, in places where I have been, to see men, out of devotion, make a vow of ignorance as well as of chastity, poverty, and penitence; 'tis also a gelding of our unruly appetites to blunt this cupidity that spurs us on to the study of books, and to deprive the soul of this voluptuous complacency, that tickles us with the idea of knowledge; and 'tis plenarily to accomplish the vow of poverty to add unto it that of the mind. We need little learning to teach us how to live at our ease; and Socrates tells us that it is in us, with the way how to find it, and the manner how to use it. All this knowledge of ours that exceeds the natural is well nigh superfluous and vain; 'tis much if it do not more burden and cumber us than it does us good: *Paucis opus est litteris ad mentem bonam*:[4] "A man of good natural parts has no great need of learning:" 'tis a feverish excess of the mind; a tempestuous and unquiet instrument. Collect yourself; you will find in yourself the arguments of nature against death true, and the most proper to serve you in time of need; 'tis they that make a peasant, an entire people, die with as much firmness as a philosopher. Should I have died less cheerfully before I had read Cicero's Tusculans? I believe not; and when I find myself at the best, I perceive that my tongue is enriched indeed, but my courage little or nothing elevated by them; it is just as nature forged it at first, and against any conflict only defends itself after a natural and ordinary way: books have not so much served me for instruction as for exercise. What if knowledge, trying to arm us with new defences against natural inconveniences, has more imprinted in our fancies their weight and grandeur, than her reasons and subtleties to secure us from them? They are subtleties, indeed, with which she often alarms us to little purpose; do but observe how many slight and frivolous, and, if nearly examined, how many incorporeal arguments the closest and wisest authors scatter about a good one; they are no other but verbal quirks to gull us; but forasmuch as this may be with some profit, I will shift them no farther; many of that sort are here, dispersed up and down, either borrowed or imitated; yet ought a man to take heed not to call that force which is only a knack of writing, and that solid which is only quick, or that good which is only fine: *Quæ magis gustata quam potata delectant*;[5] "Which more delight in tasting than in being drunk;" every thing that pleases does not nourish, *ubi non ingenii, sed animi negotium agitur*.[6] "Where the question is not about improving the wit, but bettering the understanding."

Learning is a dangerous acquisition. That which is of absolute use is in us by nature.

[1] Cicero, *Acad.* i. 4.
[2] Seneca, *Epist.* 106.
[3] *Life of Agricola*, c. 4.
[4] Seneca, *Epist.* 106.
[5] Cicero, *Tusc. Quæs.* v. 5.
[6] Seneca, *Epist.* 75.

To see the work that Seneca makes to fortify himself against death; to see him sweat and pant to harden and encourage himself, and fight so long upon the perch, would have lessened his reputation with me, had he not very bravely maintained it to the last. His so ardent and frequent agitations discover that he was himself impetuous and ardent (*Magnus animus remissius loquitur, et securius . . . non est alius ingenio, alius animo color,*[1] "A great courage speaks more negligently, more securely . . . wit and courage wear one and the same livery;" he must be convicted at his own expense); and he does in some sort discover that he was hard pressed by his enemy. Plutarch's way, by *how much* it is more disdainful and negligent, is in my opinion so much the more manly and persuasive: I am apt to believe that his soul had more assured and more regular motions. The one, more sharp, pricks and makes us start, and more touches the soul; the other more solid, who informs, establishes, and constantly supports us, more touches the understanding. That ravishes the judgment, this wins it. I have likewise seen other writings, yet more reverenced than these, that, in the representation of the conflict they maintain against the temptations of the flesh, paint them so sharp, so powerful, and invincible, that we, who are of the common sort of people, are apt as much to wonder at the strangeness and unknown force of their temptation, as at their resistance.

A comparison between Seneca and Plutarch.

To what end do we go arming ourselves with these efforts of science? Let us look down to the earth, upon the poor people that we see scattered about, prone and intent upon their business, that neither know Aristotle nor Cato, example nor precept: even from these does nature every day extract effects of constancy and patience, more pure and firm than those who so inquisitively study in the schools. How many do I ordinarily see who slight poverty? How many that desire to die, or that die without alarm or regret? He that is now digging in my garden has this morning buried his father, or his son. The very names by which they call diseases sweeten and mollify the sharpness of them: the phthysic is with them no more than a cough, the dysentery but a looseness, a pleurisy but a cold, and as they gently name them, so they lightly endure them; they are very great and grievous indeed when they hinder their ordinary labour, and they never keep their beds but to die: *Simplex illa et aperta virtus in obscuram et solertem scientiam versa est.*[2] "That plain and simple virtue is converted into an obscure and subtle knowledge."

The resolution of the vulgar in facing the most fatal accidents of life, and even death itself, more instructive than the lectures of the philosophers.

I was writing this about the time when a great load of our intestine troubles for several months, lay with all its weight upon me: I had the enemy at my door on one side, and the freebooters, worse enemies than they, on the other: *Non armis, sed vitiis certatur;* "Fighting not with arms, but with vices;" and underwent all sorts of military injuries at once:

Montaigne's account of the terrible calamities of the civil war in which he was involved.

> Hostis adest dextra lævaque a parte timendus,
> Vicinoque malo terret utrumque latus.[3]
>
> "On either hand an enemy alarms,
> And threatens both sides with injurious arms."

A monstrous war! Other wars are bent against strangers, this against itself; and destroys itself with its own poison. 'Tis of so malignant and ruinous a nature, that it ruins itself with the rest; and with its own rage mangles and tears itself to pieces. We oftener see it dissolve of itself, than through scarcity of any necessaries, or by force of the enemy. All discipline evades it; it comes to compose sedition, and is itself full of it; will chastise disobedience, and itself is the example; and, employed for the defence of the laws, rebels against its own. What a condition are we in! Our physic makes us sick!

> Nostre mal s'empoisonne
> Du secours qu'on luy donne.
>
> Exsuperat magis, segrescitque medendo.[4]
>
> "His physic makes him worse, and sicker still."
>
> Omnia fanda, nefanda, malo permista furore,
> Justificam nobis mentem avertere deorum.[5]
>
> "For right and wrong, confounded in this war,
> Have robb'd us of the gods' protecting care."

In the beginning of these popular maladies a man may distinguish the sound from the sick; but when they come to continue, as ours have done, the whole body is then infected from head to foot, and no part is free from corruption; for there is no air that men so greedily draw in, that diffuses itself so soon, and that penetrates so deep, as that of license. Our armies only subsist, and are kept together by the cement of strangers: for of French there is now no constant and regular army to be made. Oh, shame! there is no more discipline now to be seen but in borrowed soldiers. As to ourselves, we conduct ourselves at the discretion, not of the chief, but every one at his own; the general has a harder game to play within than he has without; 'tis for the commander to follow the soldiers, to pay court to them, to consult their humours; he alone has to obey; all the rest is dissolute and free. It pleases me to observe how much pusillanimity and cowardice there is in ambition; by how abject and servile ways it must arrive at its end; but, withal, it displeases me to see good and generous natures, and that

[1] Seneca, *Epist.* 114, 118.
[2] Id. *ib.* 95.
[3] Ovid, *de Ponto*, i. 3, 57.
[4] *Æneid*, xii. 46.
[5] Catullus, *de Nupt. Pelei et Thetidos*, verse 405.

are capable of justice, every day corrupted in the management and command of this confusion. Long toleration begets habit; habit, consent and imitation. We had enough of ill-born souls, without spoiling those that were generous and good; so that if we go on, there will not remain any with whom to entrust the health of this state of ours, in case fortune chances to restore it:

> Hunc saltem everso juvenem succurrere seclo
> Ne prohibite.[1]
>
> "O, let this youth a prostrate world sustain."

What is become of the old precept, that soldiers ought more to fear their chief than the enemy?[2] And that wonderful example, that an orchard being enclosed within the precincts of a camp of the Roman army, was seen at their dislodgment the next day, in the same condition, not an apple, though ripe and delicious, being pulled, but all left to the owner?[3] I could wish that our youth, instead of the time they spend in less fruitful travels and less honourable employments, would bestow one half of that time in being an eye-witness of naval exploits under some good captain-commander of Rhodes, and the other half in observing the discipline of the Turkish armies; for they have many differences and advantages over ours: one of which is, that our soldiers become more licentious in expeditions, theirs more temperate and circumspect; for the thefts and insolences committed upon the common people, which are only punished with a cudgel in peace, are capital in war; for an egg taken in Turkey without paying for it, fifty blows with a cudgel is the prefixed rate; for any thing else, how trivial soever, not necessary to nourishment, they are presently impaled, or beheaded without mercy. I am astonished, in the history of Selim, the most cruel conqueror that ever was, to see that, when he subdued Egypt, the beautiful gardens about Damascus, though all open, and in a conquered land, and his army encamped upon the very place, should be left untouched by the hands of the soldiers, because they had not received the signal of plunder.

But is there any disease in a government so important as ought to be physicked with such a mortal drug? "No," says Favonius,[4] "not so much as the tyrannical usurpation of a commonwealth." Plato, likewise,[5] will not consent that a man should do violence to the peace of his country to cure it; and by no means approves of a reformation that disturbs and hazards all, and that is to be purchased at the price of the citizens' blood and ruin; determining it to be the duty of a patriot, in such a case, to let things alone; and only to pray to God for his extraordinary assistance; and he seems to be angry with his friend Dion for having proceeded something after another manner. I was a Platonist in this point, before I knew there had ever been such a man as Plato in the world. And if this person ought absolutely to be rejected from our society, he who, by the sincerity of his conscience, merited from the divine favour to penetrate so far into the Christian light, through the universal darkness wherein the world was involved in his time, I do not think it would well become us to suffer ourselves to be instructed by a heathen, how great an impiety it is not to expect from God any relief simply his own, and without our co-operation. I often doubt whether, among so many men as meddle in such affairs, there is not to be found some one of so weak understanding as to have been really persuaded that he went towards reformation by the worst of deformations; that he advanced towards his salvation by the most express causes that we have of most assured damnation; that by overthrowing the government, magistracy, and laws, in whose protection God had placed him, by tearing his mother to pieces, and giving the lacerated limbs to her old enemies to gloat over, by inspiring fraternal minds with parricidial animosities, by calling devils and furies to his aid, he can assist the holy sweetness and justice of the divine laws. Ambition, avarice, cruelty, and revenge, have not sufficient natural impetuosity of their own; let us bait them with the glorious titles of justice and devotion. There cannot a worse state of things be imagined than where wickedness comes to be legitimate, and assumes, with the magistrate's permission, the cloke of virtue: *Nihil in speciem fallacius quam prava religio ubi deorum numen prætenditur sceleribus.*[6] "Nothing has a more deceiving face than false religion, where devotion is pretended by wicked men." The extremest sort of injustice, according to Plato, is where that which is unjust is reputed just.[7]

The common people then suffered therein very much, not present damages only,

> Undique totis
> Usque adeo turbatur agris,[8]
>
> "So great disturbance reigns throughout the land,"

but future too: the living were to suffer, and so were they who were yet unborn: they pillaged them, and consequently me too, even of hope, taking from them all they had laid up in store to live on for many years:

> Quæ nequeunt secum ferre aut abducere, perdunt;
> Et cremat insontes turba scelesta casas.[9]
> Muris nulla fides, squalent populatibus agri.[10]

[1] Virgil, *Georgic.* i. 500. Montaigne probably alludes to Henry of Navarre, afterwards Henry IV. of France.
[2] Val. Maximus, ii. 7, *ext.* 2.
[3] Frontin. *Stratag.* iv. 3, 13, speaking of the army of M. Scaurus.
[4] Plutarch, *Life of Marcus Brutus*, c. 3.
[5] *Epist. to Perdiccas.*
[6] Livy, xxxix. 16.
[7] *Republic*, ii. 4.
[8] Virgil, *Eclog.* i. 11.
[9] Ovid. *Trist.* iii 10 65.
[10] Claudian, *in Eutrop.* i. 244.

"What they can't bear away they spoil and spurn,
And the lewd rabble harmless houses burn;
Walls can't secure their masters, and the field,
Through woful waste, does an ill prospect yield."

Besides this shock, I suffered others; I underwent the inconveniences that moderation brings along with it in such diseases; I was curried on all hands; to the Ghibelline I was a Guelph; to the Guelph a Ghibelline; one of my poets expresses this very well, but I know not where it is. The situation of my house, and my friendliness to my neighbours, presented me with one face; my life and my actions with another. They did not lay formal accusations against me, for they had no hold. I never slink from the laws, and whoever would have questioned me, would have done himself a greater prejudice than me; they were only mute suspicions that were whispered about, which never want appearance in so confused a mixture, no more than envious or idle heads. I commonly assist the injurious presumptions that fortune scatters abroad against me, by a way I have ever had of evading to justify, excuse, or explain myself, conceiving that it were to compromise my conscience to plead in its behalf: *Perspicuitas enim augmentatione elevatur*:[1] "For perspicuity is clouded by augmentation." And, as if every one saw as clearly into me as I do myself, instead of retiring from an accusation, I step up to meet it, and rather give it some kind of colour by an ironical and scoffing confession, if I do not sit totally silent, as of a thing not worth my answer. But such as look upon this kind of behaviour of mine as too haughty a confidence, have as little kindness for me as they who interpret it the weakness of an indefensible cause; particularly great people, towards whom want of submission is the extreme fault, and who are rude to all justice that knows and feels itself, and is not submissive, humble, and suppliant: I have often knocked my head against this pillar. So it is, that at what then befel me an ambitious man would have hanged himself, and a covetous one would have done the same. I have no manner of care of getting;

Sit mihi quod nunc est etiam minus, et mihi vivam
Quod superest ævi, si quid superesse volent di:[2]

"This is my prayer: let me possess
My present wealth, or even less;
And if the bounteous gods should deign
A longer life, that life be mine:"

but the losses that befel me by the injury of others, whether by theft or violence, go almost as near my heart, as they would do to that of the most avaricious man. The offence troubles me, without comparison, more than the loss. A thousand several sorts of mischiefs fell upon me in the neck of one another; I could better have borne them all at once.

I had already begun considering to whom amongst my friends I might commit a necessitous and degraded old age: and having turned my eyes quite round, I found myself altogether at a loss. To let one's self fall plump down, and from so great a height, it ought to be in the arms of a solid, vigorous, and fortunate friendship; they are very rare, if there be any. At last I concluded that it was safest for me to trust to myself in my necessity; and if it should fall out that I should be put upon cold terms in fortune's favour, I should so much more recommend me to my own, and so much the closer attach me to myself. Men on all occasions throw themselves upon foreign help, to spare their own, which is the only certain and sufficient one, for him who knows how to arm himself therewith. Every one runs elsewhere, and to the future, forasmuch as no one is arrived at himself. And I was satisfied that they were profitable inconveniences, forasmuch as ill scholars are to be admonished with the rod, when reason will not do; as a crooked piece of wood is by fire and straining to be reduced to straightness. I have a great while preached to myself to keep to myself, and separate myself from the affairs of others; yet I am still turning my eyes aside; a bow, a kind word, or look from a great person tempts me; of which God knows how little scarcity there is in these days, and how little they signify! I still, without wrinkling my forehead, hearken to the persuasions that are offered me to draw me into the market-place; and so gently refuse, as if I were half willing to be overcome. Now, to so indocile a spirit, blows are required; and this vessel which thus chops and cleaves, and is ready to fall in pieces, must have the hoops forced down with good sound strokes of a mallet. Secondly, that this accident served me for exercise to prepare for worse; if I, who, both by the benefit of fortune, and by the condition of my manners, hoped to be the last, should happen to be one of the first that should be trapped in this storm; instructing myself betimes to constrain my life, and fit it for a new condition. The true liberty is to be able to do what a man will with himself: *Potentissimus est qui se habet in potestate*.[3] "He is most potent, who has himself in his own power." In an ordinary and quiet time, a man prepares himself for moderate and common accidents; but, in the confusion wherein we have been for these thirty years, every Frenchman, whether in particular or in general, sees himself every hour upon the point of the total ruin and overthrow of his fortune; by so much the more ought he to have his courage furnished with stronger and more vigorous provision. Let us thank fortune, that has not made us live in an effeminate, idle, and languishing age; some, who could never have been so by other means, will be made famous by their misfortunes. As

How he bore his misfortune

[1] Cicero, *de Nat. Deor* iii. 4
[2] Horace, *Epist.* i. 18, 107.
[3] Seneca, *Epist.* 90.

I seldom read in histories the confusions of other states, without regret that I was not present, the better to consider them, so does my curiosity make me in some sort please myself with seeing with my own eyes this notable spectacle of our public death, its form and symptoms; and, seeing I could not hinder it, am content to be destined to assist in it, and thereby to instruct myself. Thus do we greedily covet to see, though in shadow, and in the fables of theatres, the tragic representations of human fortune; 'tis not without compassion of what we hear, but we please ourselves in rousing our trouble, by the rarity of these pitiable events. Nothing tickles that does not pinch. And good historians skip over, as a stagnant water and dead sea, calm narrations, to be again upon the stories of wars and seditions, which they know are most acceptable to the reader.

I question whether or no I can handsomely confess with how insignificant a sacrifice of the repose and tranquillity of my life, I have passed over above the one half of it amid the ruin of my country. I am a little too liberal of patience, in accidents that do not directly affect me, and, in pitying myself, do not so much regard what they take from me, as what remains safe, both within and without. There is comfort in evading, one while one, another while another, of those evils that are levelled at me too at last, but at present hurt others only about us: as also that, in matters of public interest, the more my affection is universally dispersed, the weaker it is; to which may be added that it is half true, *tantum ex publicis malis sentimus, quantum ad privatas res pertinet*;[1] "we are only so far sensible of public evils, as they respect our private affairs;" and that the health from which we fell was such that itself lessens the regret we ought to have. It was health, but only in comparison of the sickness that has succeeded it; we are not fallen from any great height: corruption and thievery that is in dignity and office, seems to me the most insupportable; 'tis less annoying to be rifled in a wood than in a place of security. It was a universal junction of particular members, rotten in emulation of one another, and the most of them with inveterate ulcers, that neither required nor admitted of any cure.

This sinking, therefore, did rather animate than oppress me, by the assistance of my conscience, which was not only at peace within itself, but elevated, and I did not find any reason to complain of myself. Also, as God never sends evil, any more than good, absolutely unmixed to men, my health continued at that time more than usually good: and, as I can do nothing without it, there are few things that I cannot do with it. It afforded me means to rouse up all my provision, and to lay my hand before the wound, that would else perhaps have gone farther, and experienced that, in my patience, I had some stand against fortune; and that it must be a great shock could throw me out of the saddle. I do not say this to provoke her to give me a more vigorous charge; I am her humble servant, and submit to her pleasure. Let her be content with what she has done, in God's name. Do you ask if I am sensible of her assaults? Yes, certainly. But, as those who are possessed and oppressed with sorrow, may sometimes suffer themselves, nevertheless, by intervals to taste a little pleasure, and are sometimes surprised with a smile, so have I so much power over myself as to make my ordinary condition quiet and free from disturbing thoughts; but I suffer myself withal, by fits, to be surprised with the stings of those unpleasing imaginations, that assault me whilst I am arming myself to drive them away, or at least to wrestle with them.

But behold another aggravation of the evil, which befel me in the tail of the rest. Both without doors and within, I was assaulted with a plague, most violent in comparison of all others; for, as sound bodies are subject to more grievous maladies, forasmuch as they are not to be forced but by such, so my very healthful air, where no contagion, though very near, in the memory of man, had ever taken footing, coming to be corrupted, produced strange effects:

Account of a fatal plague, that happened at that time in the country where Montaigne lived.

> Mista senum et juvenum densantur funera; nullum
> Sæva caput Proserpina fugit.[2]
>
> "Of old and young see thousands die;
> No one from cruel Proserpine can fly."

I had to suffer this pleasant condition, that the sight of my house was frightful to me; whatever I had there was without guard, and left to the mercy of every one. I myself, who am of so hospitable a nature, was myself in very great distress for a retreat for my family; a wild and scattered family, frightful both to its friends and itself, and filling every place with horror where it attempted to settle; having to shift abode as soon as any one's finger begun to ache; all diseases are then concluded to be the plague, and people do not stay to examine what they are. And the mischief is, that, according to the rules of art, in every danger that a man comes near, he must undergo a quarantine in the suspense of his infirmity, your imagination all that while tormenting you at pleasure, and turning even your health itself into a fever. Yet all this would have gone the less to my heart, had I not withal been compelled to be sensible of others' sufferings, and miserably to serve six months together for a guide to this caravan; for I carry my antidotes within myself, which are resolution and patience. Apprehension, which is particularly to be feared in this

[1] Livy, xxx. 44.

[2] Horace, *Od.* i. 28, 19.

disease, does not much trouble me; and if, being alone, I should have taken it, it had been a more sprightly and a longer flight: 'tis a kind of death that I do not think of the worse sort; 'tis usually short, stupid, without pain, and consoled by the public condition; without ceremony, without mourning, and without a crowd. But as to the people about us, the hundredth part of them could not be saved:

Videas desertaque regna
Pastorum, et longè saltus lateque vacantes.[1]

"Deserted realms now may'st thou see of swains,
And every where forsaken groves and plains."

In this place, my greatest revenue is manual: what an hundred men ploughed for me lay a long time fallow.

The fortitude of the common people in this general desolation.

But then what example of resolution did we not see in the simplicity of all this people? Every one generally renounced all care of life: the grapes, the principal wealth of the country, hung in clusters upon the vines; every one indifferently preparing for, and expecting death, either to-night or to-morrow, with a countenance and voice so far from fear, as if they had contracted with death in this necessity, and that it had been a universal and inevitable sentence. 'Tis always such: but how slender a hold has the resolution of dying? The distance and difference of a few hours, the sole consideration of company, renders the apprehension and the idea various to us. Do but observe these: by reason that they died in the same month, children, young people and old, they were no longer astonished at it, they no more lamented. I saw some who were afraid of staying behind, as in a dreadful solitude; and I did not commonly observe any other solicitude amongst them than that of sepulture; they were troubled to see the dead bodies scattered about the fields at the mercy of beasts, which presently began to flock about them. How differing are the fancies of men! The Negrites, a nation subjected by Alexander, threw the bodies of their dead in the deepest parts of their woods, on purpose to have them there eaten, the only sepulture reputed happy amongst them.[2] Some, who were yet in health, digged their own graves; others laid them down in them whilst yet alive; and a labourer of mine, while dying, with his hands and feet pulled the earth upon him. Was not this to nustle and settle himself to sleep at greater ease? A bravery, in some sort, like that of the Roman soldiers, who, after the battle of Cannæ, were found with their heads thrust into holes in the earth, which they had made, and there suffocated themselves, with their own hands pulling the earth about their ears.[3] In short a whole nation by custom was brought to a discipline nothing inferior in undauntedness to the most studied and premeditated resolution.

Whether in the calamities of life we derive any great advantages from the instructions of science.

Most of the instructions of learning, to encourage us, have in them more of show than of force, and of ornament than effect. We have abandoned nature, and would teach her what to do; she who did so happily and so securely lead us; and in the mean time, from the footsteps of her instructions, and that little which, by the benefit of ignorance, remains of her image imprinted in the life of this rustic rout of unpolished men, learning is constrained every day to borrow thence to make a pattern for her disciples of constancy, tranquility, and innocence. 'Tis a fine thing to see, that these, full of so much fine knowledge, have to imitate this foolish simplicity, and that in the principal acts of virtue; and that our wisdom must learn, even from beasts, the most profitable instructions in the greatest and most necessary concerns of human life, as how we are to live and die, manage our goods, love and bring up our children, and maintain justice; a singular testimony of human infirmity; and that this reason we so handle at our pleasure, finding evermore some diversity and novelty, leaves with us no apparent trace of nature; and that they have done with all men, as perfumers do with oil; they have sophisticated it with so many argumentations and far-fetched discourses, that it is become variable, and particular to every one of them, and has lost its proper, constant, and universal face, and we must seek testimony from beasts, not subject to favour, corruption, or diversity of opinions; for it is indeed true that even they themselves do not always go exactly in the path of nature; but wherein they do swerve, 'tis so little, that you may always see the track: as horses that are led make several bounds and curvets, but 'tis always at the length of the collar, and they still follow him that leads them; and as a hawk takes his flight, but still under the restraint of his string.[4] *Exilia, tormenta, bella, morbos, naufragia meditare - - - ut nullo sis malo tiro:*[5] "Meditate upon banishments, tortures, wars, diseases, and shipwrecks, that thou mayest not be to seek in any disaster," what good will this curiosity do us, to pre-occupy all the inconveniences of human nature, and to prepare ourselves, with so much trouble, against things which, peradventure, will never befal us? *Parem passis tristitiam facit, pati posse;*[6] "it troubles men as much that they may possibly suffer, as if they really did;" not only the blow, but the wind of the blow strikes us: or like frantic people, for 'tis certainly a frenzy, to go now and whip yourself, because

[1] Virgil, *Georgic*, iii. 476.
[2] Diod. Siculus, xvii. 105.
[3] Livy, xxii. 51.
[4] Hawks that were under tuition had a long string tied to their feet, which the falconer retained the other end of.
[5] Seneca, *Epist.* 91, 107.
[6] Id. *ib.* 74.
[7] Id. *ib.*

it may so fall out that fortune may one day make you undergo it; and to put on your furred gown at Midsummer, because you will stand in need of it at Christmas? Throw yourselves, say they, into the experience of all the evils, the most extreme that can possibly befal you; assure yourselves there. On the contrary, the most easy and most natural way would be to banish even the thoughts of them: they will not come soon enough, forsooth; their true being will not be with us long enough, we must lengthen and extend them, and incorporate them in us before-hand, and there entertain them, as if they would not otherwise sufficiently press upon our senses. "We shall find them heavy enough when they come," says one of our masters, not of one of the tender, but of one of the most severe sects; "in the mean time favour thyself, believe what pleases thee best. What good will it do thee to anticipate and gather in beforehand thy ill fortune, to lose the present for fear of the future, and to make thyself miserable now, because thou art to be so in time?"[1] These are his words. Learning indeed, does us one good office, in instructing us exactly in the dimension of evils,

Curis acuens mortalia corda![2]

"He bade sad care make keen the heart;"

'twere pity that any part of their grandeur should escape our sense and knowledge!

Of what use is preparation for death.

'Tis certain that, for the most part, the preparation for death has administered more torment than the thing itself. It was of old truly said, and by a very judicious author: *Minus afficit sensus fatigatio quam cogitatio.*[3] "Suffering itself does less afflict the senses than the apprehension of suffering." The sentiment of present death sometimes of itself animates us with a prompt resolution no more to avoid a thing that is utterly inevitable. Many gladiators have been seen, in the olden time, who, after having fought timorously and ill, have courageously entertained death, offering their throats to the enemy's sword, and bidding them dispatch. The remote sight of future death requires a constancy that is slow and lazy, and consequently hard to be got. If you know not how to die, never trouble yourself; nature will fully and sufficiently instruct you upon the spot; she will exactly do that business for you; take you no care:

Incertam frustra, mortales, funeris horam
Quæritis, et qua sit mors aditura via.
Pœna minor, certam subito perferre ruinam;
Quod timeas, gravius sustinuisse diu.[4]

"Mortals, in vain's your curiosity
To know the hour and death that you must die;
Better your fate strike with a sudden blow,
Than that you long should what you fear foreknow."

We trouble life by the care of death, and death by the care of life; the one torments, the other frights us. 'Tis not against death that we prepare, that is too momentary a thing; a quarter of an hour's suffering, without consequence, without hurt, does not deserve particular precepts. To say truth, we prepare ourselves against the preparations of death. Philosophy orders us always to have death before our eyes, to foresee and consider it before the time, and after gives us rules and precautions to provide that this foresight and thought do us no harm. Just so do physicians, who throw us into diseases, to the end they may have whereon to lay out their drugs and their art. If we have not known how to live, 'tis wrong to teach us to die, and make the end disform from all the rest; if we have known how to live constantly and quietly, we shall know how to die so too. They may boast as much as they please: *Tota philosophorum vita, commentatio mortis est*;[4] "the whole life of a philosopher is the meditation of his death;" but I fancy that, though it be the end, 'tis not the aim of life; 'tis his end, his extremity, but nevertheless not his object. She ought herself to be to herself her own aim and design; her true study is to order, govern, and suffer herself. In the number of several other offices, that the general and principal chapter of knowing how to live comprehends, is this article of knowing how to die; and did not our fears give it weight, one of the lightest too.

That death ought not to be premeditated.

The true aim of life.

To judge of them by the utility, and by the naked truth, the lessons of simplicity are not much inferior to those which learning preaches to us; on the contrary, men differ in sentiment and force; we must lead them to their own good, according to their capacities by various ways.

Simple nature disposes us to die with a better grace than died Aristotle, &c.

Quo me cumque rapit tempestas, deferor hospes.[5]

"For as the tempest drives, I shape my course."

I never saw any countryman among my neighbours cogitate with what countenance and assurance he should pass over his last hour; nature teaches him not to dream of death till he is dying; and then he does it with a better grace than Aristotle, upon whom death presses with a double weight, both of itself, and of so long a premeditation. Wherefore it was the opinion of Cæsar that the least premeditated death was the easiest and the most happy:[6] *Plus dolet quam necesse est, qui ante dolet quam necesse est.*[7] "He, grieves more than is necessary, who grieves before it is necessary." The

[1] Seneca, *Epist* 13 and 98.
[2] Virgil, *Georgic*, i. 123.
[3] Quintil. *Instit. Orat.* i. 12.
[4] The two first verses are in Propertius, ii. 27. 1. I know not whence Montaigne took the others.
[5] Cicero, *Tusc. Quæs.* i. 30.
[6] Horace, *Epist.* i. 1, 15.
[7] See Suetonius, Cæsar, c. 87.
[8] Seneca, *Epist.* 98.

sharpness of this imagination springs from our curiosity. Thus do we ever hinder ourselves, desiring to prevent and govern natural ordinances. 'Tis only for the learned to dine the worse for it, when in the best health, and that they have the best stomachs, and to frown and be out of humour at the image of death. The common sort stand in need of no remedy of consolation but just in the shock, and when the blow comes, and consider no more about it but just what they endure. Is it not then, as we say, that the stupidity and want of apprehension in the vulgar gives them that patience in present evils, and that profound indifference as to future ill accidents; that their souls, being more gross and dull, are less penetrable and not so easily moved? If it be so, let us henceforth, in God's name, teach nothing but ignorance; 'tis the utmost fruit that the sciences promise us, to which this stupidity so gently leads its disciples.

We should have no want of good masters, who are interpreters of natural simplicity. Socrates shall be one; for, as I remember, he speaks something to this purpose to the judges who sat upon his life and death: "I am afraid, sirs, that if I entreat you to put me to death, I shall confirm the charge of my accusers, which is, that I pretend to be wiser than others, as having some more secret knowledge of things that are above and below us. I know that I have neither frequented nor known death, nor have ever seen any person that has tried his qualities, from whom to inform myself. Such as fear it pre-suppose they know it; as for my part, I neither know what it is, nor what they do in the other world. Death is, perhaps, an indifferent thing; perhaps, a thing to be desired. 'Tis nevertheless to be believed, if it be a transmigration from one place to another, that it is a bettering of one's condition, to go and live with so many great persons deceased, and to be exempt from having any more to do with unjust and corrupt judges. If it be an annihilation of our being, 'tis yet a bettering of one's condition, to enter into a long and peaceable night; we find nothing more sweet in life than a quiet and profound sleep without dreams. The things that I know to be evil, as to offend one's neighbour, and to disobey one's superior, whether it be God or man, I carefully avoid: such as I do not know whether they be good or evil, I cannot fear them. If I go to die, and leave you alive, the gods only know whether it will go better with you or with me; wherefore, as to what concerns me, you may do as you shall think fit. But, according to my method of advising just and profitable things, I affirm that you will do your conscience more right to set me at liberty, unless you see farther into the cause than I; and judging according to my past actions, both public and private, according to my intentions, and according to the profit so many of our citizens, both old and young, daily extract from my conversation, and the fruit that you reap from *me* yourselves, you cannot more duly acquit yourselves towards my merit than by ordering that, my poverty considered, I should be maintained in the Prytaneum at the public expense; a thing that I have often known you with less reason grant to others. Do not impute it to obstinacy or disdain that I do not, according to the custom, supplicate, and go about to move you to commiseration. I have both friends and kindred, not being, as Homer says, begotten of a block or of a stone, no more than others that are able to present themselves before you in tears and mourning; and I have three desolate children with which to move you to compassion; but I should do a shame to our city, at the age I am, and in the reputation of wisdom, wherein I now stand, to degrade myself by such an abject form. What would men say of the other Athenians? I have always admonished those who have frequented my lectures, not to redeem their lives by an unworthy action; and in the wars of my country, at Amphipolis, Potidea, Delia, and other expeditions where I have been, I have effectually manifested how far I was from securing my safety by my shame. I should moreover interest your duty, and should tempt you to unbecoming things: for 'tis not for my prayers to persuade you, but the pure and solid reasons of justice. You have sworn to the gods to keep yourselves upright; and it would seem as if I suspected or would recriminate upon you, should I not believe that you are so; and I should give evidence against myself, not to believe them as I ought, mistrusting their conduct, and not purely committing my affair into their hands. I do wholly rely upon them, and hold myself assured they will do in this what shall be most fit both for you and me. Good men, whether living or dead, have no reason to fear the gods."[1]

Socrates's pleadings.

Is not this innocent, true, frank, and infantine pleading of an unimaginable loftiness, and just beyond all example, and in what a necessity employed? In earnest he had very good reason to prefer it to that which the great orator Lysias had penned for him;[2] admirably couched indeed in the judiciary style, but unworthy of so noble a criminal. Should a suppliant voice have been heard out of the mouth of Socrates? that lofty virtue have struck sail in the height of its glory? and his rich and powerful nature have committed his defence to art, and, in her highest proof, have renounced truth and simplicity, the ornaments of his speaking, to adorn and deck itself with the embellishments of figures, and equivocations of a premeditated speech? He did very wisely, and like himself, not to corrupt the tenour of an

[1] Plato, *Apology for Socrates.*

[2] Cicero, *de Orat.* i. 54.

incorrupt life, and so sacred an image of human form, to spin out his decrepitude, the poor ekeing of a year, and to betray the immortal memory of that glorious end. He owed his life not to himself, but to the example of the world. Had it not been a public damage that he should have concluded it after a lazy and obscure manner? Doubtless, the careless and indifferent consideration of his death very well deserves that posterity should consider him so much the more, as they indeed do; and there is nothing so just in justice as that which fortune ordained for his recommendation; for the Athenians abominated all those who had been causers of his death to such a degree, that they avoided them as excommunicated persons, and looked upon every thing as polluted that had been but touched by them; no one would wash with them in the public baths; none would salute, or own acquaintance with them; so that at last, unable longer to support this public hatred, they hanged themselves.[1]

If any one should think that, amongst so many other examples that I had to choose for my present purpose, out of the sayings of Socrates, I have made an ill choice of this, and shall judge that this discourse is elevated above common ideas, I must tell them that I have purposely done it; for I am of another opinion, and hold it a discourse, in rank and simplicity, much behind and inferior to common notions. He represents, in an artificial boldness and infantine security, the pure and first impression and ignorance of nature; for it is to be believed that we have naturally a fear of pain, but not of death, by reason of itself. 'Tis a part of our being, no less essential than living. To what end should nature have begot in us a hatred and horror of it, considering that it is of so great utility to her in maintaining the succession and vicissitude of her works? and that, in this universal republic, it concludes more to truth and augmentation, than to loss or ruin?

Death a part of our being, and very beneficial to nature.

Sic rerum summa novatur.[2]
" Thus nature doth herself renew."
Mille animas una necata dedit,[3]

the failing of one life is the passage to a thousand other lives. Nature has imprinted in beasts the care of themselves and of their conservation; nay, they proceed so far as to be timorous of being worse, of hitting or hurting themselves, and of our haltering and beating them, misfortunes that are subject to their sense and experience; but that we should kill them, they cannot fear, nor have they faculty to imagine and conclude such a thing as death. Yet it is said that we see them not only cheerfully undergo it (horses for the most part neighing, and swans singing when they die), but moreover seek it at need, of which elephants have given many examples.

Beasts naturally solicitous of their preservation.

Besides, this way of arguing which Socrates here makes use of, is it not equally admirable, both in simplicity and vehemence? Really it is much more easy to speak like Aristotle and to live like Cæsar, than to speak and live as Socrates did. There lies the extreme degree of perfection and difficulty; art cannot reach it. Now, our faculties are not so trained up. We do not try, we do not know them; we invest ourselves with those of others, and let our own lie idle: as some one may say to me that I have here only made a nosegay of culled flowers, and have brought nothing of my own but the thread that ties them together.

In earnest, I have so far yielded to the public opinion, that those borrowed ornaments do accompany me; but I would not have them totally cover and hide me; that is quite contrary to my design, who desire to make a show of nothing but what is my own, and what is my own by nature; and had I taken my own advice, I had at all hazards spoken purely alone. I more and more load myself every day, beyond my purpose and first method, upon the account of idleness and the humour of the age.[4] If it misbecomes me, as I believe it does, 'tis no matter; it may be of use to some other. Such there are who quote Plato and Homer, who never saw either of them; and I also have taken passages enough, distant from their source. Without pains and without learning, having a thousand volumes about me in the place where I write, I could readily borrow, if I pleased, from a dozen scrap-gatherers, people that I do not much trouble myself withal, wherewith to embellish this treatise of physiognomy. There needs no more but a preliminary epistle of some German to stuff me with such: and we, in this way, go seeking a fine glory to cheat the sottish world. These hodge-podges of common-places, wherewith so many furnish their studies, are of little use but to common subjects, and serve but to show, and not to direct us; a ridiculous fruit of learning, that Socrates does so pleasantly canvass against Euthydemus. I have seen books made of things that were never either studied or understood, the author committing to several of his learned friends the examination of this and t'other matter to compile it; contenting himself, for his share, to have projected the design, and by his industry to have tied together this faggot of unknown provision: the ink and paper, at least, are his. This is to buy or borrow a book, and not to make one; 'tis to show men, not that a man can make a book, but that, whereof

With what view Montaigne has charged his book with quotations.

[1] Plutarch, *On Envy and Hatred.*
[2] Lucan, ii. 74.
[3] Ovid, *Fast.* i. 380.
[4] In fact, the first edition of the Essays (1580) has very few quotations. They are more numerous in the edition of 1588, but the multitude of ancient authorities which occasionally embarrass Montaigne's work, as it now stands, only date from the posthumous edition of 1595.

they may be in doubt, that he cannot make one. A president, in my hearing, boasted that he had clustered two hundred and odd common quotations in one of his judgments; in telling which he deprived himself of the glory that had been attributed to him for the speech; in my opinion t'was a pusillanimous and absurd boast for such a subject and such a person. I do quite contrary; and, amongst so many borrowed things, am glad if I can steal one, disguising and altering it for some new service. At the hazard of having it said that 'tis for want of understanding its natural use, I give it some particular address of my own, to the end it may not be so absolutely another's. These set their thefts in show, and value themselves upon them: and they have more credit with the laws than with me. We naturalists think that there is a great and incomparable preference in the honour of invention to that of quotation.

If I would have spoken by learning, I had spoken sooner; I had written in a time nearer to my studies, when I had more wit, and a better memory; and would rather have trusted to the vigour of that age than this, if I would have professed writing. And what if this gracious favour which fortune has lately offered me by the means of this work,[1] had befallen me in such a time of my life, instead of this, wherein 'tis equally desirable to possess, and ready to lose? Two of my acquaintances, great men in this faculty, have, in my opinion, lost half, in refusing to publish at forty years' old, that they might stay till threescore. Maturity has its defects as well as greenness, and worse; and old age is as unfit for this kind of business as any other; he that commits his decrepidness to the press is a fool, if he thinks to squeeze any thing out thence that does not relish of dotage and stupidity; our wits grow costive and thick in growing old. I deliver my ignorance in pomp and state, and my learning meagrely and poorly; this accidentally and accessorily, that principally and expressly; and write purposely of nothing, but of nothing; nor of any science but that of insciences. I have chosen a time when my life, which I am to give an account of, lies wholly before me; what remains has more to do with death; and of my death only should I find it a prating death, as others do, I would moreover give an account at my departure.

Old age unfit for writing of books.

Socrates was a perfect exemplar in all great qualities; and I am vexed that he had so deformed a body and face as they say, and so unsuitable to the beauty of his soul; himself being so amorous, and such an admirer of beauty: nature surely did him wrong. There is nothing more likely than a conformity and relatio of the body to the soul: *Ipsi animi magni refert quali in corpore locati sint; multa enim è corpore existunt quæ acuant mentem, multa quæ obtundant*:[2] "It is of great consequence in what bodies souls are placed, for many things spring from the body that sharpen the mind, and many that blunt and dull it." This speaks of an unnatural ugliness and deformity of limbs; but we call that ill-favouredness also, an unseemliness at first sight, which is principally lodged in the face, and distastes us by slight causes, and by the complexion, a spot, a rude countenance, sometimes from some inexplicable cause, in members nevertheless of good symmetry and perfect in themselves. The ugliness that clothed a very beautiful soul in La Boëtie was of this predicament: that superficial ugliness, which nevertheless is always the most imperious, is of least prejudice to the state of the mind, and of little certainty in the opinion of men. The other, which, by a more proper name, is called deformity, more substantial, strikes deeper in: not every shoe of smooth shining leather, but every shoe neatly made, shows the interior shape of the foot. Socrates said of his ugliness, that it accused just as much in his soul, had he not corrected it by education; but, in saying so, I believe he did but jest, as his custom was; never so excellent a soul made itself.

Socrates's deformed body, unsuitable to the beauty of his mind.

I cannot often enough repeat how much I hold beauty to be a potent and advantageous quality: he called it a short tyranny, and Plato, the privilege of nature. We have nothing that excels it in credit; it holds the first rank in the commerce of men; it presents itself to meet us, seduces and prepossesses our judgments with great authority and wonderful impression. Phryne had lost her cause, though in the hands of an excellent advocate, if, opening her robe, she had not corrupted her judges by the lustre of her beauty.[3] And I find that Cyrus, Alexander, and Cæsar, the three masters of the world, never neglected beauty in their greatest affairs; no more did the first Scipio. The same word in Greek signifies both fair and good, and the Holy Word often calls those good whom it would call fair. I readily concur in the high rank given, in the song, which Plato[4] calls an idle one, taken out of some of the ancient poets, to these goods; "health, beauty, and riches." Aristotle says[5] that the right of command belongs to the beautiful; and when there are persons whose beauty comes near the images of the gods, that then veneration is in like manner their due. To one that asked him why people

What beauty is, and how much to be esteemed.

Beautiful persons ought to command.

[1] The author probably refers to the friendship of Mademoiselle de Gournay, which the perusal of his Essays procured him.

[2] Cicero, *Tusc. Quæs.* iv. 33

[3] Sextus Empiricus *adversus Mathematicos*, ii. 65. and Quintilian, ii. 15. who ascribe to Phryne the invention of this expedient, but Athenæus gives the honour of thus gaining her cause to Hyperides, her advocate.

[4] In the *Gorgias*.

[5] *Politics*, i. 3.

oftener and longer frequented the company of handsome persons? "The question," said he,[1] "is not to be asked by any but one that is blind." The most and the greatest philosophers paid for their schooling, and acquired wisdom by the favour and mediation of their beauty. Not only in the men that serve me, but also in the beasts, I consider this point within two fingers' breadth of goodness.

And yet I fancy that those features and moulds of face, and those lineaments by which men guess at our internal complexions, and our fortunes to come, are things that do not very directly and simply lie under the chapter of beauty and deformity, no more than every good odour and serenity of air promises health, nor all fog and stink infection in a time of pestilence. Such as accuse ladies of contradicting their beauty by their manners, do not always hit right; for, in a face which is none of the best, there may lie some air of probity and trust: as, on the contrary, I have seen betwixt two beautiful eyes, menaces of a dangerous and malignant nature. There are some physiognomies that are favourable, and in a crowd of victorious enemies, you shall presently choose, amongst men you never saw before, one rather than another, to whom to surrender, and with whom to entrust your life, and yet not properly upon the consideration of beauty.

Whether any assurance may be derived from physiognomy.

A man's look is but a feeble guarantee, and yet is of some consideration too; and if I had to lash them, I would more severely scourge the wicked, who belie and betray the promises that nature has planted in their foreheads; I should with greater severity punish iniquity in a mild and gentle aspect. It seems as if there were some happy and some unhappy faces; and I believe there is some art in distinguishing affable from simple faces, grave from rude, sullen from pensive, scornful from melancholic, and such other bordering qualities. There are beauties which are not only haughty, but sour; and others that are not only sweet, but, more than that, insipid; to prognosticate future adventures from these is a thing that I shall leave undecided.

I have, as to my own concern, as I have said elsewhere, simply and nakedly embraced this ancient rule; that "we cannot fail in following nature:" "that the sovereign precept is to conform ourselves to her." I have not, as Socrates did, corrected my natural complexions by the force of reason, and have not in the least molested my inclination by art: I have let myself go on as I came; I contend not; my two principal parts live, of their own accord, in peace and good intelligence; but my nurse's milk, thanks be to God, was tolerably wholesome and good. Shall I say this by the way? that I see a certain image of scholastic propriety, almost only in use amongst us, in greater esteem than 'tis really worth; a slave to precepts, and fettered with hope and fear. I would have it such as that laws and religions should not make, but perfect and authorize it; that finds it has wherewithal to support itself without help; born and rooted in us from the seed of universal reason, and imprinted in every man by nature. That reason which rectified Socrates from his vicious bent, rendered him obedient to the gods, and to men in authority in his city; courageous in death, not because his soul is immortal, but because he is mortal. 'Tis a doctrine ruinous to all government, and much more hurtful than ingenious and subtle, which persuades the people that a religious belief is alone sufficient, and without conduct, to satisfy the divine justice. Custom demonstrates to us a vast distinction betwixt devotion and conscience.

Montaigne's countenance a favourable one

I have a tolerable aspect, both in form and interpretation;

Quid dixi, habere me? Imo habui, Chreme,[2]

Heu! tantum attriti corporis ossa vides;[3]

"Have, did I say? No, Chremes, I had once;
Of a worn body thou but see'st the bones;"

and that makes a quite contrary show to that of Socrates. It has often happened to me, that, upon the mere credit of my presence and air, persons who had no manner of knowledge of me, have put a very great confidence in me, whether in their own affairs or mine; and I have in foreign parts thence obtained favours singular and rare. But amongst the rest these two examples are perhaps worth particular relation: a certain person planned to surprise my house and me in it; his stratagem was to come to my gates alone, and to be importunate to be let in. I knew him by name, and had reason to repose a confidence in him, as being my neighbour, and something related to me, I caused the gates to be opened to him, as I do to every one. There he was, all aghast, his horse panting and in a foam. He told me this flam: "That about half a league off, he had met with a certain enemy of his, whom I also knew, and had heard of their quarrel; that this enemy had given him a very brisk chase, and that, having been surprised in disorder, and his party being too weak, he was fled to my gates for refuge; and that he was in great trouble for his followers, whom, he said, he concluded to be all either dead or taken." I innocently did my best to comfort, assure, and refresh him. Presently after come four or five of his soldiers, that presented themselves in the same countenance and affright to get in too; and after them more, and still more, very well mounted and armed, to the number of five-and-twenty, or thirty, pretending that they had the enemy at their heels. The mystery began a little to

[1] Laertius *in vitâ*
[2] Terence, *Heaut.* i. 1. 42.
[3] I know not whence Montaigne borrowed this verse.

awake my suspicion: I was not ignorant what an age I lived in, how much my house might be envied, and I had several examples of others of my acquaintances whom a similar mishap had befallen. So it was, that, knowing there was nothing to be got in having begun to do a courtesy, unless I went through with it, and that I could not disengage myself from them without spoiling all, I let myself go the most natural and simple way, as I always do, and invited them all to come in. And, in truth, I am naturally very little inclined to suspicion and distrust; I willingly incline towards excuse, and the gentlest interpretation; I take men according to the common order, and do not any more believe those perverse and unnatural inclinations, unless convinced by manifest evidence, than I do monsters and miracles: and am, moreover, a man, who willingly commit myself to fortune, and throw myself headlong into her arms; and have hitherto found more reason to applaud than to condemn my conduct in so doing; having ever found her more solicitous of, more a friend to my affairs, than I am myself. There are some actions in my life wherein the conduct may justly be called difficult, or, if they please, prudent: yet of those, supposing the third part to be my own, certainly the other two-thirds were absolutely and solely hers. We are, methinks, to blame, in not trusting Heaven enough with our affairs, and pretend more from our own conduct than belongs to us; and therefore it is that our designs so often miscarry; God is displeased at the extent we attribute to the rights of human prudence above his, and cuts them shorter, by how much the more we amplify them. The last comers kept themselves on horseback in my court, whilst their leader was with me in the parlour, who would not have his horse set up in the stable, saying he would immediately retire, so soon as he should have news of his men. He saw himself master of his enterprise, and nothing now remained but the execution. He has since several times said, for he was not ashamed to tell the story himself, that my countenance and frankness had snatched the treachery out of his hands. He again mounted his horse, his followers having continually their eyes intent upon him, to see when he would give the sign; very much astonished to see him leave and give up his advantage.

Another time, relying upon I know not what truce, newly published in the army, I took a journey through a very fickle country. I had not rid far, but I was discovered, and two or three parties of horse, from several places, were sent out to take me; one of them the third day overtook me, where I was charged by fifteen or twenty gentlemen in visors, followed at a distance by a band of harquebusiers. Here I was surrounded and taken, withdrawn into the thick of a neighbouring forest, dismounted, robbed, my trunks rifled, my cash-box taken, and my horses and equipage divided amongst new masters. We had in this copse a very long contest about my ransom, which they set so high, that it very well appeared I was not known to them. They were moreover in a very great debate about my life; and, in truth, there were several circumstances that threatened me in the danger I was in:

Tunc animis opus, Ænea, tunc pectore firmo.[1]

"Then, then, Æneas, was there need,
Of an undaunted heart indeed."

I still insisted upon the truce, being willing they should only have the gain of what they had already taken from me, which was not to be despised, without promise of any other ransom. After two or three hours that we had been in this place, and that they had mounted me on a pitiful jade that was not likely to run from them, and committed me to the guard of fifteen or twenty harquebussiers, and dispersed my servants to others, having given order that they should carry us away prisoners different ways, and being already got some two or three musket-shots from the place,

Jam prece Pollucis, jam Castoris implorata:[2]

"Whilst I implor'd Castor and Pollux' aid:"

behold a sudden and unexpected alteration among them. I saw their chief return to me with gentler language, making search amongst the troopers for my dispersed goods, and causing as many as could be recovered to be restored to me, even to my casket; but the best present they made me was my liberty: for the rest did not much concern me in those days. The true cause of so sudden a change, and of this reconsideration, without any apparent impulse, and of so miraculous a repentance, in such a time, in a complotted and deliberate enterprise, and become just by custom (for at the first dash, I plainly confessed to them of what party I was, and whither I was going), was what I really do not yet rightly apprehend. The most eminent amongst them, who pulled off his visor, and told me his name, then several times told me, over and over again, that I was obliged for my deliverance to my countenance, and the freedom and firmness of my words, that rendered me unworthy of such a mischance, and demanded assurance from me of the like courtesy. 'Tis probable that the divine bounty would make use of this vain instrument of my preservation, and moreover defended me the next day from other and worse ambushes, which these themselves gave me warning of. The last of these two gentlemen is yet living, to give an account of the story: the first was killed not long ago.

If my face did not answer for me, if men did

[1] Æneid, vi. 261.

[2] Catullus, Carm. lxvi. 65.

The simplicity of his intention which was visible in his eyes, and his language, prevented his freedom in discourse from being resented.

not read in my eyes and voice the innocence of my intentions, I had not lived so long without quarrels, and without giving offence, considering the indiscreet liberty I take, right or wrong, to say whatever comes at my tongue's end, and to judge so rashly of things. This way may with reason appear uncivil and ill adapted to our customs; but I have never met with any who have judged it outrageous or malicious, or that took offence at my liberty, if he had it from my own mouth: words repeated have another kind of sound and sense. Neither do I hate any person; and I am so slow to offend, that I cannot do it, even upon the account of reason itself; and when occasion has called upon me to sentence criminals, I have rather chosen to fail in point of justice, than to do it: *Ut magis peccari nolim quam satis animi ad vindicanda peccata habeam.*[1] "I had rather men should not offend, but I have not the heart to condemn them." Aristotle, 'tis said, was reproached for having been too merciful to a wicked man: "I was, indeed," said he,[2] "merciful to the man, but not to his wickedness." Ordinary judgments exasperate themselves to punishment, from horror of the fact: 'tis just this that cools mine; the horror of the first murder makes me fear the second, and the deformity of the first cruelty makes me abhor all imitation of it. That may be applied to me, who am but a knave of clubs, which was said of Charillus, king of Sparta: "He cannot be good, because he is not evil to the wicked:"[3] or thus, for Plutarch delivers it both these ways, as he does a thousand other things, variously and contrary to one another: "He must needs be good, because he is so even to the wicked."[4] Even as in lawful actions, I do not care to employ myself, when for such as are displeased at it; so to say the truth, in unlawful things, I no do not make conscience enough of employing myself, when for such as are willing.

Aristotle reproached for being merciful.

CHAPTER XIII.

OF EXPERIENCE.

No desire in us is more natural than that of knowledge. We try all ways that can lead to it; where reason is wanting, we therein employ experience,

Why experience is not a sure means to inform us of the truth of things.

Per varios usus artem experientia fecit,
Exemplo monstrante viam.[5]

"By several proofs experience art has made,
Example being guide."

which is a means much more weak and low; but truth is so great a thing, that we ought not to disdain any mediation that will lead us to it. Reason has so many forms that we know not which to take; experience has no fewer; the consequence we would draw from the conference of events is unsure, by reason they are always unlike. There is no quality so universal, in this image of things, as diversity and variety. Both the Greeks and Latins, and we, for the most express example of similitude, have pitched upon that of eggs: and yet there have been men, particularly one at Delphos, who could distinguish marks of difference amongst eggs so well, that he never mistook one for another; and, having many hens, could tell which had laid a particular egg.[6] Dissimilitude intrudes itself of itself in our works; no art can arrive at a perfect similitude; neither Perrozet, nor any other card-maker, can so carefully polish and blank the back of his cards, that some gamesters will not distinguish them by only seeing them shuffled by another. Resemblance does not so much make them one, as difference makes them another. Nature has obliged herself to make nothing other, that is not unlike.

And yet I am not much pleased with his opinion, who thought by the multitude of laws to curb the authority of judges, in cutting them out their parcels; he was not aware that there is as much liberty and stretch in the interpretation of laws, as in their fashion; and they but fool themselves who think to lessen and stop our debates, by summoning us to the express words of the Bible, forasmuch as human wit does not find the field less spacious wherein to controvert the sense of another, than to deliver his own, and, as if there were less animosity and tartness in the glossing than in the invention. We see how much he was deceived; for we have more laws in France than in all the rest of the world besides; and more than would be necessary for the government of all the worlds of Epicurus: *Ut olim flagitiis, sic nunc legibus laboramus*:[7] "So that as formerly we suffered from wickedness, so now we suffer from the laws:" and yet we have left so much to the opinion and decision of our judges, that there never was so full and uncontrolled a liberty. What have our legislators got by culling out a hundred thousand particular cases, and annexing to these a hundred thousand laws? This number holds no manner of proportion with the infinite diversity of human actions; the multiplication of our inventions will never arrive at the variety of examples: add to them a hundred times as many more; it will not, nevertheless, ever happen that, of events to come, there shall any one fall out that, in this great number of thousands of

Montaigne's opinion as to a multiplicity of laws.

[1] Livy, xxix. 21.
[2] Laertius, *in vitâ*.
[3] Plutarch, *On the Difference between a Flatterer and a Friend*, and *On Envy and Hatred*.
[4] Plutarch, *Life of Lycurgus*, c. 4.
[5] Manil. i. 59.
[6] Cicero, *Acad.* ii. 16.
[7] Tacitus, *Annal.* iii. 25.

events so chosen and recorded, shall find any one, to which it can be so exactly coupled and compared, that there will not remain some circumstance and diversity which will require a variety of judgment. There is little relation betwixt our actions, that are in perpetual mutation, and fixed and immobile laws: the most to be desired, are those that are the most rare, the most simple and general; and I am farther of opinion that it would be better for us to have none at all, than to have them in so prodigious numbers as we have.

The laws of nature better than our own.

Nature always gives them better than those are which we make ourselves; witness the picture of the golden age of the poets, and the state wherein we see nations live who have no other. Some there are who, for their only judge, take the first passer-by that travels over their mountains to determine their cause;[1] and others who on their market-day choose out some one amongst them upon the spot, to decide all their controversies. What danger would there be that the wisest should so determine ours, according to occurrences, and at sight, without obligation of example and consequence? "Every shoe to his own foot." King Ferdinand, sending colonies to the Indies, wisely provided that they should not carry along with them any law students, for fear lest suits should get footing in that new world; as being a science, in its own nature, the mother of alteration and division: judging with Plato,[2] "That lawyers and physicians are the pests of a country."

Passengers made use of for judges.

How it comes to pass that the vulgar tongue, which serves for every other purpose, becomes obscure and ambiguous in covenants & testaments.

Whence does it come to pass that our common languages, so easy for all other uses, becomes obscure and unintelligible in wills and contracts? and that he who so clearly expresses himself herein, whatever he speaks or writes, cannot find in this any way of declaring himself that he does not fall into doubt and contradiction? if it be not that the princes of this art, applying themselves with a peculiar attention to invent and cull out sounding words, and contrive artistical periods, have so weighed every syllable, and so thoroughly sifted every sort of seam, that they are now confounded and entangled in the infinity of figures, and so many minute divisions, that they can no more fall into any rule or prescription, nor any certain intelligence; *Confusum est quicquid usque in pulverem sectum est.*[3] "Whatever is beaten into powder is confused." As you have seen children trying to bring a mass of quicksilver into a certain number of parts, the more they press and work it, and endeavour to reduce it to their own will, the more they irritate the liberty of this generous metal; it mocks and evades their endeavour, and sparkles itself into so many separate bodies, as frustrate all account: so it is here; for in subdividing these subtleties we teach men to increase their doubts; they put us into a way of stretching and diversifying difficulties, they lengthen and disperse them. In sowing and retailing of questions they make the world to fructify and increase in uncertainties and disputes; as the earth is made fertile by being crumbled and moved about deep: *Difficultatem facit doctrina.*[4] "Doctrine begets difficulty." We doubted upon Ulpian, and are now still more perplexed with Bartolus and Baldus. We should efface the trace of this innumerable diversity of opinions, and not stuff ourselves with it, and stupify posterity with it. I know not what to say to it; but experience makes it manifest that so many interpretations dissipate truth and break it. Aristotle wrote to be understood; which, if he could not be, much less will another less skilful; and a third than he who expressed his own thoughts. We open the matter, and spill it in pouring out; of one subject we make a thousand, and, in multiplying and subdividing, fall into the infinity of atoms of Epicurus. Never did two men make the same judgment of the same thing; and 'tis impossible to find two opinions exactly alike, not only in several men, but in the same men, at different times. I often find matter of doubt in things that the commentary disdains to take notice of. I am most apt to stumble in an even country, like some horses that I have known, who make most trips in the smoothest way.

Glosses and commentaries only serve to obscure the text, and especially that of the books of the law.

Who would not say that glosses augment doubts and ignorance, since there's no one book to be found, either human or divine, which the world busies itself about, the difficulties of which are cleared by interpretation. The hundredth commentator still refers you to the next, more knotty and perplexed than he: when were we ever agreed amongst ourselves: "this book has enough; there is no more to be said about it?" This is most apparent in the law: we give the authority of law to infinite doctors, infinite decisions, and as many interpretations; yet do we find any end of the need of interpreting? Is there, for all that, any progress or advancement towards peace? do we stand in need of any fewer advocates or judges than when this great mass of law was yet in its first infancy? On the contrary, we darken and bury all intelligence; we can no more discover it but at the mercy of so many fences and barriers. Men do not know the natural

1 Montaigne probably refers to the little republic of San Marino, in the papal states. In the thirteenth century it was almost universal throughout Lombardy to entrust the administration of justice to foreigners.

2 *Republic*, iii.

3 Seneca, *Epist.* 89.

4 Quintil. *Inst. Orat.* x. 3.

disease of the mind; it does nothing but ferret and inquire, and is eternally wheeling, juggling, and perplexing itself, and, like silk-worms, suffocates itself with its own web; *Mus in pice*: "a mouse in a pitch-barrel:" it thinks it discovers at a great distance I know not what glimpse of light, and imaginary truth; but, whilst running to it, so many difficulties, hindrances, and new inquisitions cross it, that it loses its way, and is made drunk with the motion: not much unlike Æsop's dogs, that, seeing something like a dead body floating in the sea, and not being able to approach it, attempted to drink the water, to lay the passage dry, and so burst themselves. To which what one Crates[1] said of the writings of Heraclitus falls pat enough, "That they required a reader who could swim well," that the depth and weight of his doctrine might not overwhelm and choke him. 'Tis nothing but particular weakness that makes us content ourselves with what others or ourselves have found in this chace after knowledge; one of better understanding would not rest so content: there is always room for one to succeed us, nay, even for ourselves, and a route another way throughout; there is no end of our inquisitions, our end is in the other world. 'Tis a sign either that wit is grown shorter-sighted when it is satisfied, or that it is grown weary. No generous mind can stop in itself; it will still essay farther, and beyond its power; it has sallies beyond its effects. If it do not advance and press forward, and retire, rush, turn and wheel about, 'tis but half alive; its pursuits are without bound or method; its aliment is admiration, ambiguity the chace; which Apollo sufficiently declared, still speaking to us in a double, obscure, and oblique sense; not feeding, but amusing and puzzling us. 'Tis an irregular and perpetual motion, without example and without aim; its inventions heat, pursue, and interproduce one another:

Ainsi venid on, en un ruisseau coulant,
Sans fin l'une eau apres l'aultre roulant;
Et tout de reng, d'un eternel conduict,
L'une suyt l'aultre, et l'une l'aultre fuyt.
Par ceste cy celle là est poulsée,
Et ceste cy par l'aultre est devancée:
Tousjours l'eau va dans l'eau; et tousjours est ce
Mesme ruisseau, et tousiours eau diverse.[2]

"So in a running stream one wave we see
After another roll incessantly;
And, as they glide, each does successively
Pursue the other, each the other fly:
By this that's evermore push'd on, and this
By that continually preceded is:
The water still does into water swill—
Still the same brook, but diff'rent water still."

There is more ado to interpret interpretations than to interpret the things, and more books upon books than upon all other subjects; we do nothing but comment upon one another. Every where commentaries abound: of authors there is great scarcity. Is it not the principal and most reputed knowledge of our ages to understand the learned? Is it not the common and last end of all studies? Our opinions are grafted upon one another; the first serves for a stock to the second, the second to the third, and so on: thus step by step we climb the ladder; whence it comes to pass that he who is mounted highest has often more honour than merit, for he is got up but a grain upon the shoulders of the one before him.

How often, and perhaps how foolishly, have I stretched my book, to make it speak of itself? foolishly, if for no other reason but this, that I ought to call to mind what I say of others who do the same, "that these frequent amorous glances they cast upon their works, witness that their hearts pant with self-love, and that even the disdainful severity wherewith they lash and scourge them, are no other than the wanton dissimulations of a maternal kindness;" according to Aristotle,[3] whose valuing and undervaluing himself often spring from the same air of arrogancy; for as to my excuse, that I ought in this to have more liberty than others, forasmuch as I specially write of myself and of my writings, as I do of my other actions; that my theme returns to myself; I know not whether every one will take it.

I have observed in Germany, that Luther has left as many divisions and disputes about the doubt of his opinions, and more, than he himself has raised upon the holy Scriptures. Our contestation is verbal. I demand what nature is; what pleasure, circle, and substitution are? The question is about words, and is answered accordingly. A stone is a body, but if a man should farther urge, "and what is a body?" — "substance;" — "and what is substance?" and so on,[4] he would drive the respondent to the end of his common-place book. We exchange one word for another, and very often for one less understood. I know better what man is, than I know what animal is, or mortal, or rational. To satisfy one doubt, they give me three; 'tis the hydra's head. Socrates asked Menon what virtue was? "There is," says Menon, "the virtue of a man and of a woman, of a magistrate, and of a private person, of an old man, and of a child." "Very well," says Socrates, "we were in quest of one virtue, and thou hast brought us a whole swarm;"[5] we put one question, and they return us a whole hive. As no event and no face entirely resembles another, so do they not entirely differ, an ingenious mixture of nature. If our faces were not alike, we could not distinguish man from beast; if they were not unlike, we could not distinguish one man from another. All things hold by some similitude, all examples halt, and the

Our disputes are endless, and most of them about words.

[1] Or rather *Socrates*, as the author probably wrote it. See Laertius, ii. 22.

[2] La Boëtie, *in the Collection before referred to.*

[3] *Ethics*, IV. 13.

[4] Plato, *Menon.*

[5] See Locke's *Essay on the Human Understanding*, book i. ch. 4, sect. 10, and book ii. ch. 23, sect. 2.

relation which is drawn from experience is always faulty and imperfect. Comparisons are always coupled at one end or the other; so do the laws serve, and are fitted to every one of our affairs, by some wrested, biassed, and forced interpretation.

Imperfection of the laws that concern the subjects of a state.

Since the Ethic laws, that concern the particular duty of every one in himself, are so hard to be taught and observed, as we see they are, 'tis no wonder if those which govern so many particular men are much more so. Do but consider the form of this justice that governs us; 'tis a true testimony of human weakness, so full is it of error and contradiction! What we find to be favour and severity in justice, and we find so much of them both, that I know not whether the mean is so often met with, are sick parts and improper members of the very body and office of justice. Some country people have run in to bring me news, in great haste, that they just left, in a forest of mine, a man with a hundred wounds upon him, who was yet breathing, and begged of them water for pity's sake, and help to carry him to some place of relief; but they said they durst not go near him, but ran away, lest the the officers of justice should catch them there, and, as it falls out with those who are found near a murdered person, they should be called in question about this accident, to their utter ruin, having neither money nor friends to defend their innocence. What could I say to these people? 'Tis certain that this office of humanity would have brought them into trouble.

How many innocent persons have we known that have been punished without the judge's fault, and how many that have not arrived at our knowledge? This happened in my time. Certain men were condemned to die for a murder committed; their sentence, if not pronounced, at least determined and concluded on. The judges, just at the nick, are advertised by the officers of an inferior court hard by, that they have some men in custody, who have directly confessed the said murder, and make an indubitable discovery of all the particulars of the fact. 'Twas, notwithstanding, put to the question, whether or no they ought to suspend execution of the sentence already passed upon the first accused[1]; they considered the novelty of the example, and the consequence of reversing judgments; that the sentence of death was duly passed, and the judges deprived of repentance. To conclude, these poor devils were sacrificed to the forms of justice. Philip,[1] or some other, provided against a like inconvenience, after this manner: he had condemned a man in a great fine towards another, by a determinate judgment. The truth some time after being discovered, he found that he had passed an unjust sentence; on one side was the reason of the cause, on the other side the reason of the judicial forms. He in some sort satisfied both, leaving the sentence in the state it was, and out of his own purse recompensing the interest of the condemned party. But he had to do in a reparable affair: the people I speak of were irreparably hanged. How many sentences have I seen more criminal than the crimes themselves?

All which makes me remember the ancient opinions:[2] "That there is a necessity a man must do wrong by detail, who will do right in gross; and injustice in little things, that will come to justice in great; that human justice is formed after the model of physic, according to which, all that is useful is also just and honest. And of what is held by the Stoics, that nature herself proceeds contrary to justice in most of her works; and of what is received by the Cyrenaicks, that there is nothing just of itself;[3] that customs and laws make justice; and what the Theodorians hold, that maintain theft, sacrilege, and all sorts of uncleanness, just in a wise man, if he knows them to be profitable to him."[4] There is no remedy; I am in the same case that Alcibiades was,[5] that I will never, if I can help it, put myself into the hands of a man who shall determine of my head, where my life and honour shall more depend upon the care and diligence of my attorney, than my own innocence. I would venture myself with such a justice as would take notice of my good deeds as well as my ill, and where I had as much to hope as to fear: indemnity is not sufficient pay to a man, who does better than not to do amiss. Our justice presents us but one hand, and that the left; let him be who he will, he shall be sure to go off with loss.

Ancient opinions on the subject of justice.

In China, of which kingdom the government and arts, without commerce with, or knowledge of ours, surpasses our examples in several parts of excellence; and of which the history gives me to understand how much greater and more various the world is, than either the ancients or we have been able to penetrate; the officers deputed by the prince to visit the state of his provinces, as they punish those who behave themselves ill in their places, so do they liberally reward those who have carried themselves above the common sort, and beyond the necessity of their duty. They there present themselves, not only to be approved, but to get; not simply to be paid, but have presents made them. No judge, thank God, has ever yet spoken to me, in the quality of a judge, upon any account whatever, whether my own or that of another, criminal or civil; no prison has ever received me, even as a visitor. Imagination renders the very out-

Montaigne never had a suit in any court of justice.

[1] *Philip of Macedon.* See Plutarch, *Apothegms.*
[2] Plutarch, *Inst. for those who manage State Affairs.*
[3] Laertius, ii. 92.
[4] Laertius, i. 99.
[5] Who said that in such a case he would not trust his own mother. See Plutarch, *in vitâ.*

side of a gaol disagreeable to me. I so love freedom of will and action, that were I interdicted the remotest corners of the Indies, I should live a little more uneasy thereat. And whilst I can find either earth or air open in any part of the world, I will never live in any place where I must hide myself. Good God! how ill should I endure the condition wherein I see so many people, nailed to a corner of the kingdom, deprived of the privilege of entering into the principal cities and courts, and the liberty of the public roads, for having quarrelled with our laws? If those under which I live should but wag a finger at me by way of menace, I would immediately go seek out others, let them be where they would; all my little prudence, in the civil wars wherein we are now engaged, is employed, that they may not hinder my liberty of going and coming.

What it was that in Montaigne's time kept up the credit of the laws.

Now the laws keep up their credit, not because they are just, but because they are laws; that is the mystic foundation of their authority; they have no other of any service. They are often made by fools; more often by men that, out of hatred to equality, fail in equity; but always by men who are vain and irresolute authors. There is nothing so much, nor so grossly, nor so ordinarily faulty, as the laws. Whoever obeys them because they are just, does not justly obey them as he ought. Our French laws, by their irregularity and deformity, do in some sort lend a helping hand to the disorder and corruption which is manifest in their dispensation and execution. The command is so perplexed and inconstant, that it in some sort excuses both disobedience and defect in the interpretation, the administration, and the observation of it. What fruit then soever we may extract from experience, yet that will little advantage our institution, which we draw from foreign examples, if we make so little profit of that we have of our own, which is more familiar to us, and certainly sufficient to instruct us in that whereof we have need. I study myself more than any other subject; 'tis my metaphysics, 'tis my physics.

Qua Deus hanc mundi temperet arte domum;
Qua venit exoriens, qua deficit, unde coactis
Cornibus in plenum menstrua luna redit;
Unde sălo superant venti, quid flamine captet
Eurus, et in nubes unde perennis aqua;
Sit ventura dies, mundi quæ subruat arces.[1]
Quærite, quos agitat mundi labor.[2]

"By what means God the universe does sway,
Or how the pale-faced sister of the day,
When, in increasing, can her horns unite,
Till they contract into a full orb'd light;
Why winds do of the sea the better get,
Why Eurus blows, and clouds are always wet;
What day the world's great fabric must o'erthrow,
Let them inquire, would the world's secrets know."

In this university, I suffer myself to be ignorantly and negligently led by the general law of the world. I shall know it well enough when I feel it; my learning cannot make it alter its course. It will not change itself for me; 'tis folly to hope it, and a greater folly to concern one's self about it, seeing it is necessarily alike, public, and common. The goodness and capacity of the governor ought absolutely to discharge us of all care of the government. Philosophical inquisitions and contemplations serve for no other use but to increase our curiosity. Philosophers, with great reason, send us back to the rules of nature; but they have nothing to do with so sublime a knowledge. They falsify them, and present us her face painted with too high and too sophisticated a colour, whence spring so many different portraits of so uniform a subject. As she has given us feet to walk withal, so has she given us prudence to guide us in life; not such an ingenious, robust, and majestic prudence as that of their invention, but yet one that is easy, quiet, and salutiferous; and that very well performs what the other promises, in him who has the good fortune to know how to employ it sincerely and regularly, that is to say, according to nature. The most simply to commit a man's self to nature, is to do it the most wisely. Oh, what a soft, easy, and wholesome pillow is ignorance and incuriosity, whereon to repose a well-contrived head![3]

I had rather understand myself well in myself, than in Cicero.[4] Of the experience I have of myself, I find enough to make me wise, if I were but a good scholar: whoever will call to mind the excess of his past anger, and to what a degree that fever transported him, will see the deformity of this passion better than in Aristotle, and conceive a more just hatred against it. Whoever will remember the hazards he has run, those that threaten him, and the light occasions that have removed him from one state to another, will by that prepare himself for future changes, and the knowledge of his condition. The life of Cæsar himself has no greater example for us than our own: both popular and imperial, it is still a life to which all human accidents may refer. Let us but listen to it, and we may apply to ourselves all that we have principal need of; whoever shall call to memory how many and many times he has been mistaken in his own judgment, is he not a great fool if he does not ever after distrust it? When I find myself convinced, by the reason of another, of a false opinion, I do not learn so much what he has said to me that is new, and from my ignorance in this particular thing; that would be no great acquisition, as I do in general my own weakness, and the treachery of my understanding, whence I extract the reformation of the whole mass. In all my errors I do the same; and find from this rule

[1] Propertius, iii. 5, 26.
[2] Lucan, i. 417.
[3] "Il y st une precieuse ignorance, tresor d'une ame pure, qui met toute sa felicité à se replier sur elle même."—Rousseau, *Disc. sur les Lettres.*
[4] The edition of 1588 has "than in Plato."

great utility to life; I regard not the species and individual, as a stone that I have stumbled at; I learn to suspect my steps throughout, and to regulate them. To learn that a man has said or done a foolish thing is nothing; a man must learn that he is nothing but a fool, a much more ample and important instruction. The false steps that my memory has so often made, even then when it was most secure and confident of itself, are not idly thrown away; it may now swear to me and assure me as much as it will, I shake my ears, and trust it not; the first opposition that is made to my testimony puts me into suspense, and I durst not rely upon it in any thing of moment, nor warrant it in another body's concerns; and were it not that what I do for want of memory, others do more often for want of faith, I should always, in matter of fact, rather choose to take truth from another's mouth than my own. If every one would pry into the effects and circumstances of the passions that sway him, as I have done into those which fell to my lot, he would see them coming, and would a little break their impetuosity and career; they do not always seize us on a sudden; there is threatening and degrees:

> Fluctus uti primo cœpit cum albescere vento,
> Paulatim sese tollit mare, et altius undas
> Erigit, inde imo consurgit ad æthera fundo.[1]
>
> "As the sea first begins to foam and fret,
> Thence higher swells, higher, and higher yet,
> Till at the last the waves so high do rise,
> They seem to bid defiance to the skies."

Judgment holds in me a magisterial seat; at least, it carefully endeavours to make it so: it lets my appetites take their own course, as also hatred and friendship; nay, even that I bear to myself, without alteration or corruption; if it cannot reform the other parts according to its own model, at least, it suffers not itself to be corrupted by them, but plays its game apart.

That advertisement to every one to know himself should be of important effect, since the god of wisdom and light caused it to be writ on the front of his temple,[2] as comprehending all he had to council us. Plato says, also, that prudence is no other thing but the execution of this ordinance; and Socrates minutely verifies the same in Xenophon. The difficulties and obscurity are not discerned in any science, but by those that are got into it; for a certain degree of knowledge is required to enable a man to know that he knows not; and we must thrust against a door to know whether it be bolted against us or not; whence this Platonic subtlety springs: that "neither they who know are to enquire, because they know; nor they who do not know, because, to enquire, they must know what they enquire about."[3] So in this "to know one's-self," that every man is seen so resolved and satisfied with himself, that every man thinks himself sufficiently understanding, signifies that every one understands nothing at all; as Socrates gives Euthydemus to learn.[4] I, who profess nothing else, do therein find such depth and so infinite a variety, that all the fruit I have reaped from my apprenticeship serves only to make me sensible how much I have to learn. To my weakness, so often confessed, I owe the propension I have to modesty, to obedience, to the beliefs prescribed me, to a constant coldness and moderation of opinions, and a hatred of that troublesome and wrangling arrogance, wholly believing and trusting in itself, the capital enemy of discipline and truth. Do but hear them domineer; the first trash they utter, 'tis in the style wherewith men establish religion and laws: *Nihil est turpius, quam cognitioni et perceptioni assertionem approbationem que præcurrere.*[5] "Nothing is more absurd than that assertion and admission should precede knowledge and precept." Aristarchus said,[6] that anciently there were scarcely seven wise men to be found in the world, and in his time scarce so many fools: have we not more reason than he to say so in this age of ours? Affirmation and obstinacy are express signs of want of wit. A fellow has stumbled and knocked his nose against the ground a hundred times in a day, and yet he will be at his ergotisms as resolute and assured as before; so that one would conclude he had had some new soul and vigour of understanding infused into him since, and that it happened to him as to that ancient son of the earth,[7] who acquired new strength, and was made more daring by his fall;

> Cui cum tetigere parentem,
> Jam defecta vigent renovato robore membra;[8]
>
> "Whose broken limbs upon his mother laid,
> Immediately new force and vigour had:"

so the incorrigible coxcomb thinks he assumes a new understanding by undertaking a new dispute. 'Tis by my own experience that I accuse human ignorance, which is, in my opinion, the surest part of the world's school. Such as will not conclude it in themselves, by so vain an example as mine, or of their own, let them believe it from Socrates, the master of masters; for the philosopher Antisthenes said to his disciples:[9] "Let us go and hear Socrates; there I will be a pupil with you;" and maintaining the dogma of the Stoical sect, "that virtue was sufficient to make a life completely happy, having no need of any other thing whatever," he added, "except the force of Socrates."

The long attention that I employ in con-

1 *Æneid*, vii. 528.
2 *Apollo*, on the front of his temple at Delphi.
3 Plato, *Menon*.
4 Xenophon, *Mem on Socrates*, iv. 2, 24.
5 Cicero, *Acad.* i. 13.
6 Plutarch, *On Brotherly Love.*
7 Antæus.
8 Luc. iv. 599.
9 Laertius, *in vitâ.*

sidering myself, does also fit me to judge tolerably of others; and there are few things whereof I speak better, and with better excuse. I frequently happen to see and distinguish the conditions of my friends more exactly than they do themselves; I have astonished some with the pertinence of my description, and have given them notice of themselves. By having from my infancy been accustomed to contemplate my own life in that of others, I have acquired a complexion studious in that particular; and when I am once intent upon it, I let few things about me, whether countenances, humours, or discourses, that serve to that purpose, escape me. I study all, both what I am to avoid, and what I am to do. Also in my friends I discover by their productions their inward inclinations; not to range this infinite variety of actions, so diverse and disconnected, into certain sorts and chapters, and distinctly to distribute my parcels and divisions under known heads and classes;

> Sed neque quam multæ species, et nomina quæ sint,
> Est numerus.[1]
>
> "But vain the wish, th' imperfect labour vain,
> To rank their various tribes, or name the train."

The learned speak and deliver their fancies more specifically and minutely. I, who see no farther into things than as custom informs me, without rule, present mine generally and conjecturally: as in this, I pronounce my sentence by loose and unknit articles, as of a thing that cannot be spoken at once and in gross: relation and conformity are not to be found in so low and common souls as ours. Wisdom is a solid and entire building, of which every piece keeps its place and carries its mark: *Sola sapienta in se tota conversa est.*[2] "Wisdom only is wholly turned into itself." I leave it to those who are artists, and I know not whether they will be able to bring it about in so perplexed a thing, to marshal into distinct bodies this infinite diversity of faces, to settle our inconstancy, and set it in order. I do not only find it hard to piece our actions to one another, but I moreover find it very hard properly to design them every one by themselves, by any principal quality, so ambiguous they are and variform by several lights. That which is remarked for rare in Perseus, King of Macedon,[3] "That his mind, fixing itself to no one condition, wandered about in all sorts of living, and represented manners so wild and strange that it was neither known by himself nor any other what kind of man he was," seems almost to fit all the world; and especially I have seen another of his stature, to whom I think this conclusion might still more properly be applied.[4] No moderate settledness; still running headlong from one extreme to another, upon occasions not to be guessed at; no manner of course without traverse and wonderful contrariety; nor simple quality; so that the best guess man can one day make will be, that he affected and studied to make himself known by being not to be known. A man had need have strong ears to hear himself frankly censured; and there being but few that can endure to hear it without being nettled, those who hazard the undertaking it to us manifest a singular effect of friendship; for 'tis to love sincerely indeed to attempt to hurt and offend us for our own good. I think it rude to censure a man whose ill qualities are more than his good ones: Plato requires three things in him that will examine the soul of another, to wit, knowledge, good will, and boldness.[5]

I have been asked, what I should have thought myself fit for, had any one wished to make use of me, in my younger years;

> Dum melior vires sanguis dabat, æmula necdum
> Temporibus geminis canebat sparsa senectus:[6]
>
> "Ere age unstrung my nerves, or time had snowed my head:"

For nothing, said I. And I am willing enough not to know how to do anything that would enslave me to another. But I would have told truths to my master, and had controlled his manners, if he had so pleased; not in gross, by scholastic lessons, which I understand not, and from which I see no true reformation spring in those that do; but by observing them by leisure, at all opportunities, and judging them, an eye-witness, one by one, simply and naturally, giving him to understand upon what terms he was in the common opinion, in opposition to his flatterers. There is none of us that would not be worse than kings, if so continually corrupted as they are with that sort of vermin; Alexander, that great king and philosopher, could not defend himself from them. I should have fidelity, judgment, and freedom enough for that. It would be a nameless office, otherwise it would lose both its grace and its effect; and 'tis a part that is not indifferently fit for all men, for truth itself has not the privilege to be spoken at all times, and in all sorts; the use of it, noble as it is, has its circumscriptions and limits. It often falls out, as the world now goes, that a man lets it slip into the ear of a prince, not only to no purpose, but moreover injuriously and unjustly; and no one shall make me believe that a virtuous remonstrance may not be viciously applied, and that the interest of the substance is not often to give place to that of the form.

Montaigne would have been a fit person to talk freely to his sovereign, to tell him truths, and to teach him to know himself.

For such a purpose I would have a man that is content with his own fortune,

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[1] Virgil, *Georgic*, ii. 103.
[2] Cicero, *de Finib.* iii. 7.
[3] See Livy, xli. 20.
[4] *The author speaks of himself.*
[5] Plato, *Gorgias.*
[6] *Æneid*, v. 415.

Quod sit, esse velit; nihilque malit,[1]

"Who likes that present state of his,
And would not be but what he is,"

and but of middling rank, so that on the one hand, he would not be afraid to touch his master's heart to the quick, through fear by that means of losing his preferment; and on the other, being of middling quality, he would have more easy communion with all sorts of people. And I would have this office limited to only one; for to allow the privilege of this liberty and privacy to many, would beget an inconvenient irreverence; and even of that one too, I would, above all things, require the fidelity of silence.

A king is not to be believed when he brags of his constancy in awaiting the shock of the enemy for his glory, if, for his profit and amendment, he cannot stand the freedom of a friend's advice, which has no other power but to pinch his ear, the remainder of its effect being still in his own hands. Now there is no condition of man which stands in so great need of true and free warnings as they do: they sustain a public life, and have to satisfy the opinion of so many spectators, that, men having used to conceal from them whatever should divert them from their own way, they insensibly have found themselves involved in the hatred and detestation of their people, sometimes upon such occasions as they might have avoided, without any prejudice even of their pleasures themselves, had they been advised and set right in time. Their favourites, commonly, have more an eye to themselves than to their master; and indeed 'tis to be expected, forasmuch as in truth most of the offices of true friendship, when applied to the sovereign, are under a rude and dangerous proof; so that therein there is great need, not only of very great affection and freedom, but of courage too.

Free advice necessary for kings.

In short, all this hodge-podge that I scribble here, is nothing but a register of the essays of my life,[2] which for the internal health is exemplary enough to take instruction against the grain; but as to bodily health, no man can furnish out more profitable experience than I, who present it pure, and no way corrupted and changed by art or opinion. Experience is properly upon its own dunghill in the subject of physic, where reason wholly gives it place: Tiberius said that whoever had lived twenty years ought to be responsible to himself for all things that were hurtful or wholesome to him, and know how to order himself without physic;[3] and he might have learnt it of Socrates, who, advising his disciples to be solicitous of their health, as a chief study, added that it was hard if a man of sense, having a care of his exercise and diet, did not better know than any physician, what was good or ill for him.[4] Indeed, physic professes itself always to have experience for the touch of its operations: and Plato had reason to say, that, to be a thorough physician, it would be necessary that he who would take it upon him should first himself have passed through all the diseases he pretends to cure, and through all the accidents and circumstances whereof he is to judge.[5] 'Tis but reason they should get the pox, if they will know how to cure it. For my part I should put myself into such hands; for the others but guide us, like him who paints the sea, rocks, and ports, seated at his table, and there makes the figure of a ship sail in all security: put him to it in earnest, he knows not at which end to begin. They make such a description of our maladies, as a town-crier does of a lost horse or dog; such a colour, such a height, such an ear; but bring him to him, and he knows it not for all that. God grant that physic may one day give me some good and visible relief, to see how I shall cry out in good earnest,

The advantage that may be derived from Montaigne's Essays for the health of the soul, and much more for that of the body.

Tandem efficaci do manus scientiæ.[6]

"At length I own the power of the pill."

The arts that promise to keep our bodies and souls in health, promise a great deal; but withal, there is none that less keep their promise. And, in our times, those that make profession of these arts amongst us, less manifest the effects than any other sort of men: one may say of them, at the most, that they sell medicinal drugs, but that they are physicians one cannot say. I have lived long enough to be able to give an account of the usage that has carried me so far; for whoever has a mind to read it, as his taster, I give him an essay. Here are some articles as my memory shall supply me with them: I have no custom that has not varied according to accidents; but I only record those that I have been best acquainted with, and that hitherto have had the greatest possession of me.

My form of life is the same in sickness that it is in health; the same bed, the same hours, the same meat, and the same drink, serve me in both conditions alike; I add nothing to them but the moderation of more or less, according to my strength and appetite. My health consists in maintaining

Montaigne's course of life the same in sickness as in health.

[1] Martial, x. 47. 12.

[2] "Nam suadere principi, quod oporteat, multi laboris." Tacit. *Hist.* i. 15.

[3] Montaigne here probably had in his mind Tacitus (*Annal* vi. 46), where the historian, speaking of Tiberius, says: "Solitusque eludere medicorum artes, atque eos, post tricesimum ætatis annum, ad internoscenda corporis sua utilia, vel noxia, alieni consilii indigerent." Suetonius (*Life of Tiberius*, c. 28.) only says that Tiberius, after he was 30 years of age, governed his health after his own fancy, and without the help and advice of physicians. And Plutarch tells us in his treatise *Of the Rules and Precepts for Health*, that he remembered to have heard that Tiberius used to say, that the man who after threescore years of age held his hand out to a physician to feel his pulse, deserved to be laughed at for a fool."

[4] Xenophon, *Mem. on Socrates*, iv. 7, 9.

[5] Plato, *Republic*, iii.

[6] Horace, *Epod.* xvii. 1.

my wonted state without disturbance. I see that sickness puts me off it on one side; if I will be ruled by the physicians, they will put me off on the other; so that by fortune and by art I am altogether displaced. I believe nothing more certainly than this, that I cannot be hurt by the use of things to which I have been so long accustomed. 'Tis for custom to give a form to a man's life, such as it pleases; in that she is all in all; 'tis the cup of Circe that varies our nature as she likes. How many nations, and but three steps from us, think the fear of the dew, that so manifestly is hurtful to us, a ridiculous fancy, and our watermen and peasants despise it. You make a German sick if you lay him upon a mattrass, as you do an Italian if you lay him upon a feather-bed, and a Frenchman without curtains or fire. A Spanish stomach cannot endure our form of eating, nor ours to drink like the Swiss. A German made me very merry at Augusta,[1] with disputing the convenience of our hearths, by the same arguments which we commonly make use of in decrying their stoves; for, to say the truth, that smothered heat, and then the scent of that heated matter of which the fire is composed, gets into the head of such as are not used to them, though not into mine; but as to the rest, the heat being always equal, constant and universal, without flame, without smoke, and without the wind that comes down our chimnies, they may in many ways endure comparison with ours. Why do we not imitate the Roman architecture? For they say that anciently fires were not made in their houses, but on the outside, and at the foot of them; whence the heat was conveyed to the whole fabric by pipes contrived in the wall, which went twining about the places that were to be warmed: which I have seen plainly described somewhere in Seneca.[2] This gentleman, hearing me commend the conveniences and beauties of his city, which truly deserves it, began to pity me that I had to go away; and the first inconvenience he alleged to me was, the heaviness in the head that the chimnies elsewhere would bring upon me. He had heard some one make this complaint, and fixed it upon us, being by custom deprived of the opportunity of perceiving it at home. All heat that comes from the fire makes me weak and dull, and yet Evenus said that fire was the best condiment of life.[3] I rather choose any other way of making myself warm.

We are afraid to drink our wines when towards the bottom of a vessel; in Portugal, this is thought delicious, and it is the beverage of princes. In fine, every nation has several modes and customs, that are not only unknown, but would seem savage and miraculous to others. What should we do with those people who admit of no testimonies, if not printed, who believe not men if not in a book, not truth herself, if not of competent age? We dignify our nonsense when we commit it to the press. 'Tis of a great deal more weight to what you speak of, to say: "I have read such thing," than if you only say: "I have heard such a thing." But I, who no more disbelieve a man's mouth than his pen, and who know that men write as indiscreetly as they speak, and who esteem this age as much as one that's past, do as soon quote a friend I know as Aulus Gellius or Macrobius, and what I have seen, as what they have written: and as they held of virtue, that it is not greater for having continued longer, so do I hold of truth, that for being older it is not wiser. I often say that it is mere folly that makes us run after foreign and scholastic examples: their fertility is the same now that it was in the time of Homer and Plato. But is it not that we seek more the honour of the quotation, than the truth of the discourse? as if it were more to borrow our proofs from the shops of Vascosan or of Plantin, than from what is to be seen in our own village: or else, indeed, that we have not the wit to cull out and make useful what we see before us, and judge of it vividly enough to draw it into example; for if we say that we want authority to procure faith to our testimony, we speak from the purpose; forasmuch as, in my opinion, of the most ordinary, common, and known things, could we but find out their light, the greatest miracles of nature might be formed, and the most wonderful examples, especially upon the subject of human actions.

Now, upon this subject I am speaking of, setting aside the examples I have gathered from books, and what Aristotle says[4] of Andro the Argian, that he travelled over the arid sands of Libya without drinking; a gentleman who has behaved himself well in several employments, said, in a place where I was, that he had rid from Madrid to Lisbon in the heat of summer, without drinking. He is very healthy and vigorous for his age, and has nothing extraordinary in his course and method of living but this, to live sometimes two or three months, nay, a whole year, without drinking. He is sometimes dry, but he lets his drought pass over, and holds it an appetite which easily goes of itself; he drinks more out of caprice, than either for need or pleasure.

Here is another example: 'tis not long ago that I met one of the learnedest men in France, among those of the greatest fortune, studying in a corner of a hall that they had separated for him with tapestry, and about him a rabble of his servants, full of noise. He told me, and Seneca almost says the same of himself,[5] he made an advantage of this hubbub; as if,

[1] Augsburgh (Augusta Vindelicorum), through which Montaigne passed on his way to Italy, in October, 1580. He does not mention this discourse about stoves and chimnies in his Journey.

[2] *Epist.* 90.
[3] Plutarch, *Platonic Questions.*
[4] Laertius, *Life of Pyrrho.*
[5] *Epist.* 56.

beaten with this rattle, he so much the more collected and retired himself into himself for contemplation, and that this tempest of voices drove back his thoughts within himself. When a scholar at Padua, he had his study so long situated in the rattle of coaches, and the tumult of the public place, that he not only formed himself to the contempt, but even to the use of noise, for the service of his studies. Socrates answered Alcibiades, who being astonished at his patience, asked him how he could endure the perpetual scolding of his wife: "Why," said he, "as those do who are accustomed to the ordinary noise of wheels to draw water."[1] I am quite otherwise; I have a tender head, and easily discomposed; when 'tis bent upon any thing, the least buzzing of a fly tears it into pieces.

Seneca, in his youth, having, by the example of Sextus, put on a positive resolution of eating nothing that had received death, passed over a whole year without it, and, as he said, with pleasure,[2] and only left off that he might not be suspected of taking up this rule from some new religions, by which it was prescribed. He took up withal, from the precepts of Attalus, a custom, not to lie any more upon any sort of bedding that yielded under a man's weight, and even to his old age made use of such as would not yield to any pressure. What the custom of his time made him account austerity, that of ours makes us look upon as effeminacy.

Do but observe the difference betwixt the way of living of my labourers and mine; Scythia and the Indies have nothing more remote both from my force and method. I have picked up boys from begging to serve me, who soon after have quitted both my kitchen and livery, only that they might return to their former course of life: and I found one afterwards picking up muscles in our neighbourhood for his dinner, whom I could neither by entreaties nor threats reclaim from the sweetness he found in indigence. Beggars have their magnificences and delights as well as the rich; and, 'tis said, their dignities and orders. These are the effects of custom; she can mould us not only into what form she pleases (and yet the sages say[3] we ought to apply ourselves to the best, which she would soon make easy to us), but also to change and variation, which is the most noble and most useful of her apprenticeships. The best of my bodily attributes is that I am flexible, and very little obstinate; I have inclinations more proper and ordinary, and more agreeable than others; but I am diverted from them with very little struggle, and easily slip into a contrary course. A young man ought to cross his own rules, to awake his vigour, and to keep it from growing faint and rusty: and there is no course of life so weak and foolish as that which is carried on by rule and discipline;

> Ad primum lapidem vectari cum placet, hora
> Sumitur ex libro; si prurit frictus ocelli
> Angulus, inspecta genesi, collyria quærit:[4]
>
> "If he but walk a mile he first must look
> For the fit hour and minute in the book.
> If his eye itch, the pain will still endure,
> Nor till a scheme he raised, apply the cure:"

he shall often throw himself even into excesses, if he will take my advice: otherwise the least debauch will ruin him, and he will render himself uneasy and disagreeable in company. The worst quality in a gentleman is delicateness, and an obligation to a certain particular way; and it is particular, if not pliable and supple. It is a kind of reproach not to be able, or not to dare, to do what we see others do before us; let such as these sit at home. It is in every man unbecoming; but in a soldier it is vicious and intolerable; who, as Philopœmen said,[5] ought to accustom himself to all variety and inequality of life.

Though I have been brought up as much as possible, to liberty and indifference, yet so it is that having, in growing old, more settled upon certain forms (my age is now past instruction, and I have henceforward nothing to do but to keep it up as well as I can), custom has already, e'er I was aware, so imprinted its character in me, in certain things, that I look upon it as a kind of excess to leave them off; and, without a force upon myself, I cannot sleep in the day-time, nor eat between meals, nor breakfast, nor go to bed, without a great interval betwixt eating and sleeping, as of three good hours after supper; nor get children but before I sleep, and never standing upon my feet, nor endure my own sweat, nor quench my thirst either with pure water or pure wine, nor keep my head long bare, nor have my hair cut after dinner; and I should be as uneasy without my gloves as without my shirt, or without washing when I rise from table, or get out of bed; and could not lie without a canopy and curtains, as if these were all-essential things. I could dine without a table-cloth, but without a clean napkin, after the German fashion, very incommodiously; I soil them more than they or the Italians do, and make but little use either of spoon or fork. I am sorry that the same is not in use amongst us, that I see the example of in kings; which is to change our napkins at every service, as they do our plates. We are told of that laborious soldier Marius, that, growing old, he became nice in his drinking, and never drank but out of a particular cup of his own;[6] I, in like manner, have suffered myself to fancy a certain form of glasses, and do not willingly drink in a common glass, no more than from a common hand; all metal offends me in comparison of a clear and transparent matter; let my eyes taste too, according to their capacity. I owe several

The customs to which Montaigne was a slave in his old age.

[1] Laertius, *in vita.*

[2] *Epist.* 108.

[3] *Pythagoras*, in Stobæus, *Serm.* 29.

[4] *Juvenal*, vi. 576.

[5] Or rather, *as it was said to Philopœmen.* See Plutarch, *in vita.*

[6] Plutarch, *How we should restrain Anger.*

other such niceties to custom. Nature has also, on the other hand, helped me to some of hers; as not to be able to endure two full meals in one day without overcharging my stomach, nor a total abstinence from one of those meals, without filling myself with wind, drying up my mouth, and dulling my appetite; as finding great inconvenience from much evening air; for of late years, in night marches, which often happen to be all night long, after five or six hours my stomach begins to be queasy, with a violent pain in my head, so that I always vomit before the day breaks. When others go to breakfast, I go to sleep, and when I rise I am as brisk and gay as before. I had always been told that the evening dew never spread itself but at the beginning of the night: but for some years past, long and familiarly frequenting a lord possessed with this opinion, that the dew is more sharp and dangerous about the declining of the sun, an hour or two before he sets, which he carefully avoids, and despises that of the night; he has almost imprinted in me not only his reasoning, but his opinion. What, shall doubt itself and inquiry strike our imagination, and change us? Such as absolutely and on a sudden give way to these propensions, totally ruin themselves; and I am grieved for several gentlemen who, through the folly of their physicians, have in their youth and health put themselves into consumptions; it were yet better to endure a cold, than, by disuse, for ever to lose the commerce of common life, in an action of so great use. Ill-natured science, to interdict us the sweetest and most pleasant hours of the day! Let us keep possession of it to the last; for the most part a man hardens himself by being obstinate, and corrects his constitution, as Cæsar did the falling sickness, by dint of contempt.[1] A man should addict himself to the best rules, but not enslave himself to them; except not to such, if there be any such, the obligation and servitude to which are of profit.

The care that Montaigne took to keep his body open.

Both kings and philosophers go to stool, and ladies too; public lives are bound to ceremony, mine, that is obscure and private, enjoys all natural dispensation; soldier and Gascon are also qualities a little subject to indiscretion; wherefore I shall say of this action, that it is necessary to refer it to certain prescribed and nocturnal hours, and force a man's self to it by custom, as I have done; but not to subject himself, as has been my practice in my declining years, to a particular convenience of place and seat for this purpose, and making it troublesome by long sitting: and yet, foul offices, is it not in some measure excusable to require more care and cleanliness? *Natura homo mundum et elegans animal est;*[2] "Man is by nature a clean and delicate creature." Of all the actions of nature, I am the most impatient of being interrupted in that. I have seen many soldiers troubled with the unruliness of their stomachs; whilst mine and I never fail of our punctual assignation, which is at leaping out of bed, if some indispensable business or sickness do not interfere with us.

The surest course to be taken by valetudinarians.

I do not then think, as I said before, that sick men can better place themselves any where in safety, than in keeping quietly in that course of life wherein they have been bred and trained up; alteration, be it what it will, distempers and confuses them. Chesnuts will never hurt a Perigordian, or one of Lucca; or milk and cheese the inhabitants of the mountains. People are ordered not only a new, but a contrary method of life, a change that the most healthful cannot endure. Prescribe water to a Breton of threescore and ten, shut a seaman up in a stove, and forbid a Basque footman walking; you will deprive them of motion, and in the end of air and light.

An vivere tanti est?

Cogimur a suetis animum suspendere rebus,
Atque, ut vivamus, vivere desinimus - - -
Hos superesse reor, quibus et spirabilis acr,
Et lux, qua regimur, redditur ipsa gravis?[3]

"Is life of such a mighty consequence?
Must we accustom'd things quite over give,
And cease to live, that we may longer live?
Surely their life they once for all must leave,
Whom light and air, by which they live, do grieve."

If they do no other good, they do this at least, that they prepare the patients betimes for death, by little and little undermining and cutting off the use of life.

Montaigne, whether well or sick, indulged his natural appetites.

Both well and sick I have ever willingly suffered myself to obey the appetites that pressed upon me. I give great authority to my inclinations and desires; I do not love to cure one disease by another; I hate remedies that are more troublesome than the disease itself. To be subject to the stone, and subject to abstain from eating oysters, are two evils instead of one; the disease torments us on the one side, and the remedy on the other. Since we ever run the hazard of mistaking, let us run it as a consequence of pleasure. The world proceeds quite contrary; and thinks nothing profitable that is not painful; facility stands suspected. My appetite is in several things of itself happily enough accommodated to the health of my stomach; high-flavoured sauces were pleasant to me when young, but my stomach disliking them afterwards, my taste incontinently did the same; wine is hurtful to sick people; and 'tis the first thing that my mouth disrelishes when I am sick, and with an invincible distaste. Whatever I take against my liking does me

[1] Plutarch, *in vitâ*.
[2] Seneca, *Epist.* 92.
[3] Pseudo-Gall. *Eleg.* i. 155, 247. The words, *An vivere tanti est*, are not in the text.

harm, and nothing hurts me that I eat with appetite and pleasure. I never received harm by any action that was very agreeable to me; and accordingly I have made all medicinal conclusions mightily give way to my pleasure; and I have, when I was young,

> Quem circumcursans huc atque huc sæpe Cupido
> Fulgebat crocina splendidus in tunica,[1]
>
> "Whilst Cupid round me fluttering did fly,
> In his rich mantle of the Tyrian dye,"

given myself the reins as freely and inconsiderately as any other whatever to the desire that was predominant in me;

> Et militavi non sine gloria,[2]
>
> "And in the field of Love have honour won;"

yet more in continuation and holding out, than in sally:

> Sex me vix memini sustinuisse vices.[3]

'Tis certainly a misfortune and a miracle at once, to confess at what a tender age I was subjected to love. It was indeed by chance; for it was long before the years of choice or discretion. I do not remember myself so long ago; and my fortune may very well be coupled to that of Quartilla, who could not remember the time she was a maid.[4]

> Inde tragus, celeresque pili, mirandaque matri
> Barba meæ.[5]
>
> "My early budding beard my friends amazed."

Physicians commonly submit their rules to the violent longings that happen to sick persons, with very good success. This great desire, so strange and vicious, cannot be imagined to be, but that nature must have a hand in it. And then how easy a thing is it to satisfy the fancy? In my opinion, this part wholly carries it, at least, above all the rest. The most grievous and ordinary wills are those that fancy leads us with. This Spanish saying mightily pleases in several points of view: *Defienda me Dios de my.* "God defend me from myself." I am sorry, when I am sick, that I have not some longing that might give me the contentment of satisfying it; all the rules of physic would hardly be able to divert me from it. I do the same when I am well, I see very little more than to wish and to will. 'Tis pity a man should be so weak and languishing, that he can't even wish.

The art of physic is not so resolved that we need be without authority for whatever we do; it changes according to the climates and moons, according to Fernel and according to L'Escale.[6] If your physician does not think it good for you to sleep, to drink wine, or to eat such and such meats, never trouble yourself; I will find you another that shall not be of his opinion. The diversity of physical arguments and opinions embraces all sorts of methods. I saw a miserable sick man panting and burning with thirst, that he might be cured, who was afterwards laughed at for his pains by another physician, who condemned that advice as prejudicial to him. Had he not tormented himself to good purpose?. A man of that profession is lately dead of the stone, who had made use of extreme abstinence to contend with his disease. His fellow physicians said that, on the contrary, this abstinence from drink had dried his body up and baked the gravel in his bladder.

The uncertainty of physic gives a sanction to most of our longings.

I have observed that, both in wounds and sickness, speaking discomposes and hurts me as much as any disorder I can commit. My voice spends and tires me, for 'tis loud and high; so that when I have gone to whisper some great person about an affair of consequence, they have often had to moderate my voice.

Talking hurtful to Montaigne in his sickness.

This story deserves a place here. Some one,[7] in a certain Greek school, was speaking loud, as I do; the master of the ceremonies sent to him to speak lower. "Tell him then he must send me," replied the other, "the tone he would have me speak in." To which the other replied, "That he should take the tone from the ear of him to whom he spake." It was well said, if it be understood: "Speak according to the affair you are speaking about to your auditor;" for if it mean, "'tis sufficient that he hears you, or, govern yourself by him," I do not find it to be reason. The tone and motion of my voice carries with it a great deal of the expression and signification of my meaning, and 'tis I who am to govern it, to make myself understood. There is a voice to instruct, a voice to flatter, and a voice to reprehend. I would not only have my voice reach my hearer, but, peradventure, that it strike and pierce him. When I rattle my footman in a sharp and bitter tone, it would be very fine for him to say, "Pray, master, speak lower, I hear you very well." *Est quædam vox ad auditum accommodata, non magnitudine, sed proprie-*

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1 Catullus, *Carm.* lxvi. 133.

2 Horace, *Od.* iii. 26. 2.

3 Ovid, *Amor.* iii. 7. 26. Some very curious inquirers will blame me for not having explained this little verse; and there are others, whom I rather wish to keep fair with, would give me a rap on the knuckles if I had. All I can do to oblige the first, is to refer them to Fontaine's tale called *Le Berceau*, verse 245.

4 Petronius, c. 25.

5 Martial, xi. 22. 7.

6 Fernel, physician to Henry II., born 1497, died 1558.—L'Escale, better known as J. C. Scaliger, one of the greatest scholars of that age. No one was at this period accredited as a learned man, who did not give some Greek or Latin turn to his real name. Fernel became *Fernelius*; L'Escale, *Scaliger*; Tournebu, *Turnebus*; Budé, *Budæus*; Filander, *Philander*; Casaubon, *Hortibonus*, or *Hortusbonus*; Schwartzerde, *Melanchton* (μελαινα χθων). Sans-Malice, physician to Francis I., took the Greek appellation *Alakia*; and, later, Van der Beken called himself *Torrentius*, &c. &c.

7 *Carneades.* See Laertius, *in vitâ.*

tate.[1] "There is a certain voice accommodated to the hearing, not by the loudness, but by its propriety." Speaking is half his that speaks, and half his that hears; the last ought to prepare himself to receive it, according to its motion, as with tennis-players; he that receives the ball, shifts, draws back, and prepares himself, according as he sees him move who strikes the stroke, and according to the stroke itself.

Distempers have their periods, which we must wait for with patience.

Experience has moreover taught me this, that we damage ourselves by impatience. Evils have their life and limits, their diseases and their recovery. The constitution of maladies is formed after the pattern of the constitution of animals; they have their fortunes and days limited from their birth. Whoever attempts imperiously to cut them short by force in the middle of their course, lengthens and multiplies them, and incenses instead of appeasing them. I am of Crantor's opinion, "that we are neither obstinately and wilfully to oppose maladies, nor to truckle to them for want of courage; but that we are naturally to give way to them, according to their condition and our own." We ought to grant free passage to diseases, and I find they stay less with me, who let them alone, and I have lost those which are reputed the most tenacious and obstinate, by their own decay, without any help or art, and contrary to rule. Let us a little permit nature to take her own way; she better understands her own affairs than we. "But such a one died:—" and so will you, if not of that disease, of another; and how many have not escaped dying who have had three physicians always at their tails? Example is a vague and universal mirror, and has all aspects. If it be a pleasant medicine, take it; 'tis always so much present good. I will never stick at the name or the colour, if it be grateful to the palate: pleasure is one of the chief kinds of profit. I have suffered colds, gouty defluxions, relaxations, palpitations of the heart, megrims, and other accidents, to grow old and die in me a natural death, which I have been rid of when I was half prepared to nourish and keep them. They are sooner prevailed upon by courtesy than by huffing. We must patiently suffer the laws of our condition: we are born to grow old, to grow weak, and to be sick, in spite of all physic. 'Tis the first lesson the Mexicans teach their children; so soon as ever they are born, they thus salute them: "Child, thou art come into the world to endure, suffer, and say nothing." 'Tis injustice to lament that that has befallen any one, which may befal every one: *Indignare, si quid in te inique proprie constitutum est.*[2] "Be angry when there is any thing unjustly decreed against thee alone."

Take an old man begging of God Almighty that he will maintain his health vigorous and entire, that is to say, that he will restore him to youth:

> Stulte, quid hæc frustra votis puerilibus optas?[3]
>
> "Why pray'st thou, fool, such childish prayers in vain?"

is it not folly? his condition is not capable of it. The gout, the stone, indigestion, are symptoms of long years, as heat, rains, and winds of long voyages. Plato[4] does not believe that that Æsculapius troubled himself to seek, by regimen, to prolong life in a weak and wasted body, useless to his country and to his profession, and to beget healthful and robust children; and does not think such solicitude suitable to the divine justice and prudence, which is to direct all things to utility. My good friend, your business is done: no body can restore you; they can at the most but patch you up, and prop you a little, and prolong your misery an hour or two:

> Non secus instantem cupiens fulcire ruinam,
> Diversis contra nititur objicibus;
> Donec certa dies, omni compage soluta,
> Ipsum cum rebus subruat auxilium;[5]
>
> "Like one who, willing to defer a while
> A sudden ruin, props the tottering pile,
> Till in short space the house, the props and all
> Together with a dreadful havoc fall."

We must learn to suffer what we cannot avoid. Our life, like the harmony of the world, is composed of contrary things, of various tones, sweet and harsh, sharp and flat, sprightly and solemn. And the musician who should only affect one of these, what would he be able to do? He must know how to make use of them all, and to mix them; and so we likewise, the good and evil, which are consubstantial with life. Our being cannot subsist without this mixture, and the one is no less necessary to it than the other. To attempt to kick against natural necessity, is to represent the folly of Ctesiphon, who undertook to outkick his mule.[6]

Why Montaigne avoided to consult physicians.

I consult little about the alterations I feel; for those people take advantage when they have you at their mercy. They stun your ears with their prognostics, and having once formerly surprised me, weakened with sickness, injuriously handled me with their dogmas and magisterial fopperies; one while menacing me with great pains; and another with approaching death. By this I was indeed moved and shaken, *but* not subdued nor justled from my place. Though my judgment was neither altered nor distracted, yet it was at least disturbed; 'tis always agitation and combat.

He loved to flatter his imagination in his illness.

Now I use my imagination as gently as I can, and would discharge it of all trouble and contest, if I could. A man must assist,

[1] Quintil. xi. 3.
[2] Seneca, *Epist.* 91.
[3] Ovid, *Trist.* iii. 8. 11.
[4] *Republic*, iii.
[5] Pseudo-Gallus, i. 171.
[6] Plutarch, *How we should restrain Anger.*

flatter, and deceive it if he can. My mind is fit for that office; it wants no appearances throughout. And, could it persuade as it preaches, it would successfully relieve me. Will you have an example? It tells me, "that 'tis for my good to have the stone; that the buildings of my age are naturally to suffer some decay; that it is now time they should begin to disjoint. 'Tis a common necessity, and I could not expect a miracle to be performed in my favour; I therein pay what is due to old age, and I cannot expect a better bargain. That company ought to comfort me, being fallen into the most common infirmity of my time. I see everywhere men tormented with the same disease, and am honoured by the fellowship, forasmuch as men of the best quality are most frequently afflicted with it; 'tis a noble and dignified disease. That of such as are pestered with it, few have it to a less degree of pain, and while others are put to the trouble of a strict diet, and the daily taking of nauseous drugs and potions, I owe my good intervals purely to my good fortune. For some ordinary broths of Eringo's, or burst-wort, that I have twice or thrice taken to oblige ladies, who, with kindness greater than my pain, would needs present me half of theirs, seemed to me equally easy to take, and fruitless in operation. They are to pay a thousand vows to Æsculapius, and as many crowns to their physician, for the voiding a little gravel, which I often do by the benefit of nature. Even the decency of my countenance is not disturbed by it in company, and I can hold my water ten hours, and as long as any man that is in health. "The fear of this disease," it says, "did formerly affright thee, when it was unknown to thee; the cries and despair of those that make it worse by their impatience beget a horror in thee. 'Tis a malady that punishes the members by which thou hast most offended. Thou art a conscientious fellow,

The stone ordinary in old men, especially men of quality.

Quæ venit indigne pœna, dolenda venit:[1]

"To guiltless suff'rers our regret is due:"

"consider this chastisement; 'tis very easy in comparison with that of others, and inflicted with a paternal tenderness. Do but observe how late it came; it only seizes on and incommodes that part of thy life which is, as it were, sterile and lost, having, as it were by compact, given full room to the licence and pleasures of thy youth. The fear and the compassion that people have of this disease serves thee for matter of glory, a quality whereof, if thou hast thy own judgment purified, and if thy reason is therein right and sound, yet thy friends will notwithstanding discover some tincture in thy complexion. 'Tis a pleasure to bear it said of one's self: 'Here is great force, here is great patience.' Thou art seen to sweat with pain, to look pale and red, to tremble, to vomit well nigh to blood, to suffer strange contractions and convulsions, by starts to let tears drop from thine eyes, to urine thick, black, and frightful water, or to have it suppressed by some sharp and craggy stone, that cruelly pricks and tears thee, whilst all the while thou entertainest the company with an ordinary countenance, drolling by fits with thy people, making one in a continued discourse, now and then excusing thy pain, and making thy sufferance less than it is. Dost thou call to mind the men of past times, who so greedily sought diseases to keep their virtue in breath and exercise? Put the case that nature forced, and lead thee on to this glorious schooling, into which thou wouldst never have entered of thy own free-will. If thou tellest me that it is a dangerous and mortal disease, what others are not? For 'tis a physician's cheat to except any, and to say, that they do not go directly to death: what matter is it, if they tend that way by accident, or if they slide and slip into the path that leads to it? But thou dost not die because thou art sick, thou diest because thou art living. Death kills thee without the help of sickness, and in some, sickness has deferred death, who have lived longer by reason of that they thought themselves dying withal. To which may be added that, as there are wounds, so there are diseases, medicinal and wholesome. The stone is often no less long-lived than you. We see men with whom it has continued from their infancy, even to an extreme old age, and if they had not broken company, it would have gone on with them longer still. You oftener kill it than it kills you. And though it presented you the image of approaching death, were it not a good office to a man of such an age, to put him in mind of his end? And, which is worse, thou hast no longer any thing that should make thee desire to be cured. From the first day, common necessity calls thee away. Do but consider how artificially and gently she puts thee out of taste with life, and weans thee from the world; not forcing and compelling thee with a tyrannical subjection, like so many other infirmities which thou seest old men afflicted withal, that hold them in continual torment, and keep them in perpetual, unintermitted pains and dolours, but by warnings and instructions at intervals, intermixing long pauses of repose, as it were, to give thee leave to meditate upon and repeat her lesson at thy own ease and leisure. To give thee means to judge aright, and to assume the resolution of a man of courage, she presents to thee the entire state of thy condition, both in good and evil, and one while a very cheerful, and another an insupportable life, in one and the same day. If thou embracest not death, at least thou shakest hands with it once a month; by which thou hast the more cause to hope that it will one day surprise thee without warning, and that being so often conducted to the water-

[1] Ovid, *Heroid* v. 8.

side, and thinking thyself to be still upon the accustomed terms, thou and thy confidence will at one time or another be unexpectedly wafted over.[1] A man cannot reasonably complain of diseases that fairly divide the time with health."

I am obliged to fortune for having so often assaulted me with the same sort of weapons; she forms and fashions me thereto, hardens and habituates me by custom; I know within a little for how much I shall be quit. For want of natural memory, I make one of paper, and as any new symptom happens in my disease, I set it down; whence it falls out that, having now passed through almost all sorts of examples, if any surprise threatens me, tumbling over these little loose notes, as sybil's leaves, I never fail of finding matter of consolation from some favourable prognostic in my past experience.[2] Custom also makes me hope better for the time to come; for the conduct of this evacuation having so long continued, 'tis to be believed that nature will not alter her course, and that no other worse accident will happen than what I already feel. And besides, the condition of this disease is not unsuitable to my prompt and sudden complexion: when it assaults me gently, I am afraid, for 'tis then for a great while; but it has naturally brisk and vigorous attacks. It claws me to purpose for a day or two. My reins held out an age without alteration, and I have almost now lived another since they changed their state; ills have their periods as well as good; perhaps the infirmity draws towards an end. Age weakens the heat of my stomach, the digestion of which being less perfect, it sends this crude matter to my reins: why, at a certain revolution, may not the heat of my reins be also abated, so that they can no more petrify my phlegm, and nature find out some other way of purgation? Years have evidently helped me to drain certain rheums; and why not those excrements which furnish matter for gravel? But is there any thing so sweet as the sudden change, when from an excessive pain, I come, by the voiding of a stone, to recover, as from a flash of lightning, the beautiful light of health, so free and full, as it happens in our sudden and most sharp cholics? Is there any thing in the pain suffered, that a man can counterpoise to the pleasure of so sudden an amendment? Oh! how much does health seem the more pleasant to me after sickness, so near and contiguous that I can distinguish them in the presence of one another in their greatest height, where they present themselves in emulation, as if to make head against and to dispute it with one another! As the Stoics say, that the vices are profitably introduced, to give value to and set off virtue;[3] we can with better reason, and less temerity of conjecture, say of nature, that she has given us pain for the honour and service of pleasure and ease. When Socrates, after his fetters were knocked off, felt the pleasure of that itching which the weight of them had caused in his legs, he rejoiced to consider the strict alliance betwixt pain and pleasure; how they are linked together by a necessary connexion, so that by turns they follow and mutually beget one another; and cried out to the good fellow Æsop, that he ought, out of his consideration, to have taken the materials proper for a fine fable.[4]

Health more pleasant after sickness.

The worst that I see in other diseases is that they are not so grievous in their effect as they are in their result: a man is a whole year recovering, and all the while full of weakness and fear. There is so much hazard, and so many steps to arrive at safety, that one has never done. Before they have unmuffled you of a wrapper, and then a cap, before they allow you to walk abroad and take the air, to drink wine, lie with your wife, or eat melons, 'tis odds but you relapse into some new distemper. The stone has this privilege, that it carries itself clean off; whereas other maladies always leave behind them some impression and alteration, that renders the body subject to some new disease, lending a hand to one another. Those are excusable, that content themselves with possessing us, without extending it farther, and introducing others to succeed them: but courteous and kind are those whose passage brings us any profitable issue. Since I have been troubled with the stone, I find myself free from all other accidents; much more, methinks, than I was before, and have never had any fever since. I argue that the extreme and frequent vomitings that I am subject to, purge me: and, on the other side, my distastes, and the strange fasts I keep, digest my peccant humours; and nature in those stones voids whatever there is in me of superfluous and hurtful. Let them never tell me that it is a medicine too dear bought: for what are so many stinking potions, caustics, incisions, sweats, setons, diets, and so many other methods of cure, which often, by reason we are not able to undergo their violence and importunity, bring us to our graves? So that when I am ill I look upon it as physic; when well, for an absolute deliverance.

The advantage of the stone above all other distempers.

And here is another particular benefit of my disease; which is, that it most plays its game by itself, and lets me play mine, or else I only want courage to do it; for in its greatest fury I have endured it ten hours together on horseback. Do but endure it, you need no other

[1] An allusion to what was fabled by the ancient Greeks and Romans, that the dead were transported over the river Styx in Charon's ferry-boat.

[2] It is these *little notes* which partly constitute the Journey through Italy. His visits to the mineral waters of Lorraine, Switzerland, and Tuscany were principally occasioned by the stone, with which he was afflicted.

[3] Plutarch, *On the Common Conceptions against the Stoics.*

[4] Plato, *Phædo.*

regimen; play, dine, run, do this and do that, if you can; your excess will do you more good than harm: say as much to one that has the pox, the gout, or hernia. The other diseases have more universal obligations, rack all our actions after another kind of manner, disturb our whole order, and to their consideration engage the whole state of life: this only pinches the skin; it leaves the understanding and will wholly at our disposal, and the tongue, hands, and feet; it rather awakens than stupifies you. The soul is over-excited with the ardour of a fever, prostrated with the epilepsy, and displaced by a sharp megrim, and, in short, astounded by all the diseases that hurt the whole mass, and the most noble parts. This never meddles with the soul; if anything goes amiss with her, 'tis her own fault: she betrays, dismounts, and abandons herself. 'Tis only fools who suffer themselves to be persuaded that this hard and massy body, which is baked in our reins, is to be dissolved by drinks: wherefore, when it is once stirred, there is nothing to be done but to give it passage; it will take it of itself.

I moreover observe this particular convenience in it, that it is a disease wherein we have little to guess at: we are dispensed from the trouble into which other diseases throw us by the incertainty of their causes, conditions, and progress; a trouble that is infinitely painful: we have no need of consultation and doctoral interpretations; the senses well enough inform us what it is and where it is.

By such-like arguments, weak and strong, as Cicero[1] did the disease of his old age, I try to rock asleep and amuse my imagination, and to dress its wounds. If I find them worse to-morrow, I will provide new remedies and applications. To show that this is *true*: I am come to that pass of late, that the least motion forces pure blood out of my reins; what of that? I stir nevertheless as before, and ride after my hounds with a juvenile and reckless ardour, and find that I have a very good bargain in a malady of that importance, when it costs me no more than a little heaviness and uneasiness in that part; 'tis some great stone that wastes and consumes the substance of my kidneys and of my life, which I by little and little evacuate, not without some natural pleasure, as an excrement henceforward superfluous and troublesome. Now, if I feel anything to roll and stir, do not expect that I should trouble myself to consult my pulse, or my urine, in order to find there some vexatious sign: I shall soon enough feel the pain, without making it more and longer by the disease of fear. Who fears to suffer, already suffers what he fears: to which may be added, that the doubts and ignorance of those who take upon them to expound the springs of nature, and her internal progressions, and the many false prognostics of their art, ought to give us to understand that her ways are inscrutable and utterly unknown: there is great uncertainty, variety, and obscurity in all that she either promises or threatens. Old age excepted, which is an indubitable sign of the approach of death; in all other mishaps I see few signs of the future, whereon we may ground our divination. I only judge of myself by my real senses, and not by reason. To what end? since I am resolved to bring nothing to it but expectation and patience. Will you know how much I get by this? Observe those that do otherwise, and who rely upon so many divers persuasions and counsels; how often and how much they labour under imagination, without any bodily pain at all. I have many times amused myself, being well and in safety, and delivered from these dangerous ills, by describing them to the physicians, as but then beginning to discover themselves in me; undergoing the sentence of their dreadful conclusions very much at my ease; and so much the more obliged to the favour of God, and better satisfied of the vanity of this art.

There is nothing that ought so much to be recommended to youth as activity and vigilance: our life is nothing but motion: I move with great difficulty, and am slow in everything; in rising, going to bed, or eating: seven of the clock in the morning is early for me; and where I govern I never dine before eleven, nor sup till after six. I have formerly attributed the cause of the fevers and other diseases I have fallen into, to the heaviness that long sleeping had brought upon me, and have ever repented going to sleep again in the morning. Plato is more angry at the excess of sleeping, than at that of drinking.[2] I love to lie hard and alone, even without my wife, as kings do; well covered with clothes. They never warm my bed; but, since I've grown old, they give me at need warm clothes to lay to my feet and stomach. They find fault with the great Scipio,[3] that he was a heavy sleeper; and, in my opinion, for no other reason but that men were displeased that he alone should have nothing in him to be found fault withal. If I have anything curious in my way of living, 'tis rather in my lying than anything else; but generally I give way and accommodate myself as much as any one to necessity. Sleep has taken up a great part of my life, and I yet continue, at the age I now am, to sleep eight or nine hours together. I wean myself, to my advantage, from this propensity to sloth, and am evidently better for so doing. I find the change a little hard indeed, but in three days 'tis over, and I see but few that live with less sleep when

Montaigne a great sleeper.

He corrected that habit in his latter days, and found the benefit of so doing.

[1] *De Senectute.*
[2] Laertius, *in vitâ.* Plato, *Laws*, viii. 13.
[3] Plutarch, *That it is requisite a Prince should be learned.*

need requires, and that more constantly exercise themselves, nor to whom long journeys are less troublesome. My body is capable of a firm, but not of a violent or sudden agitation. I avoid of late all violent exercises, and such as make me sweat, wherein my limbs grow weary before they are hot. I can stand a whole day together, and am not wearied with walking; but not on a high-road, for there, from my youth upwards, I have never loved to travel, except on horseback; on foot I mud myself up to the breech, and little fellows like me are subject, in the streets, to be elbowed and justled, for want of appearance: I have ever loved to repose myself, whether sitting or lying, with my heels as high, or higher, than my seat.

The military profession very pleasant and honourable.

There is no profession so pleasant as the military: a profession both noble in its execution (for valour is the strongest, proudest, and most generous of all virtues), and noble in its cause: there is no utility either more universal, or more just, than the protection of the peace and greatness of one's country. The company of so many noble, young, and active men delights you; the ordinary sight of so many tragic spectacles; the freedom of this conversation without art, and a masculine and unceremonious way of living, pleases you; the variety of a thousand several actions, the inspiriting harmony of martial music, that ravishes and enflames both your ears and soul; the honour of this vocation, nay, even its sufferings and difficulties, which Plato so little heeds, that, in his Republics, he makes women and children share in them, are delightful to you. You put yourselves voluntarily upon particular exploits and hazards, according as you judge of their lustre and importance; and see when even life itself is excusably employed,

Pulchrumque mori succurrit in armis.[1]

"How beautiful it is to die in arms."

To fear common dangers that concern so great a multitude of men, not to dare to do what so many sorts of souls, and a whole people do, is for a heart that is low and mean beyond all measure: company encourages even children themselves. If others excel you in knowledge, in gracefulness, and strength, or fortune, you have third causes to blame for that; but to give place to them in stability of mind, you can blame no one for that but yourself. Death is more abject, more languishing and painful in bed than in battle; fevers and catarrhs as painful and mortal as a musket-shot: whoever has fortified himself valiantly to bear the accidents of common life, would not need to raise his courage to be a soldier. *Vivere, mi Lucili, militare est.*[2] "To live, my Lucilius, is to make war."

I do not remember that I ever had the itch, and yet scratching is one of nature's sweetest gratifications, and nearest at hand; but the smart follows too near. I use it most in my ears, which are often apt to itch.

I came into the world with all my senses entire, even to perfection. My stomach is commodiously good, as also is my head and my breath; and, for the most part, uphold themselves so in the height of fevers. I have passed the age to which some nations, not without reason, have prescribed so just a term of life, that they would not suffer men to exceed it;[3] and yet I have some intermissions, though short and inconstant, so clean and sound, as are little inferior to the health and elasticity of my youth. I do not speak of vigour and sprightliness; 'tis not reason that it should follow me beyond its limits;

Montaigne's hale constitution.

Non hoc amplius est liminis, aut aquæ
Cælestis, patiens latus.[4]

"My sides no longer can sustain
The hardships of the wind and rain."

My face and eyes presently discover me: all my alterations begin there, and appear worse than they really are; my friends often pity me, before I feel the cause in myself. My looking-glass does not fright me; for even in my youth, it has befallen me more than once to have a scurvy complexion, and of ill prognostic, without any great consequences; insomuch that the physicians, not finding any cause within answerable to that outward alteration, attributed it to the mind, and that some secret passion had tormented me within; but they were deceived. If my body would govern itself as well under my rule as my mind does, we should move a little more at our ease: my mind was then not only free from trouble, but moreover full of joy and satisfaction, as it commonly is, half by complexion, half by its own design:

His mind not much disturbed by the ailments of the body.

Nec vitiant artus ægræ contagia mentis.[5]

"I never yet could find
That e'er my body suffered by my mind."

I am of opinion that this temperature of my soul has often raised my body from its lapses: this is often depressed; while, if the other be not brisk and gay, 'tis at least quiet, and at rest. I had a quartan ague four or five months, that made me look miserably ill; yet my mind was always, not only calm, but pleasant. If the pain be without me, the weakness and langour do not much afflict me: I feel several bodily faintings, that beget a horror in me but to name, which yet I should less fear than a thousand passions and agitations of mind that I

[1] *Æneid*, ii. 317.
[2] Seneca, *Epist* 96.
[3] *Vix.*, fifty years.
[4] *Horace, Od. iii. 10, 19.*
[5] Ovid, *Tristia*, iii. 8, 25.

see about. I resolve no more to run, 'tis enough that I crawl along: and I complain not of the natural decadence that I feel in myself:

Quis tumidum guttur miratur in Alpibus?[1]

"Say, whom do goitres in the Alps surprise?"

any more than I regret that my duration shall not be as long and entire as that of an oak.

I have no reason to complain of my imagination: I have had few thoughts in my life that have so much as broken my sleep, if not those of desire, which have awakened without afflicting me. I dream but seldom, and then of chimeras and fantastic things, commonly produced from pleasant thoughts, and rather ridiculous than sad: and believe it to be true that dreams are the true interpreters of our inclinations; but there is art required to sort and understand them:

Res, quæ in vita usurpant homines, cogitant, curant, videut.
Quæque agunt vigilantes, agitantque, ea si cui somno accidunt
Minus mirandum est.[2]

"'Tis no wonder if what men practise, think, care for, and do when awake, should also run in their heads, and move them when they are asleep." Plato moreover says,[3] that 'tis the office of prudence to draw instructions of divination of future things from dreams. I see nothing in it, if not the wonderful experiences that Socrates, Xenophon, and Aristotle, all men of irreproachable authority, relate. The historians say[4] that the Atlantes never dream; who also never eat any thing that has received death: which I add, forasmuch as it is, perhaps, the reason why they never dream; for Pythagoras ordered a certain preparation of diet, to beget appropriate dreams.[5] Mine are always very gentle, without any agitation of body, or expression of voice. I have seen several of my time wonderfully disturbed in them; Theon the philosopher walked in his sleep; as also did Pericles' servant, and that upon the tiles and tops of the house.[6]

He was not dainty in his diet.

I hardly ever choose my dish at table, but fall too of the next at hand, and unwillingly change my course. A confusion of meats, and a clutter of dishes, displease me as much as any other confusion. I am easily satisfied with few viands, and am an enemy to the opinion of Favorinus,[7] that in a feast they should snatch from you the meat you like, and set another plate of another sort before you; and that it is a pitiful supper if you do not sate your guests with the rumps of birds, the beccafico being the only one that deserves to be all eaten. I usually eat salt meats; and yet I love bread that has no salt in it; and my baker never sends up any other to my table, contrary to the custom of the country. In my infancy, what they had most to correct in me was the refusal of things that children commonly best love, as sugar, sweet-meats, and march-pane. My tutor contended with this aversion to delicacies, as a kind of over-nicety; and indeed 'tis nothing else but a difficulty of taste in any thing to which it applies itself. Whoever shall cure a child of an obstinate affection to brown bread, bacon, or garlick, will cure him of all kind of delicateness. There are some who pretend to hardiness and patience, by wishing for beef and ham amongst pheasant and partridge; they have a good time on't; 'tis the delicacy of delicacies; 'tis the taste of an effeminate fortune, that disrelishes ordinary and accustomed things, *per quæ luxuria divitiarum tædio ludit.*[8] Not to make good cheer with what another does, and to be *curious* in what a man eats, is the essence of this vice:

Si modica cœnare times olus omne patella.[9]

"If an herb soup in a small dish thou fear'st."

There is indeed this difference, that 'tis better to oblige one's appetite to things that are most easy to be had; but 'tis always a vice to oblige one's self: I formerly said a kinsman of mine was nice, who, by being in our gallies, had unlearned the use of beds, and to put off his clothes when he went to sleep.

Montaigne was brought up from his cradle in the meanest and most common manner of living.

If I had any sons I should readily wish them my fortune. The good father that God gave me, who has nothing of me but the acknowledgment of his bounty, but truly 'tis a very hearty one, sent me from my cradle to be brought up in a poor village of his, and there continued me all the while I was at nurse, and even longer, bringing me up to the meanest and most common way of living: *Magna pars libertatis est bene moratus venter.*[10] "A well-governed stomach is a great part of liberty." Never take upon yourselves, and much less give up to your wives, the care of their bringing up; leave the forming them to fortune, under popular and natural laws; leave it to custom to train them up to frugality and austerity, that they may rather descend from hardships than mount up to them. This humour of his yet aimed at another end, that is, to make me familiar with those people, and that condition of men, which most need our assistance; believing that I should be more holden to regard them who extended their arms to me, than those

That mothers ought not to have the education of their children.

[1] Juvenal, xiii. 162.
[2] These Latin verses, which are to be found in Cicero, *de Divinat.* i. 22, are taken from a tragedy of Accius, entitled *Brutus*, wherein they are addressed by a soothsayer to Tarquinius Superbus, one of the principal *dramatis personæ*.
[3] In the *Timæus*.
[4] *Herod.* iv. 184. Pomponius Mela, i. 8.
[5] Cicero, *de Divinat.* ii. 58.
[6] Laertius, *Life of Pyrrho.*
[7] Favorinus expresses the directly contrary opinion. *See* Aulus Gellius, xv. 8.
[8] Seneca, *Epist.* 18.
[9] Horace, *Epist.* i. 5. 2.
[10] Seneca, *Epist.* 123.

who turned their backs upon me: and for this reason also it was that he provided me godfathers of the meanest fortune, to oblige and bind me to them.

What was the advantage of his education.

Neither has his design succeeded altogether ill; for, whether be it upon the account of glory, because there is more honour in such a condescension, or out of natural compassion, that has a very great power over me, I have a very kind inclination towards the meaner sort of people. The faction which I condemn in our civil wars, I shall more sharply condemn when I see them flourish: it will half reconcile me to them when I shall see them miserable and oppressed. How much do I admire the generous humour of Chelonis, daughter and wife to kings of Sparta![1] Whilst her husband Cleombrotus, in the commotion of her city, had the advantage over Leonidas, her father, she, like a good daughter, stuck close to her father in all his misery and exile, in opposition to the conqueror. But so soon as the chance of war turned, she changed her will with the change of fortune, and generously turned to her husband's side, whom she accompanied throughout, where his ruin carried him; having, as it appears, no other wish than to cleave to that side that stood most in need of her, and where she could best manifest her compassion. I am naturally more apt to follow the example of Flaminius,[2] who more readily gave his assistance to those that had most need of him, than to those who had power to do him good, than I am that of Pyrrhus, who was of a humour to truckle to the great, and to domineer over the small.

Montaigne did not love to sit long at table.

Long sittings at meat both trouble me and do me harm; for perhaps from having, for want of something better to do, accustomed myself to it from a child, I eat all the while I sit. Therefore it is that, at my own house, though the meals there are of the shortest, I usually sit down a little after the rest, after the manner of Augustus;[3] but I do not imitate him in rising also before the rest of the company; on the contrary, I love to sit still a long time after, and to hear them talk, provided I am none of the talkers; for I tire and hurt myself with speaking upon a full stomach, as much as I find it pleasant and very wholesome to argue and to strain my voice before dinner.

The ancient Greeks and Romans[4] had more reason than we in setting apart for eating, which is a principal action of life, if not diverted by other extraordinary business, many hours, indeed the greatest part of the night; eating and drinking more deliberately than we do, who perform all our actions in post haste; and, in extending this natural pleasure to more leisure and better use, intermixing with their meals several pleasant and profitable offices of conversation.

The abstinence of which Montaigne was capable.

They whose concern it is to have a care of me, may very easily hinder me from eating anything they think will do me harm; for in such things I never covet nor miss any thing I do not see: but withal, if it once comes in my sight, 'tis in vain to persuade me to forbear; so that when I design to fast I must be parted from those that eat suppers, and must only have so much given me as is required for a limited collation; for if I sit down to table I forget my resolution. When I order my cook to alter the manner of dressing any dish of meat, all my family knows what it means; that my stomach is out of order, and that I shall not touch it.

Account of his taste, with its changes and revolutions.

I love to have all meats that will endure it very little boiled or roasted, and love them very high, even to smell of it, in many. Nothing but toughness generally offends me (of any other quality I am as patient and indifferent as any man I have known); so that, contrary to the common humour, even in fish it often happens that I find them both too fresh and too firm: not for want of teeth, which I ever had good, even to excellence, and which age does but now begin to threaten; I have ever been used every morning to rub them with a napkin, and before and after dinner. God is favourable to those whom he makes to die by degrees; 'tis the only benefit of old age; the last death will be so much the less full and painful; it will kill but a half or quarter of a man. I had one tooth lately fall out without drawing, and without pain: it was the natural term of its duration; both that part of my being, and several others, are already dead, and others half dead, of those that were most active and in highest esteem during my vigorous years, so that I melt and steal away from myself. What folly would it be in my understanding to fear this fall, when already so much of it is got over, as if it were from its utmost height? I hope I shall not. I in truth receive a principal consolation in the meditation of my death, that it will be just and natural; and that henceforward I cannot herein either require or hope from destiny any other but unlawful favours. Men make themselves believe that they formerly had, as greater stature, so longer lives; but they deceive themselves; and Solon, who was of those elder times, does nevertheless limit the duration of life to threescore and ten years.[5] I, who have so much and so universally adored this ἄριστον μέτρον "excellent mediocrity" of ancient times,[6] and who have concluded the most moderate measure the most perfect, shall

[1] Plutarch, *Lives of Agis and Cleomenes.*
[2] Plutarch, *in vitâ.*
[3] Id. *in vitâ.*
[4] Suetonius, *in vitâ.*
[5] Herod. i. 32.
[6] See Laertius, i. 93.

I pretend to an unreasonable and prodigious old age? Whatever happens contrary to the course of nature may be troublesome; but what comes according to her, must always be acceptable and pleasant: *Omnia quæ secundum naturam fiunt, sunt habenda in bonis*:[1] "All things that are done according to nature are to be accounted good:" and thus, Plato says,[2] the death which is occasioned by wounds or disease is violent; but that which surprises us, old age conducting us to it, is of all others the most easy, and in some sort delicious. *Vitam adolescentibus vis aufert, senibus maturitas.*[3] "Young men are taken away by force, old men by maturity." Death mixes and confounds itself throughout with life: decay anticipates its hour, and shoulders itself even into the course of our growing up. I have pictures of myself, taken at five and twenty, and five and thirty years of age; I compare them with that lately drawn; by how much more is my present image unlike the former, than to that I shall have after death! It is too much to abuse nature, to make her trot so far, that she must be forced to leave us, and abandon our conduct, our eyes, teeth, legs, and all the rest, to the mercy of a foreign and begged assistance; and to resign us into the hands of art, being weary of following us herself.

I am not very fond either of salads or fruits, except melons: my father hated all sorts of sauces, and I love them all. Eating too much hurts me; but for the quality of what I eat, I do not yet certainly know that any sort of meat disagrees with my stomach; neither have I observed that either full moon or decrease, spring or autumn, make any difference to me. We have in us motions that are inconstant, and for which no reason can be given; for example, I first found radishes very grateful to my stomach, since that nauseous, and now grateful again. In several other things, likewise, I find my stomach and appetite to vary after the same manner; I have changed and changed again from white wine to claret, from claret to white.

Montaigne was fond of fish, and did not love to mix it with flesh.

I am a great lover of fish, and consequently make my fasts feasts, and my feasts fasts; and believe what some people say, that it is more easy of digestion than flesh. As I make a conscience of eating flesh upon fish-days, so does my taste make a conscience of mixing fish and flesh; the difference betwixt them seems to me to be too great so to do. From my youth I have used myself to be out of the way occasionally at some meal, either to sharpen my appetite against the next morning (for, as Epicurus fasted and made lean meals to accustom his pleasure to make shift without abundance,[4] I, on the contrary, do it to prepare my pleasure to make better and more cheerful use of abundance); or else I fasted to preserve my vigour for the service of some action of body or mind; for both the one and the other of those are cruelly dulled in me by repletion; and, above all, I hate that foolish coupling of so healthful and sprightly a goddess with that little belching god, bloated with the fume of his liquor; or to cure my sick stomach, and for want of fit company; for I say as the same Epicurus did,[5] that a man is not so much to regard what he eats, as with whom he eats; and commend Chilo, that he would not engage himself to be at Periander's feast, till he was informed who were to be the other guests.[6] No dish is so acceptable to me, nor no sauce so alluring, as that which is extracted from the society. I think it to be more wholesome to eat more leisurely and less, and to eat oftener; but I would have the value of appetite and hunger done justice to. I should take no pleasure to be fed with three or four stinted repasts a-day, at fixed hours, after a medical manner; who will assure me that, if I have a good appetite in the morning, I shall have the same at supper? Let us old fellows, especially, take the first opportune time of eating, and leave to almanack-makers the hopes and prognostics. The utmost fruit of my health is pleasure; let us take hold of the present and known. I avoid constancy in these laws of fasting; who will have one form serve him, let him avoid the continuing of it; we harden ourselves in it; our forces are there laid asleep; six months after, you shall find your stomach so inured unto it, that all you have got is only the loss of your liberty of doing otherwise but to your prejudice.

Rules which he observed with regard to his clothing.

I never keep my legs and thighs warmer in winter than in summer; one single pair of silk stockings is all: I have suffered myself, for the relief of my rheums, to keep my head warmer, and my belly, upon the account of my cholic: my diseases in a few days habituated themselves thereto, and disdained my ordinary provisions; I presently got from a single cap to a whole one, and from this to a double one. The quilting of my doublet serves only appearance; it signifies nothing, if I do not add a hare's or vulture's skin, and wear an under cap upon my head. Follow this gradation, and you will go a very fine way to work. I am resolved to proceed no farther, and would leave off what I have begun, if I durst. You fall into some new inconvenience? all this is labour lost; you are accustomed to it; seek out some other. Thus do such ruin and destroy themselves, who submit to be pestered with these enforced and superstitious rules; they must add

[1] Cicero, *de Senect.* c. 19.
[2] In the *Timæus.*
[3] Cicero, *ut supra.*
[4] Seneca, *Epist.* 18.
[5] Id. *ib.*
[6] Plutarch. *Banquet of the Seven Sages.*

something more, and something more after that; there is no end on't.

His preference of dinners to suppers; and the measure he observed in his liquor.

For what concerns our affairs and pleasures, it is much more commodious, as the ancients did, to lose a man's dinner, and defer making good cheer, till the hour of retirement and repose, without breaking a day; and so was I formerly used to do. For health, I since by experience find, on the contrary, that it is better to dine, and that the digestion goes on better waking. I am not very apt to be thirsty, either well or sick, my mouth is indeed apt to be dry, but without thirst; and commonly I never drink but with thirst that is created by eating and some time after I've been eating. I drink pretty well for a man of my pitch; in summer, and at a relishing meal, I do not only exceed the limits of Augustus,[1] that drank but thrice precisely; but not to offend the rule of Democritus, who forbade that man should stop at four, as an unlucky number,[2] I proceed, at need, to the fifth glass, about three half pints. For the little glasses are my favourites, and I take a delight to drink them off, which other people avoid as an unbecoming thing. I mix my wine sometimes with half, sometimes the third part water; and when I am at home, by an ancient custom that my father's physician prescribed both to him and himself, they mix that which is designed for me in the buttery two or three hours before 'tis brought in. 'Tis said that Cranaus,[3] king of the Athenians, was the inventor of this custom of mixing wine with water; whether profitably or no, I have heard disputed. I think it more decent and wholesome for children to drink no wine till after sixteen or eighteen years of age. The most usual and common method of living is the most becoming: all particularity, in my opinion, is to be avoided, and I should as much hate a German that mixed water with his wine, as I should do a Frenchman that drank it pure. Public custom gives the law in these things.

His notion with regard to air, temperature, &c.

I fear a fog, and fly from smoke as from the plague; the first repairs I fell upon in my own house were the chimneys and houses of office, the common and insupportable nuisances of all old buildings; and amongst the difficulties of war, reckon the choaking dust they make us ride in a whole day together. I have a free and easy respiration; and my colds for the most part go off without offence to the lungs, and without a cough.

The heat of summer is more an enemy to me than the cold of winter; for, besides the incommodity of heat, less remediable than cold, and besides the force of the sun-beams that strike upon the head, all glittering light offends my eyes; I could not now sit at dinner over-against a flaming fire.

To dull the whiteness of paper, in those times when I was more used to read, I laid a piece of glass upon my book, and found my eyes much relieved by it. I am to this hour ignorant of the use of spectacles, and can see as far as ever I did, or as any other; 'tis true that, in the evening, I begin to find a little trouble and weakness in my sight, if I read; an exercise that I have always found troublesome, especially by night. Here is one step back, and a very sensible one; I shall retire another, from the second to the third, and so to the fourth, so gently, that I shall be stark blind before I shall be sensible of the age and decay of my sight; so artificially do the fatal sisters untwist our lives! And I doubt that my hearing begins to grow thick, and you shall see I shall have lost it, when I shall still lay the fault on the voices of those that speak to me: man must screw up his soul to a high pitch, to make it sensible how it ebbs away.

My walking is quick and firm; and I know not which of the two, my mind, or my body, I have most to do to keep in the same state. That preacher is very much my friend, that can oblige my attention a whole sermon through. In places of ceremony, where every one's countenance is so starched, where I have seen the ladies keep even their eyes so fixed, I could never order it so, that some part or other of me did not lash out! so that, though I was seated, I was never settled.[4] As the philosopher Chrysippus's chamber-maid said of her master, that he was only drunk in his legs,[5] for it was his custom to be always kicking them about in what place soever he sat, and said it at a time when, the wine having made all his companions drunk, he found no alteration in himself at all; the same may also be said of me from my infancy, that I had either folly or quicksilver in my feet, so much stirring and unsettledness there is in them where ever they are placed.

Chrysippus drunk in his legs.

'Tis indecent, besides the hurt it does to one's health, and even to the pleasure of eating, to eat so greedily as I do: I often bite my tongue, and sometimes my fingers, from haste. Diogenes meeting a boy eating after that manner, gave his tutor a box on the ear.[6] There were men at Rome that taught people to chew, as well as to walk, with a good grace. I lose the leisure of speaking, which gives the best relish to tables, provided the discourse be suitable, pleasant, and short.

He was too greedy in his appetite.

There is jealousy and envy amongst our plea-

[1] Suetonius, *in vitâ*, c. 77.

[2] For *Democritus* read *Demetrius*. See Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xxviii. 6.

[3] According to Athenæus, ii. 2, it was not *Cranaus*, but Amphycton, his successor, who introduced this custom.

[4] The edition of 1588 has: "and as to gesticulation, I am never without a switch in my hand, riding or walking."

[5] Laertius, *in vitâ*.

[6] Plutarch, *That Virtue may be taught*.

His judgment concerning the pleasures of the table.

sures; they cross and hinder one another: Alcibiades, a man very well read, understanding how to make good cheer, banished even music from tables, that they might not disturb the pleasantness of discourse, by the reason that Plato lends him:[1] "That it is a custom of common men to call fiddlers and singing-men to feasts, for want of good discourse and pleasant talk, with which men of understanding know how to entertain one another." Varro requires this in entertainments:[2] "Persons of graceful presence and agreeable conversation, that are neither silent nor babblers; neatness and delicacy both of meat and place, and fair weather." To dine your friends well requires no slight skill, and gives no slight pleasure; the greatest captains and the greatest philosophers have not disdained to give their attention to this science. My imagination has delivered three banquets to the custody of my memory, which fortune rendered sovereignly sweet to me, upon different occasions, in my most flourishing age: my present state excludes me; for each guest, in the good temper of body and mind wherein he then finds himself, supplies for his own use the principal grace and savour. I, who but crawl upon the earth, hate this inhuman wisdom, that will have us despise and hate all culture of body; I look upon it as an equal injustice to loath natural pleasures, as to be too much in love with them. Xerxes was a fool, who, environed with all human delights, proposed a reward to him that could find him out others;[3] but he is not much less so, who cuts off any of those pleasures that nature has provided for him. A man should neither pursue nor fly, but receive them. I receive them, I confess, a little too affectionately and kindly, and easily suffer myself to follow my natural inclinations. We have nothing to do to exaggerate their inanity; they themselves will make us sufficiently sensible of it; thanks be to our sickly minds, that abate our joys, and put us out of taste with them, as with ourselves; they entertain both themselves and all they receive, one while better, and another worse, according to their insatiable, vagabond, and versatile essence:

Sincerum est nisi vas, quodcunque infundis, acescit.[4]

"Your wine grows acid, when the cask is foul."

I, who boast that I so curiously and particularly embrace the conveniences of life, find, when I nearly consider them, very little more than wind. But what then? We are wind throughout: and, moreover, the wind itself, more discreetly than we, loves to bluster and shift here and there, and contents itself with its proper office, without desiring stability and solidity, qualities that belong not to it.

The pure pleasures, as well as the pure displeasures, of the imagination, say some, are the greatest, as was expressed by the balance of Critolaus.[5] 'Tis no wonder; it makes them to its own liking, and cuts them out of the whole cloth, of which I every day see notable examples, and, peradventure, to be desired. But I, who am of a mixed and heavy condition, cannot snap so soon at this one simple object, but that I negligently suffer myself to be carried away with the present pleasures of the general human law, intellectually sensible, and sensibly intellectual. The Cyrenaic philosophers hold that as corporal pains, so corporal pleasures are more powerful, both as double, and more just.[6] There are some, as Aristotle says,[7] who, out of a savage kind of stupidity, are disgusted with them: and I know others who, out of ambition, are the same. Why do they not moreover forswear breathing? Why do they not live of their own, and refuse light because it shines gratis, and costs them neither pains nor invention? Let Mars, Pallas, or Mercury afford them their light by which to see, instead of Venus, Ceres, and Bacchus. Will they not seek the squaring of the circle, even when mounted upon their wives? I hate that we should be enjoined to have our minds in the clouds when our bodies are at table: I would not have the mind there nailed, nor that it should wallow there; but I would have it apply itself to that *place*; to sit, but *not to* lie down there. Aristippus maintained nothing but the body, as if we had no soul; Zeno stickled only for the soul, as if we had no body: both of them faultily. Pythagoras, say they, followed a philosophy that was all contemplation; Socrates, one that was all manners and action: Plato found out a mean betwixt both. But they only say so for discourse' sake. For the true mean is found in Socrates; and Plato is more Socratic than Pythagoric, and it becomes him better. When I dance, I dance; when I sleep, I sleep: nay, and when I walk alone in a beautiful orchard, if my thoughts are some part of the time taken up with extrinsic occurrences, I some other part of the time call them back again to my walk, to the orchard, to the sweetness of the solitude, and to myself.

In what rank he placed the pleasures of the imagination and those of the body.

Nature has with a motherly tenderness observed this, that the actions she has enjoined us for our necessity should be also pleasant to us; and invites us to them, not only by reason, but also by appetite: and 'tis injustice to corrupt her laws. When I see both Cæsar and Alexander, in the thickest of their greatest busi-

Nature has rendered those actions agreeable which man is under a necessity of performing.

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[1] In the dialogue entitled *Protagoras*.
[2] Aulus Gellius, xiii. 2.
[3] Cicero, *Tusc. Quæs.* v. 7.
[4] Horace, *Epist.* i. 2, 54.
[5] In my opinion (says M. Coste) Montaigne here applies this balance to a purpose very different from that which Critolaus applied it to, if we may judge of this balance by what Cicero says of it.—*Tusc. Quæs.* v. 17.
[6] Laertius, ii. 90.
[7] *Ethics*, ii. 7.

ness, so fully enjoy human and bodily pleasures, I do not say that they slackened their souls, but wound them up higher by vigour of courage, subjecting these violent employments and laborious thoughts to the ordinary use of life: wise, had they believed that the last was their ordinary employment; the first, their extraordinary vocation. We are great fools. "He has passed his life in ease," say we: "I have done nothing to-day." What! have you not lived? 'Tis not only the fundamental, but the most illustrious of your occupations. "Had I been put to the management of great affairs, I should have shown what I could do." Have you known how to meditate, and manage your life? you have performed the greatest work of all: for a man to shew and set himself out, nature has no need of fortune; she equally shews herself in all degrees, and behind a curtain, as well as without one. Have you known how to compose your manners? You have done a great deal more than he who has composed books. Have you known how to take repose? You have done more than he who has taken cities and empires.

The great and glorious masterpiece of man is to know how to live to purpose; all other things, to reign, to lay up treasure, to build, are at the most but mere appendixes and little props. I take a delight to see a general of an army at the foot of a breach he intends presently to assault, giving himself up entire and free at dinner, to talk and be merry with his friends; and Brutus, when heaven and earth were conspired against him and the Roman liberty, stealing some hour of the night from his rounds to read and abridge Polybius, as in all security.[1] 'Tis for little souls, that truckle under the weight of affairs, not to know how clearly to disengage themselves, and not to know how to lay them aside, and take them up again:

What is man's true masterpiece.

> O fortes, pejoraque passi
> Mecum sæpe viri! nunc vino pellite curas:
> Cras ingens iterabimus æquor.[2]
>
> "Brave spirits, who with me have suffered sorrow,
> Drink cares away, we'll set up sails to-morrow."

Whether it be in jest or earnest that the theological and sorbonical wine, and their feasts, are turned into a proverb, I find it reason they should dine so much more commodiously and pleasantly, as they have profitably and seriously employed the morning in the exercise of their schools: the consciousness of having well spent the other hours is the just and savoury sauce of tables. The sages lived after that manner: and that inimitable emulation to virtue, which astonishes us both in the one and the other Cato, that humour of theirs, severe even to troublesomeness, did thus gently submit itself and yield to the laws of the human condition, both of Venus and Bacchus; according to the precepts of their sect, that require a perfect wise man should be as expert and intelligent in the use of pleasures, as in all other duties of life:—*Cui cor sapiat, ei et sapiat palatus.*[3] "He that has a learned soul, has a learned palate too."

Yielding and facility do, methinks, wonderfully honour, and best become a strong and generous soul: Epaminondas did not think that to dance, sing, and play, and be intent upon them, with the young men of his city, were things that did any way derogate from the honour of his glorious victories, and the perfect reformation of manners that was in him.[4] And amongst so many admirable actions of Scipio, the grandfather, a person worthy the opinion of a heavenly extraction,[5] there is nothing that gives him a greater grace than to see him earnestly and childishly trifling, in gathering and choosing shells,[6] and playing at ducks and drakes upon the sea-shore with Lælius; and, if it was bad weather, amusing and pleasing himself by representing in comedies,[7] he wrote, the meanest and most popular actions of men; and having his head full of that wonderful enterprize of Hannibal and Africa, visiting the schools in Sicily, and being continually present at the philosophical lectures, improving himself even to the blind envy of his enemies at Rome.[8] Nor is there any thing more remarkable in Socrates, than that, old as he was, he found time to make himself be instructed in dancing and playing upon instruments, and thought it time well spent. Yet this same man has been seen in an extasy standing upon his feet a whole day and a night together, in the presence of all the Grecian army, surprised and ravished with some profound thought: he was the first who, among so many valiant men of the army, ran to the relief of Alcibiades, oppressed with the enemy, shielded him with his own body, and disengaged him from the crowd by absolute force of arm. It was he who, in the Delian battle, relieved and saved Xenophon, when dismounted from his horse; and who, amongst all the people of Athens, enraged like himself at so unworthy a spectacle, first presented himself to rescue Theramenes, whom the thirty tyrants were having dragged to execution by their guards, and desisted not from his bold enterprize, but at the remonstrances of Theramenes himself, though he was only followed by two more in all. He has been seen, when courted by a beauty, with whom he was in love, yet main-

Relaxation and affability specially becoming great and generous souls.

[1] Plutarch, *in vitâ.*
[2] Horace, *Od.* i. 7. 30.
[3] Cicero, *de Finib.* ii. 8.
[4] Nepos, *in vitâ*, c. 2.
[5] *See* Aulus Gellius, vii. 1.
[6] Cicero, *de Orat.* ii. 6.; but this refers to Scipio the Younger. Indeed, in the edition of 1588, Montaigne speaks of him.
[7] Those of Terence, in the composition of which according to Suetonius, Scipio (the Younger, however, not the Elder,) and his friend Lælius had a large share.
[8] Livy, xxix. 19.

tain a severe abstinence in time of need. He has been seen continually to go to the war, and with his bare feet to walk upon ice; to wear the same robe winter and summer; to surpass all his companions in endurance of labour; and to eat no more at a feast than at his own private dinner; he was seen seven and twenty years together to endure hunger, poverty, the indocility of his children, and the claws of his wife, with the same countenance; and in the end calumny, tyranny, imprisonment, fetters, and poison: but was he invited to a drinking bout, on any occasion of civility? he was also the man of the party to whom the advantage remained; and he never refused to play at cob-nut, nor to ride the hobby-horse with the boys, and it became him well; for all actions, says philosophy, equally become, and equally honour a wise man. We have enough wherewithal to do it, and we ought never to be weary of representing the image of this great man in all the patterns and forms of perfection. There are very few examples of life full and pure; and they wrong us in our instruction to propose to us every day those that are weak and imperfect, scarce good for any one service, that pull us back, and that are rather corrupters than correctors of manners. The people deceive themselves; a man goes much more easily indeed by the ends, where the extremity serves for a bound, a stop, and guide, than by the middle way, which is large and open; and according to art, than according to nature; but withal much less nobly and commendably.

What discovers greatness of soul.

Grandeur of soul consists not so much in mounting and in proceeding forward, as in knowing how to govern and circumscribe itself. It takes every thing for great that is enough; and shows its height better in loving moderate than eminent things. There is nothing so handsome and lawful as well and duly to play the man; nor science so hard as well to know how to live this life; and of all the infirmities we have, 'tis the most savage to despise our being.

Whoever has a mind to send his soul abroad, let him do it, if he can, when the body is ill at ease, to preserve it from the contagion: but otherwise let him, on the contrary, favour and assist it, and not refuse to participate of its natural pleasures and delights with a conjugal complacency; bringing to it withal, if it be wiser, moderation, lest by indiscretion they should confound themselves with displeasures. Intemperance is the pest of pleasure; and temperance is not its scourge, but its seasoning: Eudoxus, who therein established the sovereign good, and his companions, who set so high a value upon it, tasted it in its most charming sweetness by the means of temperance, which in them was singular and exemplary.[1]

I enjoin my soul to look upon pain and pleasure with an eye equally regular: *Eodem enim vitio est effusio animi in lætitia, quo in dolore contractio*,[2] "For 'tis by the same vice that we dilate ourselves in mirth, and contract in sorrow," and equally firm; but the one gaily, and the other severely, and according to what it is able, to be as careful to restrain the one as to extend the other. The judging rightly of goods brings along with it the judging soundly of evils; and pain has something not to be avoided in its tender beginnings, and pleasure has something that may be avoided in its excessive end. Plato[3] couples them together, and will that it should be equally the office of fortitude to fight against pain, and against the immoderate and charming blandishments of pleasure: they are two fountains, from which whoever draws, when, and as much as he needs, whether city, man, or beast, is very happy. The first is to be taken physically and upon necessity, more scarcely; the other for thirst, but not to drunkenness. Pain, pleasure, love, hatred, are the first things that a child is sensible of: if, when reason comes, they apply themselves to it, that is virtue.

How we ought to behave with regard both to pain and pleasure.

I have a peculiar method of my own; I pass over my time, when it is ill and uneasy; but when 'tis good, I will not pass it over. I savour and stick to it; a man must run over the ill, and insist upon the good. This ordinary phrase of pastime, and passing away the time, represents the custom of that wise sort of people, who think they cannot have a better account of their lives, than to let them run out and slide away, to pass them over, and to baulk them, and, as much as they can, to take no notice of them, and to shun them, as a thing of troublesome and contemptible quality: but I know it to be another kind of thing, and find it both valuable and commodious, even in its latest decay, wherein I now enjoy it; and nature has delivered it into our hands, furnished with such and so favourable circumstances, that we have only ourselves to blame if it be troublesome to us, or slide unprofitably away: *Stulti vita ingrata est, trepida est, tota in futurum fertur*:[4] "The life of a fool is uneasy, timorous, and wholly bent upon the future." Nevertheless, I compose myself to lose mine without regret, but withal as a thing that is loseable by its condition, not that is troublesome or importunate: neither properly does it well become any not to be displeased when they die, excepting such as are pleased to live. There is good husbandry in enjoying it: I enjoy it double to what others do; for the measure in fruition depends more or less on our application to it. Now, especially, that I perceive mine to be so short in time, I would extend it in weight; I would stop the rapidity of its flight, by the

The use Montaigne made of life.

[1] Laertius, viii. 88. Aristotle, *Ethics*, x. 2.
[2] Cicero, *Tusc. Quæs.* iv. 31.
[3] *Laws*, i.
[4] Seneca, *Epist.* 15.

suddenness of my seizing upon it; and by the vigour of using it compensate the speed of its running away: by how much the possession of living is more short, I must take it so much deeper and more full.

Others are sensible of the sweetness of contentment and of prosperity; I feel it too as well as they, but not as it slides and passes by; a man ought to study, taste, and ruminate upon it, to render worthy thanks to him that grants it to us. They enjoy the other pleasures as they do that of sleep, without knowing it. To the end that even sleep itself should not so stupidly escape from me, I have formerly caused myself to be disturbed in my sleep, that I might the better and more sensibly relish and savour it. I consult myself about a contentment; I do not skim, but sound it; and bend my reason, now grown perverse and ill-humoured, to entertain it. Do I find myself in calm composedness? Is there any pleasure that tickles me? I do not suffer it to dally with my senses only; I associate my soul to it too; not there to engage herself, but therein to take delight; not there to lose herself, but to be present there; and employ her on her part to view herself in this prosperous estate, to weigh, esteem, and amplify its happiness: she reckons how much she stands indebted to God, to be in repose of conscience and other intestine passions; to have the body in its natural disposition, orderly and competently enjoying the soft and flattering functions, by which he of his bounty is pleased to recompense the sufferings wherewith his justice, at his good pleasure, does scourge and chastise us; how great a benefit it is to her to be so seated, that which way soever she turns her eye, the heaven is calm and serene about her; no desire, no fear or doubt, that troubles the air; nor any difficulty past, present, or to come, that her imagination may not pass over without offence. This consideration takes great lustre from the comparison of different conditions, and therefore it is that I propose to myself, in a thousand aspects, those whom fortune, or their own error, torment and whirl about, and moreover those nearer me, that so negligently and incuriously receive their good fortune: these are men who pass away their time indeed; they pass over the present and that which they possess, to look after hope and vain shadows and images, which fancy puts into their heads,

> Morte obita quales fama est volitare figuras,
> Aut quæ sopitos deludunt somnia sensus:[1]
>
> "Such shapes, they say, that dead men's spirits have,
> Or those in dreams our drowsy sense deceive:"

which hasten and prolong their flight according as they are pursued. The fruit and aim of their pursuit is to pursue; as Alexander said, that the end of his labour was to labour:[2]

> Nil actum credens, cum quid superesset agendum.[3]
>
> "Thinking nought done, if ought was left to do."

For my part, then, I love life, and cultivate it, such as it has pleased God to bestow it upon us. I do not desire it should be without the necessity of eating and drinking; and I should think to offend no less excusably to wish this necessity had been double: *Sapiens divitiarum naturalium quæsitor acerrimus.*[4] "A wise man seeks with avidity natural riches;" nor that we should support ourselves by putting only a little of that drug into our mouths, by which Epimenides took away his appetite, and kept himself alive;[5] nor that a man should stupidly create children with his fingers or heels; but rather, with reverence I speak it, that we might voluptuously create them with our fingers and heels; not that the body should be without desire, and void of delight: these are ungrateful and wicked complaints. I accept kindly, and with acknowledgment, what nature has done for me; am well pleased with it and proud of it. A man does wrong to the great and omnipotent giver, to refuse, disannul, and disfigure his gift; he has made every thing well: *Omnia quæ secundum naturam sunt æstimatione digna sunt.*[6] "All things that are according to nature are worthy of esteem."

Of philosophical opinions, I more willingly embrace those that are the most solid, that is to say, the most human, and most our own; my discourse is suitable to my manners, low and humble; philosophy plays the child, to my notion, when she puts herself upon her ergos, to prove: that 'tis a barbarous alliance to marry the divine with the earthly, the reasonable with the unreasonable, the severe with the indulgent, the honest with the dishonest: that pleasure is a brutish quality, unworthy to be tasted by a wise man; that the sole pleasure he extracts from the enjoyment of a fair young wife, is the pleasure of his conscience to perform an action according to order, as to put on his boots for a profitable journey. Oh, that his followers had no more right, or nerve, or juice, in getting their wives' maidenheads, than in these lessons.

His discourse like his deportment.

This is not what Socrates says, who is both her master and ours: he values, as he ought, bodily pleasure; but he prefers that of the soul, as having more force, constancy, facility, variety, and dignity. This, according to him, goes by no means alone (he is not so fantastic), but only it goes

Corporeal pleasure has its value, though it is inferior to that of the mind.

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[1] *Æneid*, x. 641.
[2] Arrian, *de Exped. Alex.* v. 26.
[3] Lucan, ii. 657. The poet speaks here of Cæsar, who was altogether as active and indefatigable as Alexander.
[4] Seneca, *Epist.* 119.
[5] Laertius, *in vitâ.*
[6] Cicero, *de Finib.* iii. 6; where the sense is the same, though not in the very words quoted by Montaigne.

first; temperance in him is the moderatrix, not the adversary of pleasure. Nature is a gentle guide, but not more gentle than prudent and just: *Introrsum est in rerum naturam, et penitus quid ea postulet pervidendum.*[1] "A man must search into the nature of things, and examine what she requires." I hunt after the print of her foot throughout, but we have confounded it with artificial traces; and that academic and peripatetic sovereign good, which is "to live according to it," becomes by this means hard to limit and explain; and that of the Stoics, cousin-germain to it, which is "to consent to nature." Is it not an error to esteem any actions less worthy, because they are necessary? and yet they cannot beat it out of my head that it is not a convenient marriage of pleasure with necessity, to which, says an ancient, the gods do always consent. To what end do we dismember by divorce, a building united by so joint and brotherly a correspondence? Let us, on the contrary, repair and strengthen it by mutual offices: let the mind rouse and quicken the heaviness of the body, and the body stop and fix the levity of the soul: *Qui, velut summum bonum, laudat animæ naturam, et, tanquam malum, naturam carnis accusat, profecto et animam carnaliter appetit, et carnem carnaliter fugit; quoniam id vanitate sentit humana, non veritate divina.*[2] "He that commends the nature of the soul as the supreme good, and accuses the nature of the flesh as evil, does certainly both carnally affect the soul, and carnally flies the flesh, because he is so possessed through human vanity, and not by divine truth." In this present which God has made us, there is nothing unworthy our care; we stand accountable even to a hair: and 'tis no slight commission to man, to conduct man according to his condition; 'tis express, plain, and the principal injunction of all, and the Creator has seriously and strictly enjoined it. Authority has alone the power to work upon common understandings, and is of more weight in a foreign language; and therefore let us again charge with it in this place: *Stultitiæ proprium quis non dixerit ignave et contumaciter facere quæ facienda sunt, et alio corpus impellere, alio animum; distrahique inter diversissimos motus?*[3] "Who will not say that it is the property of folly, slothfully and contumaciously to perform what is to be done, and to bend the body one way, and the mind another, and to be distracted betwixt quite different motions?"

To make this apparent, get one of these fellows one day to tell you what whimsies and imaginations he puts into his pate, and upon the account of which he diverted his thoughts from a good dinner, and complains of the time he spends in eating: you will find there is nothing so insipid in all the dishes at your table as this wise meditation of his soul (for the most part we had better sleep than wake to the purpose we do); and that his discourses and notions are not worth your partridge-pie. Though they were the raptures of Archimedes himself, what then? I do not here speak of, nor mix with, the rabble of us ordinary men, and the vanity of the thoughts and desires that divert us, those venerable souls, elevated by the ardour of devotion and religion, to a constant and conscientious meditation of divine things, who by a lively endeavour, and vehement hope, professing the use of the eternal nourishment, the final aim, and last step of Christian desires, the sole, constant, and incorruptible pleasure, disdain to apply themselves to our necessitous, fluid, and ambiguous conveniences, and easily resign to the body the care and use of sensual and temperate feeding. 'Tis a privileged study. I have ever amongst us observed supercelestial opinions, and subterranean manners, to be of singular accord.

Æsop, that great man, saw his master make water as he walked: "What," said he, "must we then dung as we run?"[4] Let us manage our time as well as we can, there will yet remain a great deal that will be idle and ill employed: the mind has no other hours wherein it would willingly do its business, without disassociating itself from the body, in that little space it needs for its necessity. They will put themselves out of themselves, and escape from being men; 'tis folly; instead of transforming themselves into angels, they transform themselves into beasts: instead of elevating, abase themselves. These transcendant humours affright me, like high and inaccessible cliffs and precipices; and nothing is hard for me to digest in the life of Socrates but his ecstacies and communication with demons, nothing so human in Plato as that for which they say he was called divine; and of our sciences, those seem to me the most terrestrial and low that are highest mounted, and I find nothing so humble and mortal in the life of Alexander as his fancies about his immortalisation. Philotas pleasantly quipt him in his answer: Alexander had congratulated himself by letter, concerning the oracle of Jupiter Ammon, who had placed him amongst the gods; "Upon thy account I am glad of it," said Philotas, "but the men are to be pitied who are to live with a man, and to obey him, who exceeds and is not contented with the measure of a man:"[5]

The folly of man's aspiring to be above what he is.

Dîis te minorem quod geris, imperas.[6]

"So you the power divine obey,
Midst mortals wide you'll spread your way."

The pretty inscription wherewith the Athenians

1 Cicero, *de Finib.* v. 16.
2 St. August. *de Civit. Dei*, xiv. 5.
3 Seneca, *Epist.* 74.

4 Plutarch, *in vitâ.*
5 Quintus Curtius. vi. 9.
6 Horat. *Od.* iii. 6, 5.

nonoured the entry of Pompey into their city is conformable to my notion:

"The more thou acknowledgest thyself man,
The more thou seemest a god."[1]

'Tis an absolute, and, as it were, a divine perfection, for a man to know how loyally to enjoy his being. We seek other conditions, by reason we do not understand the use of our own; and go out of ourselves, because we know not how to reside there. 'Tis to much purpose to go upon stilts, for when upon stilts we must yet walk upon our legs; and, when seated upon the most elevated throne in the world, we are still but seated upon our breech. The fairest lives, in my opinion, are those which regularly accommodate themselves to the common and human model, without miracle, without extravagance. But old age stands a little in need of a more gentle treatment. Let us recommend it to that God, the protector of health and wisdom, but, withal, a wisdom gay and sociable.

Frui paratis et valido mihi,
Latoe, dones, et, precor, integra
Cum mente; nec turpem senectam
Degere, nec cithara carentem.[2]

"Nor ask I more than sense and health,
Still to enjoy my present wealth.
From age and all its weakness free,
O, son of Jove, preserv'd by thee,
Give me to strike the tuneful lyre,
And thou my latest song inspire."

[1] Plutarch, *in vitâ*.

[2] Horace, *Od.* i, 31, 17.

A

DIARY OF THE JOURNEY

OF

MICHAEL DE MONTAIGNE

INTO ITALY, THROUGH SWITZERLAND AND GERMANY,

IN THE YEARS 1580 AND 1581.

TRANSLATED BY WILLIAM HAZLITT.

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INTRODUCTION.

MONTAIGNE, in the third book of his Essays, chap. ix., speaks of his travels, and particularly of his visit to Rome. It being known, then, that our author had made journeys through Switzerland, through Germany, and through Italy, it was matter of natural surprize that so close an observer, a writer who had filled his Essays with such continual domestic and personal details, should have drawn up no account of his travels; but, as no trace of any such work was discovered for 180 years after his death, the matter was thought no more of.

Towards the end of the last century, M. Prunis, a Regular Canon of Chancelade, in Perigord, was making researches through that province relative to a History of Perigord, which he had undertaken. Among other places, he visited the old Chateau de Montaigne, at this time the property of M. le Comte de Segur de la Roquette, a descendant, in the sixth generation, from Eleanora de Montaigne, only daughter of our Essayist. Upon making an application here to inspect any archives that the family might possess, he was shown an old coffer, containing a variety of papers, long since laid by and forgotten, which he was informed he might make what use of he pleased. Among them he discovered the original manuscript of the Journey of Montaigne, in all probability the only copy in existence. He obtained permission from M. de Segur to take the manuscript away with him, that he might have an opportunity of giving it a mature examination. After having thoroughly convinced himself of its genuineness, he made a journey to Paris, for the purpose of corroborating his own conviction by the opinion of the men of letters there. The manuscript was carefully examined by several literary gentlemen of note, and more especially by M. Capperonnier, Librarian to the King's Library; and it was unanimously recognised as the genuine manuscript of Montaigne's Journey.

This manuscript forms a small folio volume, of 278 pages. The hand-writing and the paper incontestably belong to the latter end of the sixteenth century. As to the style, there can be no mistake about it; in every page you recognise the *naïveté*, the frankness, and the force of expression, which stamp all Montaigne's writings as with a signet, marking them for his own. One part of the manuscript, rather more than a third, is in the handwriting of a domestic, who acted as secretary to Montaigne, and who always speaks of his master in the third person: but it is obvious that he wrote to Montaigne's dictation, for each page teems with our Essayist's peculiar manner and expressions; and here and there we come upon a touch of that delightful egotism which Montaigne so often displays, and which never sat so amiably and so well on any writer before or since. The rest of the manuscript, where Montaigne speaks *in* the first person, is in his own hand-writing, which the greatest pains were taken, and successfully, to verify; and of this portion more than one-half is in Italian. At the beginning of the manuscript one or two pages are wanting, and appear to have been torn off. The manuscript thus happily discovered had evidently not received any sort of correction on the part of Montaigne after it was once written; and it required much time and infinite pains to decipher it, so miserable was the hand-writing of the Secretary, and so ludicrously inaccurate, irregular, and various, the orthography of the master. A correct copy, however, having at length been realized, the result of the joint efforts of M. Capperonnier and several other zealous and competent persons, this copy was placed in the hands of M. de Querlon, who, assisted by M. Jamet the younger, added a variety of notes, explaining the obsolete words and expressions, and giving historical notices of many of the persons and events referred to.

The object which induced Montaigne thus, at the age of forty-seven, to leave his family and undertake a journey of seventeen months' duration, seems principally to have been the

improvement of his health; a desire to see whether the mineral waters of Lorraine, Switzerland, and Tuscany, would be more successful in removing his malady, the stone, than those of France had proved. The details which he is constantly giving of the nature and effects of these various waters are sometimes rather tiresome and distasteful; and had Montaigne revised the manuscript, for the purpose of printing it, he would, no doubt, have materially abridged much of this portion of his work. After all, it is interesting, as illustrative of the man; and, indeed, the other personal details which abound in the Essays, have been regarded by very many readers as by no means the least entertaining portion of that work.

The following extracts from M. de Querlon's *Discours Preliminaire* are added, for the purpose of making this portion of the present edition equally complete with the rest, and as an agreeable commentary not only upon the Journey, but upon our traveller:—

"A l'époque du voyage de Montaigne en Italie, 1580, cette belle contrée, couverte des ruines et des débris de l'antiquité, étoit encore depuis deux siècles devenue la patrie des arts. Elle étoit enrichie des travaux de Palladio, de Vignole, de Michel-Ange, de Raphael, de Jules Romain, du Correge, du Titien, de Paul Veronese, du Tintoret, &c. Il est vrai que l'Algarde, le Guide, l'Albane, le Dominiquin, Lafranc, Pietre de Cortone, Annibal Carrache, et une foule d'autres grands maîtres, qui suivirent de près les premiers, n'avoient point encore produit ce nombre infini d'ouvrages en tous genres qui décorent les églises et les palais d'Italie. Le Pape qui regnoit alors, Grégoire XIII., s'étoit beaucoup moins occupé des arts de décoration et d'agrément, que d'établissemens utiles et de quelques ouvrages publics. Sixte-Quint, son successeur, élu quatre ans après ce voyage, embellit beaucoup plus Rome, en moins de six ans que dura son regne, que n'avoit fait Grégoire XIII. pendant plus de douze de pontificat. Cependant cette capitale, ainsi que Florence et Venise, ainsi que plusieurs autres villes visitées par Montaigne, avoient dès-lors de quoi remplir toute l'attention des voyageurs, par les richesses et les monumens de toute espèce que les arts y avoient déja répandus. Montaigne y trouva donc de quoi s'occuper. Avec une imagination aussi vive que celle qui perce dans ses Essais, et d'une tournure pittoresque, pouvoit-il voir froidement les arts de la Grèce dont il étoit entouré? Si le journal de son voyage contient peu de ces descriptions de statues,[1] de tableaux, d'autres monumens dont tous les voyageurs modernes chargent successivement leurs relations, (la plûpart en se répétant ou se copiant les uns les autres): c'est, comme il le dit, qu'il y avoit dès ce tems-là des livres où tout cela se trouvoit; c'est encore qu'il ne voyoit que pour soi, ou qu'il n'entroit point dans son plan d'observation de faire montre des impressions que les objets faisoient sur lui, ni de se parer de connoissances dont il laissoit la possession aux artistes. Mais il paroît que tous les anciens monumens, que tous les restes des Romains l'avoient singulièrement frappé. C'est-là qu'il cherchoit la génie de Rome qui lui étoit si présent, qu'il avoit mieux senti, mieux apperçu que personne dans les écrits des Romains qui lui étoient familiers, et particulièrement dans ceux de Plutarque. Il le voyoit ce génie respirer encore sous les vastes ruines de la capitale du monde. Jamais peut-être on ne l'a conçu ni répresenté, d'aucune maniere, aussi fortement, qu'il l'est dans ses belles réflexions sur l'immense tombeau de Rome. Il est sûr au moins que dans le grand nombre de relations, de descriptions en toutes langues, qu'on a des anciens restes ou des ruines de cette ville, rien n'approche de cet èloquent morceau, rien ne donne une aussi grande idée du siége de l'empire Romain.

"Avant de lire ces réflexions, on verra comment Montaigne, avec des cartes et des livres, avoit étudié cette ville, et l'on concevra que peu de voyageurs l'ont mieux pu voir, avant ou même après lui. On ne peut douter encore qu'il n'eût partagé son attention entre l'ancienne Rome et la nouvelle; qu'il n'eût également bien examiné les restes de la grandeur Romaine, et les églises, les palais, les jardins modernes, avec tous les embellissemens dont ils étoient déja décorés. Si du peu de descriptions de Rome et de ses environs qu'il a mises dans son journal, on inféroit que le goût des arts lui manquoit, on se tromperoit évidemment, puisque, pour ne point s'en faire une tâche, il renvoye aux livres, ainsi qu'on l'a déja dit. Les statues antiques de Florence (la ville qu'il vit le mieux, après Rome), et les chefs-d'œuvres de son école, ne lui étoint point échappés. Il ne marque point une admiration outrée pour Venise, où il ne resta que sept jours, parce qu'il s'étoit proposé de revoir cette belle ville à son aise; mais on remarquera que Montaigne, sans être insensible aux belles choses, étoit assez sombre admirateur.[2] Ce qui paroît le toucher le plus, ce sont les beautés, les variétés locales, un site agréable ou singulier, quelquefois la vue d'un lieu désert et sauvage, ou des terreins bien cultivés, l'aspect imposant des montagnes, &c. &c. Cependant l'histoire naturelle n'entre pour rien dans ses observations, s'il n'est question d'eaux minérales; les arbres, les plantes, les animaux l'occupent fort peu. Il se repentit à la vérité de n'avoir pas vu sur la route de Florence le Volcan de *Pietra mala*, qu'il laissa par pur oubli, sans se détourner. On le voit assez curieux des machines hydrauliques et autres, et de toutes les inventions utiles. Il en décrit même quelques-unes, et ses descrip-

1 Il dit que *ce sont les Statues qui lui ont le plus agrées à Rome*. Il comparoit donc notre philosophe; il avoit donc le sentiment des arts.

2 Aujourd'hui l'on admire trop, et la plûpart de nos philosophes, ou de ceux qui, parmi nous, en prennent le nom, ne se défendent pas plus que les autres d'un sentiment qui ne prouve point toute l'étendue d'esprit que l'on voudroit bien montrer.

tions, pour n'être pas fort claires, pour manquer souvent de précision, parce que les termes apparemment lui manquoient, n'en prouvent pas moins son attrait, son goût pour ce genre de curiosités. Un autre objet d'observation plus conforme à sa philosophie, c'étoient les mœurs et les usages des peuples, des contrées, des conditions différentes, qu'il considéroit avec un soin particulier. Il voulut voir et entretenir quelques courtisanes à Rome, à Florence, à Venise, et ne crut point cet ordre indigne de son attention. Il aimoit naturellement le commerce des femmes; mais comme il fut toujours bien plus réglé dans ses mœurs, ou plus chaste dans sa personne que dans ses écrits, qu'il étoit assez maître de ses sens, et qu'il étoit fort attentif sur sa santé, la continence, à près de cinquante ans, ne dut pas lui couter beaucoup. A l'égard de la galanterie à laquelle sa philosophie ne l'avoit pas fait renoncer, comme on le verra dans son séjour aux bains de Lucques, il s'en permettoit un peu selon l'occasion et les circonstances.

" Montaigne au reste avoit toutes les qualités nécessaires à un voyageur. Naturellement sobre et peu sensible au plaisir de la table, peu difficile sur le choix ou sur l'apprêt des alimens, quoiqu'assez friand de poisson, il s'accommodoit partout de ce qu'il trouvoit; il se conformoit sans peine au goût, aux usages différens de tous les lieux qu'il rencontroit: cette variété même étoit un plaisir de plus pour lui. Véritable cosmopolite, qui regardoit tous les hommes comme ses concitoyens naturels, il n'étoit pas moins accommodant, moins aisé dans le commerce de la vie. Il aimoit beaucoup la conversation, et il trouvoit bien à se satisfaire chez une nation spirituelle où sa réputation l'avoit devancé, et lui avoit fait des amis. Loin d'y porter cette prévention que l'on reproche aux François de trop laisser voir aux étrangers, il comparoit leurs usages aux nôtres, et quand les premiers lui paroissoient prévaloir, il en convenoit sans hésiter. Ainsi sa franchise ne pouvoit manquer de le rendre très-agréable a ceux mêmes qui ne s'en piquoient pas autant que lui. Ajoutons à tous ces avantages l'habitude du cheval, si commode pour lui qui souffroit difficilement les voitures, et par cette heureuse habitude, un corps capable de fatigues qui lui faisoit supporter et les mauvais gîtes, et le changement d'air presque continuel, et toutes les autres incommodités des voyages.

" Montaigne voyageoit comme il écrivoit: ce n'étoit ordinairement ni la réputation des lieux, ni moins encore un plan formé de suivre telle ou telle partie pour la connoître exactement, ni la marche des autres voyageurs, qui régloient la sienne; il suivoit peu les routes ordinaires, et l'on ne voit pas que dans ses voyages (excepté toujours son attrait pour les eaux minérales), il eût un objet plus déterminé qu'il n'en avoit en composant ses Essais. A peine a-t-il le pied en Italie qu'il paroît regretter l'Allemagne."

- - - " Les deux premiers livres des Essais furent imprimés pour la premiere fois à Bordeaux en 1580; ils parurent par conséquent au moins quelques mois avant le voyage de Montaigne en Italie. Or, dans cette edition de Bordeaux, il n'est fait aucune mention de ce Voyage d'Italie. Mais, comme toutes les editions postérieures, depuis et compris la cinquième, sont augmentées d'un troisième livre, et d'environ 600 additions faites aux deux premiers, on trouve parmi ces additions plusieurs faits relatifs à ce même Voyage. Ils pourroient donc embarrasser ceux qui, ne pouvant les faire cadrer avec la date des editions antérieures aux *additions* de Montaigne, ne sauroient pas que ces faits en *font* partie, et qu'il les a lui-même insérés après coup dans les deux premiers livres des Essais.

- - - " Mais ce qui rendra ce Journal intéressant pour les lecteurs qui cherchent l'homme dans ses écrits, c'est qu'il leur ferra beaucoup mieux connoître l'auteur des Essais, que les Essais même. Ceci doit paroître un peu paradoxe; allons à la preuve. Dans ces Essais, où pourtant Montaigne parle tant et si souvent de lui-même, son véritable caractere est noyé sous la multitude des traits que peuvent en former l'ensemble, et qu'il n'est pas toujours aisé de rapprocher exactement, ou de bien faire cadrer, comme par le moyen d'un verre optique on réunit les traits dispersés dans toutes les parties de certains tableaux, pour qu'il en résulte une figure réguliere. Ce qui preuve que les Essais de Montaigne ne l'ont pas suffisamment fait connoître, c'est la diversité des jugemens qu'on a portés de lui. Ici l'on ne voit plus l'écrivain, non pas même dans le moment le plus froid de la composition la moins méditée: c'est l'homme, c'est Montaigne lui-même, sans dessein, sans aucun apprêt, livré à son impulsion naturelle, à sa maniere de penser spontanée, naïve, aux mouvemens les plus soudains, les plus libres de son esprit, de sa volonté, &c. On le voit mieux que dans ses Essais, parce que c'est bien moins lui qui parle, qui rend témoinage de lui-même, que les faits écrits de sa main pour la décharge de sa mémoire, sans autre vue, sans la moindre idée d'ostentation prochaine, éloignée, présente ou future. Parmi les faits de ce Journal qui donneront de l'auteur (et sur-tout de sa philosophie) une idée plus vraie que tous les jugemens qu'on en a portés,[1] nous nous bornons à celui-ci:

" De tous les lieux d'Italie dignes de attirer

[1] Mallebranche, entre autres, est un des plus mauvais juges de Montaigne. Un méthodiste, un homme à systêmes, ne devoit pas le trouver supportable. Ce philosophe Cartésien, par une inconséquence à la fois formelle et réelle, s'étant toujours déclaré contre *l'imagination*, sa faculté dominante (quoiqu'il en eut bien éprouvé les surprises), ne pouvoit gueres goûter un homme qui en avoit autant que lui, mais qui en avoit fait un tout autre usage. On ne connoît donc point assez Montaigne, parce qu'on ne l'a gueres jugé que sur ce qu'il dit de lui-même, sur ses personnalités continuelles, et sur les traits vagues, indécis, formés de sa main. Son caractere philosophique n'a point été développé.

l'attention de Montaigne, celui qu'on pourroit le moins soupçonner qu'il eût été curieux de voir, c'est Lorette: cependant lui qui n'étoit resté qu'un jour et demi tout au plus à Tivoli, passa près de trois jours à Lorette. Il est vrai qu'une partie de ce tems fut employé tant à faire construire un riche *Ex voto* composé de quatre figures d'argent, l'une de la Vierge (devant laquelle étoient à génoux les trois autres, la sienne, celle de sa femme, et celle de sa fille), qu'à solliciter pour son tableau une place qu'il n'obtint qu'*avec beaucoup de faveur*. Il y fit de plus ses dévotions; ce qui surprendra peut-être encore plus que le Voyage et l'*Ex voto* même. Si l'auteur de la "Dissertation sur la Religion de Montaigne," qui vient de paroître, avoit lu le Journal que nous publions, il en auroit tiré les plus fortes preuves en faveur de son Christianisme, contre ceux qui croyent bien l'honorer en lui refusant toute religion: comme si, malgré son scepticisme, on n'appercevoit pas la sienne dans vingt endroits de ses Essais, et si sa constant aversion pour les sectes nouvelles n'en étoit point une preuve éclatante et nullement équivoque, ainsi que l'avoit bien remarqué sa fille d'alliance, Mademoiselle de Gournay, la meilleure apologiste de Montaigne."

DIARY OF A JOURNEY,

&c.

[The first two or three pages of the manuscript are missing, having apparently been torn off a long time before the work was discovered; but after all the loss is not very considerable, as regards the journey itself. Montaigne left his chateau, 22nd July, 1580, as he tells us at the end of his journal, and stopped for some time in the camp of the Marshal Matignon, who was besieging the town of La Fere on the part of the League; a siege which lasted for six weeks, commencing at the end of July 1580, and the place surrendering 12th September. The Count de Grammont being killed at this siege, Montaigne, with other friends of that nobleman, conducted his body to Soissons (see Essays, book iii. c. 4.); and on the 5th September he had only got to Beaumont-sur-Oise, whence he proceeded on his route for Lorraine. The *hiatus*, however, certainly leaves us in ignorance of the circumstances of his departure, of the adventure and the name of the wounded count (perhaps wounded at the siege) whom Montaigne sent one of his brothers to visit; and, moreover, of the number and quality of his travelling companions. Those whom the course of the journal introduces us to are:—1st, the Sieur de Mattecoulon,[1] who, during his residence at Rome, was engaged in a duel (as related in the Essays, book ii. c. 37.); but of whom no mention is made in the journal; 2. M. d'Estissac, the son, in all probability, of the Madame d'Estissac, to whom Montaigne addressed the eighth chapter of his second book; 3. M. de Caselis, whom the party left at Padua; 4. M. de Hautoy, a gentleman of Lorraine, who seems to have made the entire journey with Montaigne.]

- - - MONSIEUR DE MONTAIGNE dispatched Monsieur de Mattecoulon[1] post with the esquire to visit the count, and found that his wounds were not mortal. At Beaumont,[2] M. d'Estissac joined our party for the purpose of making the journey with us, accompanied by a gentleman, a valet-de-chambre, a sumpter-mule, and, on foot, a muleteer and two lacqueys, amounting to the same number in all as our party, and who were to pay their half of the expenses. Monday, 5th of September, 1580, we set out from Beaumont, after dinner, and went on, without stopping, to sup at

Meaux, a small and pretty town, situated on the river Marne. It consists of three sections; the town and the fauxbourg being on this side the river, nearest Paris, and the third lying over the bridges. This latter, which is a very considerable place, and which they call the *marché* (market) is surrounded on all sides by the river and a well-constructed fosse, and is thickly populated. This place was formerly well fortified with thick high walls and towers; but in our second Huguenot troubles, on account of the majority of the inhabitants belonging to that party, all these fortifications were demolished. This district of the town once sustained the attack of the English, after the other parts had surrendered; in recompense of which service, the *Marché* has ever since been exempt from taxes and other imposts. They show upon the river Marne an islet of two or three hundred paces long, which, they say, was in the first instance merely a hillock thrown up by the English, from which to batter the *Marché* with their engines, but which has since, with the progress of time, become thus consolidated. In the faux-bourg we saw the abbey of Saint Faron, a very old building, where they show the apartments of Ogier the Dane. There is an ancient refectory, with long wide tables of stone, of an unusual size, extending along each side and end, in the centre of which, before our civil wars, rose a fountain of water, which served for their repasts. The majority of the monks are men of some birth. Among other things there is an antique and once magnificent tomb, exhibiting the statues of two knights, in stone, of extraordinary size. They believe these to be the effigies of Ogier the Dane and some other Paladin.[3] There is neither inscription nor coat-of-arms, but merely a Latin sentence, one of the abbots placed on it about a hundred years ago, purporting that "Here two unknown heroes were buried." Among their reliques they show the bones of these knights. The arm-bone, from the shoulder to the elbow, is about the entire length of the arm of a man of the present time, ordinary measure, or somewhat longer than M. de Montaigne's arm. They also show two of their

[1] Montaigne's brother.

[2] Beaumont-sur-Oise.

[3] A doubtful tradition. It does not seem very probable that Ogier the Dane, who died at Roncesvalles, in 800, should have been brought all the way to St. Faron to be buried. There was an Ogier de Charmontré, or Charmontray, who gave all his possessions to the monastery of St. Faron, in 1035, and he is probably the Ogier in question, if indeed there be any Ogier in the case. There is, however, in an old necrology of the monastery, this notice: "Gibelina, soror Ogerii le Danois, conversa," which would seem as though this Paladin had some connexion with the place.

swords, which are about the length of our two-handed swords; and are very much hacked all along the edge.

At Meaux, M. de Montaigne went to visit the treasurer of the church of St. Stephen,[1] by name Justus Terreille, well known among the *savans* of France; a little man, sixty years old, who has travelled in Egypt, been to Jerusalem, and resided seven years at Constantinople. He showed M. de Montaigne his library, and the rarities in his garden, amongst which we most particularly remarked a box-tree, spreading its branches in a circular form, and become, by training and cropping, so thick and round, that it appears like a massive polished ball, of the height of a man.

From Meaux, where we dined in the morning, we went to sleep at

Charly, seven leagues. Next day, Thursday morning, we went on to dine at

Dormans, seven leagues. Next day, we went on to dine at

Esprenei,[2] five leagues; where being arrived, Messieurs d'Estissac and de Montaigne went to mass, as is their custom, in the church of Notre Dame; and M. de Montaigne having observed on a former occasion, when M. the Marshal Strozzi was killed at the siege of Teonville,[3] that his body was brought to this church, he inquired where he had been deposited, and found he had been buried there without any memorial, stone, arms, or epitaph, right against the high altar; and we were told that the queen had caused him to be buried thus without pomp and ceremony, at the express wish of the Marshal himself. The Bishop of Renes,[4] a member of the family of Hanequins[5] of Paris, was at that time officiating in this church, of which he is abbot: for it was the day of the Festival of our Lady in September. M. de Montaigne, after mass, accosted M. Maldonat,[6] Jesuit, whose name is very famous for erudition in theology and philosophy. They had a long talk upon learned subjects, both then and after dinner at our lodging, where M. Maldonat came to visit us. And, among other things, M. Maldonat, who had just returned from the baths of Aspa,[7] at Liege, where he had been with M. de Nevers, told M. de Montaigne that the waters there are very cold, and that it was considered the colder you could take them the better. Indeed they are so cold that they make some of those who use them shiver and tremble; and soon after you feel a terrible pain in the stomach. He said that, for his portion, he had taken a hundred ounces; for there are persons in attendance who furnish you with glasses which hold the exact quantity you wish to have. They are not only taken fasting, but also after eating. Their operation, as he described it, is like that of the waters of Guascogne.[8] As to himself, he said that [illegible] was struck with its effects, from noticing the hurt which it did not do him, though he drank it several times while in a state of extreme perspiration and commotion of body. He had seen frogs and other little beasts which were thrown into it, die immediately from its effects; and he said that a handkerchief, if stretched over a glass full of the water, will forthwith turn yellow. People take the waters for at least a fortnight or three weeks. The place has very excellent accommodations. The water is good against all sorts of obstruction and gravel; yet neither M. de Nevers nor he got much the better for it. He had with him a steward of M. de Nevers, and they gave M. de Montaigne a printed paper upon the subject of the dispute between Messieurs de Montpensier and de Nevers,[9] so that he might learn the facts of the matter, and be able to inform such gentlemen as might ask him about it.

We set out hence, Friday morning, and came to

Chaalons,[10] seven leagues. We put up at the Crown, an excellent hostelry, where you are served on plate, and most of the bed and other furniture is of silk. The common houses in all this part of the country are built of chalk, cut into square pieces of half a foot each, or thereabouts; others are built of turf, of the same form. Next day, after dinner, we set off, and went to sleep at

Vitry le François, seven leagues. This is a small town on the river Marne, built about thirty-five or forty years back, in place of the former Vitry, which was burnt. It retains its original well-proportioned and agreeable form, and its centre consists of one of the finest squares in France. We here learned three memorable things. The first, that Madame the duchess-dowager de Guise de Bourbon,[11] eighty-seven years old, was still alive, and could still walk a quarter of a league. The next, that an execution had taken place a few days before, at a place called Montirandet,[12] in that neighbourhood, upon this occasion:—Seven or eight girls round Chaumont en Bassigni agreed, some years before, to dress themselves up as men, and so to continue for the rest of their lives. One of these came to Vitry, under the name of Mary, and gained her livelihood by weaving; she appeared a well-behaved young man, and every body liked her as such. She became betrothed

[1] The ancient cathedral, since placed under the patronage of the Virgin.
[2] Epernay, in Champagne.
[3] Theonville.
[4] Rennes.
[5] Hennequin.
[6] Juan Maldonado, the learned Spanish jesuit, author of some excellent commentaries on the Gospels; died at Rome, 1583.
[7] Spa.
[8] Gascony.
[9] It was about some point of parliamentary precedence, and was ultimately determined in favour of the Duke de Montpensier.
[10] Chalons sur Marne.
[11] Antoinette de Bourbon, widow of Claude de Lorraine, first Duke of Guise, who died in 1550. The Jacobin Doré speaks of her as of a saint.
[12] Montier-en-Der.

at Vitry to a girl who is still alive, but, in consequence of some differences that arose between them, the match was broken off. Afterwards she went to Montirandet, still gaining her livelihood at the same employment, and there she fell in love with, and married, a woman, with whom she lived four or five months, and gave her every satisfaction, 'tis said; but at the end of that time, having been recognised by a person from Chaumont, and the thing being brought under the cognizance of justice, the husband was condemned to be hanged; which she said she would rather endure than re-assume her female attire and habits. And she was accordingly hanged, on the charge of having, by unlawful practices and inventions, supplied the defects of her sex. The third anecdote is of a man still living, named Germain, of humble condition, without trade or occupation, who was a woman up to the age of twenty-two, and only noticeable as such from having more hair about her chin than other girls, whence she was called Bearded Mary. One day, making an unusual effort in a leap, her virile utensils came out, and the Cardinal de Lenoncourt, at that time bishop of Chalons, gave her the name of Germain. He is not married. He has a large thick beard; but we could not see him, for he was at some neighbouring village. They have still in the place a song, common in the mouths of the girls, in which they advise one another not to stretch their legs too wide, lest they should become men, as Mary Germain did. They say that Ambrose Paré has inserted this story in his book on surgery. It was declared to M. de Montaigne to be absolutely true, by the chief officers of the town. Thence we set out, Sunday morning after breakfast, and went without stopping to

Bar, nine leagues, where M. de Montaigne, who had been there before, found nothing new to remark, but the lavish expenditure that a private priest and dean of those parts, had gone to, and was still continuing daily, in the construction of public works. He is called Gilles de Treves; he has built the most sumptuous marble chapel, full of pictures and decorations, that is to be seen in France; and has built, and just finished furnishing, the finest private house also that is to be seen in France; the completest in structure, the most elaborately decorated and enriched, and the most commodious: this he intends for a college. He is now gilding and completing it at his own expense. From Bar, where we dined on Monday, we went to sleep at

Mannese, four leagues, a little village where M. de Montaigne was obliged to stop, on account of his cholic, which also occasioned him to abandon the desire he had formed of seeing Toul, Metz, Nancy, Jouinville, and St. Disier, towns scattered along this route, in order to get as soon as possible to Plommieres.[1] We left Mannese Tuesday morning, and went to dine at

Vaucouleur, one league; and then went along the river Meuse to a village named

Donremy,[2] on the Meuse, three leagues from Vaucouleur, where was born the famous Maid of Orleans, whose name was Joan d'Acq,[3] or d'Arcis. Her descendants were ennobled by the royal favour; and we were shown the arms which the king gave them, azure, a straight sword with a crown and handle of gold, and two fleurs-de-lis at the side of the sword; of which a receiver of Vaucouleur gave M. de Caselis a painted copy. The front of the small house in which she was born is covered with representations of her different exploits; but time has greatly defaced the painting. There is also a tree with a vine up it, which is called 'the Maid's tree,' but there is nothing else remarkable about it. We proceeded in the evening to sleep at

Neufchasteau, five leagues, where, in the church of the Cordeliers, there are a great many tombs, four or five hundred years old, of the nobility of the country,[4] all of the inscriptions on which begin in this way: "Cy git tel, qui fut mors lors que li milliaires courroit, per mil deux cens, &c." We saw their library, in which there are a great many books, but none of them rare; and a well, with very large buckets, which are worked up and down by the feet treading on a plank of wood, placed on a pivot, with which is connected a piece of round wood, to which the cord of the well is attached. M. de Montaigne had seen some of the same sort elsewhere. Close to the well is a large stone vessel, raised above the top of the well about five or six feet, which the bucket mounts up to, and by the same machinery empties itself into it, thus keeping it always full. This vessel is of such a height that from it, by means of leaden pipes, the water is conveyed to the refectory, kitchen, and bakehouse, where it rises in stone receptacles in the form of natural fountains.

From Neufchasteau, where we breakfasted, we went on to sup at

Mirecourt, six leagues, a pretty little town, where M. de Montaigne heard news of M. and Madame de Bourbon, who are in the neighbourhood. Next morning, after breakfast, he went to see, at a quarter of a league thence, out of the road, the nuns of Poussay. This is one of several religious houses, which have been established in this district, for the education of girls of good family.[5] Each has one hundred, two hundred, three hundred crowns a-year, some more, some less, for her maintenance, and separate apartments. Children at nurse are received. They are not vowed to virginity, except the officials, such as the abbess,

[1] Plombieres.
[2] Donremy la Pucelle.
[3] D'Arc.
[4] Among others, several of the lords of the family of Du Chatelet. One of these nobles insisted upon being interred standing upright in the hollow of a pillar, saying that "no churl should ever walk over his belly."
[5] The others were at Remiremont, Epinal, and Bouxieres.

prioress, and others. They dress as they please, like other young ladies, except that they all wear a white veil on the head; and in church, during service, a large mantle, which they leave in their places in the choir. All the nuns are at liberty to receive company, without any restraint, whether it be persons coming to solicit them in marriage, or ordinary visitors. Those who are inmates may give away or sell their benefice to whomsoever they will, provided the new comer be of the requisite condition; and there are certain noblemen of the province who have it in charge, and are bound by oath to ascertain clearly the family of the girls who are presented. There is nothing to hinder one person from having three or four benefices. The inmates perform the same religious ceremonies as in other convents; and the greater part of them are found to finish their days there, and to decline changing their condition. Thence we went on to sup at

Espiné,[1] five leagues. This is a pretty little town, on the river Moselle, into which we were refused admission, on account of having been at Neufchasteau, where the plague was not long since. Next morning we went on to dine at

Plommieres, four leagues. From Bar-le-Duc the leagues resume the measure of Gascony, and become longer and longer as they approach Germany, until they are double and treble what they are here. We arrived Friday, 16th Sept. 1580, at two o'clock in the morning. This place is situated on the confines of Lorraine and Germany, in a valley, between a number of high and precipitous hills, which closely environ it on all sides. At the bottom of this valley spring several fountains, hot and cold. The water of the former has neither smell nor taste, and is as hot as one can possibly drink it, so that M. de Montaigne was obliged to pour it backwards and forwards, from one glass to another. There are only two springs the water of which is used. That which turns to the west, and produces the bath called the Queen's Bath, leaves in the mouth a sweet flavour, like liquorice; without any after-taste, except that, as it seemed to M. de Montaigne, if you attentively notice, it smacks somewhat of iron. The other, which rises from the foot of the opposite mountain, of which M. de Montaigne only drank one day, is of a roughish taste, savouring of alum. The custom of the place is to use the baths only two or three times a day. Some take their meals in the bath, where also they have themselves cupped and scarified; they never take the bath till they have purged themselves. If they drink the water, 'tis a glass or two, while they are in the bath. They were much surprised at M. de Montaigne's method of taking it, who, without any previous physicking, would drink nine glasses of it, making about a quart, every morning at seven o'clock, and dined at twelve; and the days that he bathed, which was every other day, it was at four o'clock, remaining in the bath only one hour. On these days he generally went without supper. We saw many men there who had been cured of ulcers and various eruptions. The custom is to be there at least a month. The favourite season is the spring, in May. They seldom take the waters after August, on account of the coldness of the climate; but we still found company there, the dry, warm weather having lasted longer than usual. Among others, M. de Montaigne contracted an intimate friendship with the Seigneur d'Andelot, of Franche-Compté, whose father was grand equerry to the Emperor Charles V., and who himself had been first field-marshal in the army of Don John of Austria, and was made governor of Saint Quentin, when we lost it. One part of his beard was white, and one of his eyebrows; and he told M. de Montaigne that this change had come upon him all in an instant, one day that he was sitting at home full of grief at the death of a brother of his, whom the Duke of Alva had put to death as an accomplice of the Counts Eguemont and Hornes;[2] that he had been leaning his head on his hand, at the place where the hair was now white, and that when he rose, those who were with him thought the changed colour was flour, which by some chance had fallen on those parts. It had remained so ever since. These baths were formerly frequented by the Germans only; but, for several years past, people from Franche-Compté and France have come here in crowds. There are several bath-rooms; with a principal one, a large building, constructed in an oval form, after the antique. It is thirty-five paces long, and fifteen wide. The hot water rises from underneath by several springs, and cold water flows in from above, to moderate the heat, according to the wish of those who are taking it. The seats or boxes are divided off along the sides by poles, suspended in the manner of those by which horses are kept apart in our stables: the place is boarded over, to ward off the sun and rain. All round the inside of the bath there are four degrees of stone steps, rising the same way as in a theatre, whereon the bathers can sit or lean. The greatest decorum is observed: the men, however, bathe quite naked, with the exception of a slight pair of drawers, and the women with the exception of a shift. We lodged at the Angel, which is the best inn, inasmuch as it is equally near both baths. Our whole suite of apartments, though we had several rooms, cost only fifteen-pence a-day. The landlords at all the places supply wood into the bargain; but the country about is so full of it that it only costs the cutting. The landladies are excellent cooks. In the full season this lodging would have cost a crown a day, and cheap too: the

[1] Espinal, or Epinal.

[2] Egmont and Horn.

feed of the horses is three-pence a day, and all other charges are equally reasonable. The rooms are not very handsome, but they are exceedingly convenient; for, by means of a great number of passages, each chamber is independent of the others. The wine and bread are bad. The people here are a worthy set: frank, sensible, and attentive. All the laws of the country are religiously observed. Every year they renew on a tablet, before the great bath, in the German and French languages, the following rules and regulations:—

"Claude de Rynach, Knight, Seigneur of St. Balesmont, Montureulz en Ferrette, Lendacourt, &c., Counsellor and Chamberlain of our sovereign Lord Monseigneur the Duke, and his Bailli for the Vosges:

"Be it known, that for the peace and quiet of sundry ladies and other notable personages, assembling from various regions and countries to these baths of Plommieres, we have, pursuant to the command of his Highness, instituted and ordained, and do institute and ordain, as follows:

"Be it known that the correction of minor offences will remain in the hands of the Germans, as of old; to whom is enjoined the causing to be observed the ceremonies, statutes, and rules in use for the maintenance of the said baths, and the punishment of the offences committed by people of their nation, without exception of persons, and without making use of any blasphemous or irreverent language against the Catholic Church and belief.

"All persons, of whatever quality, condition, district, province, or country they may be, are forbidden to make use of injurious language, tending to excite quarrelling; or to bear arms at the said baths; or to give the lie, or to have recourse to arms, under penalty of being severely punished, as infringers of the ducal guarantee, and as rebels to his Highness.

"All prostitutes and immodest girls are forbidden to enter the said baths, or to approach the same within five hundred paces, under penalty of being whipped at the four corners of the said baths; and of imprisonment and arbitrary fine, for the persons who shall have received or harboured them.

"Under the same penalty, all persons are forbidden to use towards the ladies and all females generally, frequenting the said baths, any lascivious or immodest language; to touch their persons indecorously; or to enter or quit the said baths in any manner offensive to public propriety.

"And because, by the virtue of the said baths, God and nature operate various cures and remedies, and that it is essential to maintain purity and cleanliness, in order to prevent various contagions and infections that might there arise, it is expressly ordered that the master of the said baths shall take great care and examine all those who enter the baths night or day, and shall preserve modesty and silence there during the night, without noise, scandal, or derision. And if any person shall disobey this regulation, the master of the said baths is commanded to convey such person immediately before the magistrate, and have exemplary punishment inflicted on him.

"Finally, it is forbidden, to all persons coming from infected places, to enter or approach Plommieres, on pain of death; and all mayors and officers are enjoined to take strict heed to this; and all inhabitants of the said place are ordered to send into us certificates stating the names and surnames, and ordinary residence of the persons whom they have received into their houses, under penalty of imprisonment.

"All which ordinances above declared have been this day made public before the Grand Bath of the said Plommieres, and copies of them affixed, in the German and French languages, on the nearest and most conspicuous place to the Grand Bath, and signed by us, Bailly de Vosges. Given at the said Plommieres, the 4th day of May, in the year of Peace and our Lord, 1580.

"Claude de Rynach."

We stopped at this place from the 18th to the 27th of September. M. de Montaigne drank the water eleven mornings; on eight of these mornings he drank nine glasses, and on three mornings seven glasses; he bathed five times. He found the water easy enough to take, and always passed it before dinner. He found no other effect in it than in causing urine. His appetite was good; and his sleep, digestion, and whole ordinary condition, were in no way impaired by it. On the sixth day he had an unusually severe attack of cholic, and he had it in his right side, where he had never felt the pain before, except once at Arsac, and then very slight, without any result. This attack lasted four hours; and, during its operation, he clearly felt the straining of the stone through the ureters. The two first days he was here, he passed two little stones that were in the bladder, and afterwards, at intervals, gravel. But he left the baths in the opinion that he still had in the bladder the stone which occasioned the above-mentioned cholic, and some other little stones of which he had felt the descent. He conceived the effect of these waters, and their quality, as regarded himself, to be very like that of the high fountain at the Bath of Banieres. As to the water here, he found it very mild; indeed, children of a year or six months old are commonly to be seen paddling about in it. His perspiration was full, but gentle. He commanded me, at the request of the hostess,—it is a custom of that country,—to present her with a copy of his arms on wood, which a painter of the place executed for a crown; and the hostess had it carefully fixed on the wall of her house, outside. September 27th, after dinner, we left Plommieres, and passed over a

mountainous country, which resounded under our horses' feet as though we were riding over hollow ground, and made a noise like drums beating. We got to supper at

Remiremont, two leagues, a pretty little town, where we found excellent lodging at the Unicorn; indeed, all the towns of Lorraine (of which this is the last) have better lodging and accommodation in their inns than is to be found in France. Here is a famous Convent, of the same description with that at Poussai. The nuns claim, against M. de Lorraine, the sovereignty and principality of this town. Messrs. d'Estissac and de Montaigne proceeded to the convent immediately after their arrival; and went over several of the private suites of apartments, which are very handsome and well furnished. Their abbess was lately dead (a lady of the house of d'Inteville), and they were about electing another, the candidate being the sister of the Count de Salmes. They went to see the Doyenne, a lady of the house of Lutre,[1] who had done M. de Montaigne the honour of sending to enquire after him at Plommieres, and had there forwarded him a present of artichokes and partridges, and a barrel of wine. They learnt here that several neighbouring villages hold of the convent by a tenure of two basons of snow every Pentecost-day, or, in default of that, of a waggon drawn by four white oxen: but they said that the rent of snow had never failed to be paid, though at the time we were there the heat was as great as it is in Gascony in the height of summer. They wear a white veil on the head, with an edging of crape. Their robe is black (of whatever material and fashion they please), while they are in the convent; elsewhere they may wear colours; for petticoats, what they please; thin shoes and clogs: under their veils they dress their hair in the usual manner. To be admitted nuns here, they must be noble by four descents, both on the father's and on the mother's side. M. de Montaigne took leave of the ladies in the evening. Next morning, at day-break, we set out. Just as we had mounted our horses, the Doyenne sent a gentleman to M. de Montaigne, requesting him to come to her, which he did. This detained us an hour. The object of the ladies was to entrust M. de Montaigne with the management of their affairs at Rome, a commission which he accepted. On leaving this place, we rode for some time through a beautiful and pleasant valley, along the banks of the Moselle, and got by dinner-time to

Bossan,[2] four leagues, a dirty little village, the last place on this route, where the French language is spoken. Here Messrs. d'Estissac and de Montaigne, putting on linen smock-frocks, which were lent them for the purpose, went to see the silver-mines that M. de Lorraine has here, two thousand paces under the earth. After dinner we proceeded along the mountains, where we were shown, among other things, upon inaccessible rocks, the nests where they take goss-hawks (which cost here only three nobles of the country money), and the source of the Moselle. We got to supper at

Tane,[3] four leagues, the first town of Germany, subject to the emperor, and a very pretty place. Next morning, we proceeded along a wide and beautiful plain, bordered on the left by gentle undulations, covered with vineyards of the finest and most cultivated description, and of such extent that our Gascons said they never saw any thing like them. The vintage was in full operation. We got by dinner-time to

Melhouse,[4] two leagues, a pretty little Swiss town, canton of Basle. M. de Montaigne went to see the church, for they are not Catholics here. He found it, as well as the other churches throughout the country, of a handsome form. Indeed, nothing has been changed, with the exception that the images have been removed, and the altars changed. He had infinite pleasure in observing the freedom and good government of this nation; and in remarking that his host of the Grapes, on his return from the town-council, held in a magnificent, richly gilded palace, where he had acted as president, waited upon his guests in person at dinner; there was another man, without any train or authority, in the place, and who filled the guests' glasses as they needed it, who yet had led four companies of foot into France, under Casimir,[5] against the king, and had received a pension from the king of three hundred crowns a year, for more than twenty years.

This gentleman gave M. de Montaigne, as he was waiting on him at table, an account of his life and condition, without any setting off or affectation. He said, among other things, that his countrymen have no hesitation, notwithstanding their religion, in serving the king against the Huguenots themselves; and this several others said, as we went along; and we were told that at our siege of La Fere, there were more than fifty of the men of this town in the service of the Catholics. They mentioned that they marry indifferently women of our persuasion and of their own, and do not seek to make their Catholic wives change their religion. From this place, after dinner, we

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[1] Ludre.

[2] Bussang, Bussan.

[3] Thann.

[4] Mulhaus.

[5] John Casimir, son of Louis, Elector and Count Palatine, who led the German troops into France to the assistance of the Huguenots, in 1567, in the time of Charles IX. There must be some error in the text of this anecdote, for it seems that this worthy Swiss had been a pensioner of the King for more than twenty years; so that it does not appear very probable he would have so little regarded his interests as to have led troops against his paymaster. The paragraph which follows makes it pretty clear that he had led troops against Casimir and the Huguenots. Three hundred crowns a year, too, seems a large pension for such a person, in those days; but thus M. de Montaigne, or his secretary, tells the tale.

proceeded through a fine, open, fertile country, thickly studded with pretty villages and inns, and came to sleep at

Basle, three leagues; a handsome town, about the size of Blois, divided into two parts by the Rein,[1] which is here crossed by a wide wooden bridge. The municipality did Messrs. d'Estissac and de Montaigne the honour of sending them some wine by one of their officers, who made them a long harangue while they were at table, to which M. de Montaigne replied, also at considerable length, both parties remaining uncovered, in presence of several Germans and French, who were staying in the inn. The host served as interpreter. The wines of this district are very good. A remarkable thing we noticed here was the house of a physician, named Felix Platerus, the most elaborately decorated in the French fashion that was ever seen; it is, besides, lofty and large, and sumptuously fitted up. Among other things he has a book of simples, which he has nearly completed; and whereas others merely paint the different herbs according to their colours, he has found out a way of pasting the plants themselves on the paper, so naturally and completely that the smallest leaves and fibres are clearly to be seen, and he fixes them so closely that no part of them ever escapes; he showed us some simples which had been fixed there more than twenty years ago. We also saw, both at his house and in the public school, some entire skeletons of men, standing upright. There is this peculiarity about their clock, the town clock, not the one in the fauxbourg, that it always strikes the hours an hour before the real time; that is to say, when it strikes ten, the real time is only nine; and they told us that the reason why they keep up this custom is, that once upon a time the clock's accidentally striking an hour wrong in this way, saved their town from an assault which had been planned against it. Basilée is so called, not from the Greek word, but because *base* signifies *passage* in German. We here saw a great many literati, such as Grineus,[2] and the author of the *Theatrum*,[3] and the above named physician (Platerus), and Francis Hottoman.[4] These two last came to sup with Messieurs the day after their arrival. M. de Montaigne fancied that they were not very well agreed amongst themselves as to their religion, from the answers he received: some calling themselves Zuinglians, others Calvinists, and others Martinists;[5] and he was informed that many persons among them are still Roman Catholics at heart. The form of administering the sacrament is a common matter of conversation; every one sets his hand to it that will, and the ministers do not venture to remove this chord of the differences among the religious. The church-yard is full of images and old tombs, quite perfect, on which prayers are carved for the souls of the dead; the organs, the bells, the crosses at the top of the belfries, and all the paintings on the windows, remain entire, as well as the benches and seats in the choir. They have placed the baptismal fonts in the place where the high altar used to stand, and have raised another altar at the head of the nave. The church of the Chartreux, which is a very handsome edifice, is carefully preserved and kept up. Even the ornaments and furniture remain as before, which the people of the new faith mention in proof of their good faith, they having obliged themselves thereto by the promise they gave when they came to an agreement. The bishop of the place, who is very hostile to the new faith, resides outside the town, within his diocese, where he still keeps up the old forms, for persons of our communion. The members of the ancient religion possess about 50,000 livres a year in the town, and continue to elect the bishop. Several of the inhabitants complained to M. de Montaigne of the dissolute habits of the women, and the drunkenness of the men. We saw a poor man's child cut for umbilical hernia, and it appeared to us that he was very roughly treated by the surgeon. We visited a very fine public library they have on the banks of the river, charmingly situated. We stayed here a whole day; and next day, after dinner, resumed our journey, proceeding along the banks of the Rhine for about two leagues, and then turning off to the left, through a rich and fertile country. They have an infinite abundance of fountains throughout the country; there is no village or cross-road where you do not find one, generally large and handsome; and at Basle, they say, there are more than three hundred. They are so fond of balconies, even towards Lorraine, that in every house, where these are not already constructed, they have between all the windows of the upper rooms, doors opening upon the street, so that at some future day they may make balconies for these to lead to. In all this part of the country, from Espinal, even the smallest cottages have glass windows, and the larger houses derive, both externally and internally, a great accession of ornament and agreeableness, from being amply provided with these glass windows, the frames of which are curiously elaborated. They have plenty of materials, and good workmen, to enable them to do this; and herein they have greatly the advantage over us. Moreover, in every church, however small, they have a handsome clock

[1] Rhine.

[2] Simon Grinæus, author of an *Encomion Medecinæ*, printed at Basle in 1592; and of an edition of the Treatises of Aphrodisæus and Damascenus on Fevers.

[3] There are several works under this title, so that we do not know to whom reference is here made.

[4] Francis Hotman, the celebrated jurisconsult, whom his pupils saved from the massacre of Saint Bartholomew, and who then retired to Geneva, and afterwards to Bâle, where he died in 1590. He is considered to be the author of the celebrated *brochure* against the house of Lotraine, entitled *Au Tigre*.—See the Memoirs of Regnier de la Planche.

[5] That is to say, Lutherans, from *Martin Luther*.

and sun-dial. They are also skilled in the manufacture of tiles; their houses are covered with these, soldered with lead, in a variety of forms; and their rooms are floored with the same material. Nothing can be more cleanly than their stoves, which are of earthenware. The wood which they principally use is deal, and their carpenters are exceeding good workmen. Even their casks are all more or less carved, and are mostly painted and varnished. Their common dining-rooms are generally large and well-furnished; you often meet with five or six tables in a room, each provided with benches, at which all the inmates and guests dine together, so many at each table. The smallest inns have two or three such rooms, well fitted up, and lighted by windows. It would seem, however, that they pay more attention to their eating-rooms than to anything else, for the bed-chambers are very indifferent. There are curtains to the beds, and you have always three or four beds in a room, standing side by side; there are no chimneys, and you can *find no* place to warm yourself at but the common stove: you hear no news of fire anywhere else; and 'tis a great offence for you to go into the kitchen. They are very ill-provided everywhere with what we consider bed-chamber necessaries: he is a lucky man who can get hold of a white sheet; and what sheets there are never cover the bolster; indeed, the most ordinary covering is a sort of thin feather-bed, and that very dirty. However, they are very excellent cooks, especially in the article of fish. Their rooms have no defence against the damp or wind but the glass windows, which are quite unprovided with shutters: there are air-holes in every corner of every room; and as to the windows, they are seldom closed, even at night. Their fashions at table are quite different from ours; they never mix water with their wine, wherein they are very much in the right; for their wines are so thin that our gentlemen thought them even weaker than those of Gascony when watered, and yet they have an agreeable flavour. The servants dine at the same table with the masters, or at an adjoining table, at the same time with them; for one servant is sufficient to attend to a large table, seeing that every person, having his goblet or cup of silver placed at his right hand, the attendant has only to fill it as soon as it is empty, without moving it, the wine being kept in a pewter or wooden vessel, with a long beak; and as to the eatables, they only serve up two or three dishes on a great tray. They mix several sorts of meats together exceedingly well, but in a manner very different from ours; sometimes they put the different dishes on the table one above the other, on iron stands with long legs, one sort of meat being put on one branch of the stand, and another under it. Their tables, of which some are round, and some square, are very large, so that the servant would have some difficulty in placing the dishes separately; but he can easily remove the stand at once, and bring another; and this is done six or seven times, for one course is never introduced till that before it is removed. As to the plates, before they bring in the dessert, they place in the middle of the room, as soon as the last dish is taken away, a large basket of wicker-work, or painted wood, into which the guests throw their plates, the principal person present throwing his plate first, and the others succeeding him in due order, for in this particular they are very tenacious of the observance of rank. This basket being removed, the servant places the dessert on table, all together in two dishes; they introduce radishes here, as they do baked pears, with the meat. Among other things, they hold the crawfish in especial esteem, and always have a dish of them at table, which dish has a cover over it as a mark of particular honour; and as a further distinction, the guests hand it to one another, a thing that they hardly ever do with any other article. There is plenty of this fish to be had, and it is eaten every day, yet it is nevertheless regarded as a luxury. They do not give you water to wash your hands with, before or after meals; but every one, at his pleasure, makes use of a small washing-stand, that is always to be found in the corner of the room, as in our monasteries. Most of the utensils, whether for dining-room or bedchamber use, are made of wood, polished to the utmost degree of smoothness and cleanliness. Some place pewter plates upon these wooden ones, at dinner, till the dessert is served; and then only the wooden plates are left. They keep the cielings and floors of their rooms, and all their furniture, in the highest order and polish. Their beds are so high that you generally have to mount up to them by steps; and almost every where there are small beds, placed at the side of the large ones. As they are excellent workmen in iron, most of their spits turn upon springs, or by means of weights, as in clock-work; though some are turned by a sort of wooden sails, large and light, placed in the funnel of their chimneys, and worked by the draught and smoke. They roast their meat gently and very much, and, indeed, dry it up somewhat too much. These windmills, however, are only met with in the large inns, where they keep up a great fire, as at Baden. Their motion is uniform and continuous. The generality of the chimneys from Lorraine, besides, are different from ours: they rise from the hearth, in the middle or corner of the kitchen, and occupy almost the entire breadth of the kitchen, at the bottom, where there is a great opening of five or six square feet wide, which goes narrowing itself up to the top of the house: this gives sufficient room for them to fix their large sail, which with us would occupy so much of the funnel as to block up the passage of the smoke. The least meals

occupy three or four hours; for they eat more slowly, and in a more wholesome manner, than we do. They have an abundance of all sorts of provisions, and cover the tables in the most profuse manner; at least, we found it so. On Friday they do not help you to meat; and they say they never eat it on that day, if they can help it. The prices are about the same as in France, round Paris. The horses are supplied with more oats than they can eat. We went on to sleep at

Hornès, four leagues; a small village in the duchy of Austria. Next day, being Sunday, we heard mass; and I remarked that the women keep all on the left side of the church, and the men on the right, without intermingling. They have several rows of cross-benches, one above another, of a proper height for sitting upon. The women kneel upon these, and not on the ground, so they look as though they were standing; besides these, the men have wooden rails to lean against, and seats like the women's, on which they kneel. Instead of joining hands in prayer to God, as we do, at the elevation of the Host, they stretch them out wide apart, and keep them thus extended while the priest exhibits the *pax*. They placed Messrs. d'Estissac and de Montaigne on the third bench among the men; and those above them were afterwards occupied by men of inferior appearance, as was the case on the women's benches. It seemed to us that the first rows were not esteemed the most honourable. The interpreter and guide we had engaged at Basle, a sworn messenger of the town, came to mass with us, and in his way exhibited every manifestation of devotion and zeal. After dinner, we passed the river Arat[1] at Broug,[2] a small town belonging to Messieurs of Berne, and thence went to see an abbey, that Queen Catherine of Hungary gave to the seigneury of Berne in the year 1524, and in which are buried Leopold, archduke of Austria, and a great number of gentlemen who were defeated with him by the Swiss in 1386. Their arms and names are still legible on their tombs, and their remains are carefully preserved. M. de Montaigne spoke to a gentleman of Berne who has the command here, and who showed us every thing that was to be seen. In this abbey[3] there are loaves of bread and basons of soup always kept ready for any traveller who may apply for them, and never has any person been refused this aid, which is a part of the institution of the abbey itself. Thence we went over in the ferry-boat, which, by means of an iron pulley attached to a high cord, crosses the river Reix[4] (flowing from the lake of Lucerne), and came to

Baden, four leagues, a small town, with a suburb, in the latter of which are the baths. It is a Catholic town, under the protection of the eight cantons of Switzerland. Here several important royal congresses have taken place. We did not lodge in the town itself, but at the Bath, which is situated quite at the bottom of the mountain, along a river, or torrent rather, called Limacq,[5] which takes its course from the lake of Zurich. There are two or three public Baths, open at the top, of which only the poor people make use. The others, of which there are a great number, are enclosed in houses, where again they are divided off into small private baths, open or closed-in, let out with the apartments which each respectively adjoins. These baths are most comfortably fitted up, and there are separate pipes of hot water for every one of them. The houses are very handsome, and are kept up on a grand scale. In that where we lodged, there have been, in one day, three hundred mouths to provide for. There was still a good deal of company when we arrived, so much so that a hundred and seventy beds were required for the guests. There are eleven kitchens, with seventeen stoves, and in a house adjoining ours, they have fifty sets of rooms completely fitted up. The walls of the houses are all covered with the arms of the gentlemen who at different times have lodged in them. The other town, on the brow of the hill, is a small but pretty place, as indeed most of the towns in these parts are. For, besides that they make their streets wider and more open than ours, their squares larger, and have all their windows richly glazed, they have this fashion, almost every where, of painting their houses on the outside, and covering them with coats-of-arms and other devices, which has a very pretty effect; and further, there is no town amongst them wherein you do not find several large fountains, ornamentally constructed of stone or wood, and forming a prominent feature in the cross-ways. These various circumstances make their towns appear much prettier than those of France. The water of the baths gives out a sulphureous smell, like those of Aigues-caudes[6] and others. The heat is moderate, like those of Barboton[7] or Aigues-caudes, and the baths are consequently very mild and agreeable. Those who have under their charge ladies who wish to bathe with privacy and delicacy, will do well to bring them here, where every lady has a bath to herself, handsomely fitted up as a dressing-room, light and airy, with rich windows, painted wainscoting and ceiling, and polished floors, and provided with chairs and small tables, on which you may read or play while in the bath. The bathers can lay on, or empty off, the water, just as they like; and there are apartments

[1] Aar.
[2] Brug.
[3] The celebrated abbey of Mouri. See the Life of Dom Calmet, book i., and his *Diarium Helveticum*.
[4] The Reuss.
[5] The Limath.
[6] Hot mineral waters on the mountain of Ossau, in Bearn.
[7] Hot mineral waters in Armagnac.

adjoining each bath, with long galleries to walk in. The strolls along the river side are very pleasant. The sides of the lofty hills, which overlook the valley in which these baths stand, are, for the most part, fertile and well cultivated. The water for drinking is flat and insipid, with a sulphureous flavour, and a somewhat acid and sharp taste. The people of this part of the country principally use this bath, in which they have themselves so unmercifully cupped and bled that I have sometimes seen the two public baths almost full of blood. Those who drink the waters generally take one glass only, never more than two. People usually stop here five or six weeks, and there is company nearly all the summer. With few exceptions, the only persons who frequent these baths are Germans, who come here in great crowds. The baths are of very ancient use; they are mentioned by Tacitus.[1] M. de Montaigne made every possible endeavour to ascertain the primary source of these baths, but he could learn nothing about it; it would appear, however, that all the springs lie very low, and almost on a level with the bed of the river. The water is not so clear as others we have seen elsewhere; and they make use, while drawing it up, of a minute net-work, to clear it. It does not sparkle as other sulphureous waters, those of Spa, for instance, according to the Seigneur Maldonat, do, when poured into a glass. M. de Montaigne, the morning after we arrived, which was Monday, drank seven small glasses of this water, making, in all, more than a third of a pint; next morning he drank five large glasses, which held more than ten of the small, and might be about a pint, The same day, at nine in the morning, while the rest of the company were at dinner, he went into the bath, and perspired a good deal. He only remained in it half an hour; but while he was there, he lay stretched at his full length, the water coming up to his neck; whereas the people of the country, who remain in the water sometimes nearly the whole day, playing or drinking, have the water only up to their middle. This day there left the baths a Swiss lord, a faithful subject of our crown, who had greatly entertained M. de Montaigne all the preceding day with conversation respecting the affairs of Switzerland; and had shown him a letter which the ambassador of France,[2] son of the President du Harlay (Achilles), had written him from Solurre,[3] where he is at present, recommending him to watch carefully over the interests of the king during his absence, he having been sent for by the queen[4] to meet her at Lyons, and assist her in counteracting the designs of Spain and Savoy. The Duke of Savoy,[5] who had just died, had made an alliance a year or two ago with some of the cantons: this the king had openly resisted, alleging that they, having already bound themselves to him, were not in a condition to enter into any new obligations without his concurrence; which some of the cantons had been induced to admit, by the intervention of this same Swiss gentleman, and had accordingly declined to adopt the alliance. It is certain that in all these parts the people received the name of the king with respect and friendship, and they everywhere showed us all possible courtesy. The Spaniards are in very bad odour here. The train of this Swiss consisted of four horses. His son, who is already a pensionary of the king's, was mounted on one; a valet on another; his daughter, a tall fine girl, upon a third, with cloth housings, and a stirrup in the French fashion, carrying a portmanteau behind her, and a cap-box at the saddle-bow. She had no female attendant with her, though they were two long days' journey from their home, which is in a town of which this gentleman is governor. He himself was on the fourth horse. The ordinary dress of the women here appeared to me as neat and becoming as that of our own, even the head-dress, which consists of a cap *à la cognarde*, turning up behind, and in front, over the forehead, a slight prominence. This is ornamented all round with tufts of silk, or fur-edging; and the hair hangs down behind, in large plaits. If you take off their cap in sport, for it is not fastened any more than ours, they are not angry, though it shows you all the fronts of their heads quite bare. The younger girls, instead of caps, merely wear a band round their heads. There is no great distinction of dress between the different ranks. The mode of salutation is to kiss your hand to them, and offer to touch theirs; as to any other mode, if in passing by, you make them no end of bows and congées, the majority of them do not stir a bit, or proffer any return of your civility; they have their own way, and it is a very ancient one. Some, indeed, incline the head slightly, by way of returning your salute, but 'tis rarely done. The women are generally tall and handsome, with fair complexions. They are a kind-hearted people, especially to those who conform to their fashions. M. de Montaigne, in order thoroughly to understand the diversity of manners and customs, allowed himself, in every place he visited, to be waited upon after the particular fashion of that place, however troublesome it might appear to him at the time, or however different from what he had been accustomed to. In Switzerland, however, he suffered, he said, no inconvenience from this plan of his, except from the

[1] *Hist.* i. 67. "Locus amœno salubrium aquarum usu frequens."

[2] Harlai de Sanci, friend of Henry IV., at that time King of Navarre.

[3] Soleure.

[4] The Queen-Mother, Catherine de Medicis. The Queen-Consort, Louise de Lorraine (wife of Henry III.), who was called *La Reine Vierge*, though living at the time, took no part in state affairs.

[5] Emmanuel-Philibert died 30th August, 1580.

circumstance that at table they only have a small cloth of half a foot square for a napkin, which cloth the Swiss do not even unfold at dinner, though they serve up a great variety of sauces and soups. They always, however, place as many wooden spoons, with silver handles, as there are guests, and no Swiss is ever without a knife, which he uses in taking up every thing; and it is very seldom that they put their hands to their plates. The gates of almost all their towns bear, above the private arms of the town, those of the emperor and of the house of Austria, though, in fact, the majority of these towns have seceded from the archduke, in consequence of the mismanagement of that house. They say here that all the members of the house of Austria, excepting the Catholic king, are reduced to great poverty, especially the emperor, who is held in but very low esteem in Germany. The water that M. de Montaigne drank on Tuesday caused him three stools, and he had voided it all before mid-day. Wednesday morning, he took the same quantity as the day before. He finds that, when he perspires in the bath, he voids much less urine the next day, retaining much longer the water he has taken, and he experienced this also at Plommieres. The water that he took, the second day, was coloured, and greatly lessened in quantity when he voided it; whence he judged that it had turned into aliment, and he took this to be owing, either to the evacuation of the perspiration previously, or to his fasting; for when he bathed he only took one meal. This was the reason why he only bathed once. On Wednesday, his landlord bought a very large quantity of fish; and when M. de Montaigne asked him why he did so, he replied that the great majority of the people at Baden ate fish on Wednesdays out of a religious feeling: which confirmed what Monsieur de Montaigne had heard before, that those who there hold the Catholic faith are made the more strict and devotional by the existence of the rival religion. He argued in this way: "that when confusion and admixture arise in the same towns, and are sown in one same system of government, this relaxes the affections of men, the mixture descending down to individuals, as is the case in Auspourg[1] and imperial towns; but when a town has but one unmixed system of government (for the Swiss towns have each its separate laws and government, apart and independent, in this respect, one of another; their union and coherence applying only to certain general conditions), the towns which form a separate state and civil body, each in itself, have wherewith to fortify and maintain themselves; they stand firm in themselves, and become more united and more firmly embodied, from the very shock of the neighbouring contagion." We soon became so accustomed to the heat of their stoves that none of us felt any inconvenience from it. For, indeed, after you have once swallowed a mouthful of the new atmosphere, which you are sensible of just at the moment of entering a room where one of the stoves stands, you experience nothing afterwards but a gentle and equable warmth. M. de Montaigne, who slept in a room with a stove in it, was greatly pleased with the effect, enjoying throughout the night an agreeable and temperate degree of warmth. At all events, you do not burn either your face or your boots, and you are free from the smoke that annoys you in France. While we in France put on warm furred morning-gowns, when we come home, the people here, on the contrary, take off their coats altogether, and always go bareheaded when in-doors, wrapping themselves up only when they go out. On Thursday M. de Montaigne drank the same quantity; the water operated in both ways, and he voided gravel, though not in any great quantity. He found these waters more active than others he had tried, whether it was owing to the strength of the water itself, or whether his state of body was more adapted for it now; however this may be, he drank less than he had done of any of the others, and it came from him far better digested. To-day he got into conversation with a minister of Zurich, a native of that place, who had just arrived; and he found that their first reformed religion had been Zuinglian: from which they had approximated to that of Calvin, a somewhat milder form. When this minister was asked about predestination, he replied that they themselves held a mean between Geneva and Augusta,[1] but that they did not embarrass their flocks with the dispute. In his own particular judgment, he rather inclined to the extreme doctrines of Zuinglius; of which he proceeded to make a high eulogium, saying he considered them to approach the nearest to the primitive Christianity. Friday, after breakfast, at seven o'clock in the morning, the 7th of October, we left Baden; before we set off, M. de Montaigne took his prescribed dose of the waters, thus making it five times that he had used them. Without speaking decidedly as to their operation, in which, however, he sees as much occasion for hope as in any others he has taken, both as to the external and the internal application, he would recommend these baths fully as much as any of those he has already visited. The place itself is agreeable, and the accommodations for visitors are very excellent, each person being able to take the baths in the manner he likes best, and in the way best suited to his means, the different baths and the apartments attached to them being quite independent of each other, and of all dimensions, some small and some large; and there are separate galleries, baths, dressing-rooms, sitting-rooms, bed-chambers, and chapels, for separate parties. Both the house adjoining ours, which is called *La Cour de la Ville*, and our own, which is known as *La Cour de derrière*, are public

[1] Augsburg.

[1] Augsburg (Augusta Vindelicorum).

establishments belonging to the Seigneury of the Cantons, and are let out to lodgers. In the adjoining house they have some chimneys in the French fashion. All the principal chambers have stoves. The charges are somewhat arbitrary, as, indeed, is the case in most countries, especially our own, towards strangers. Four chambers, furnished with nine beds, in two of which there were stoves and a bath, cost us a crown a day for each of the masters; and four batz a day, which is rather more than ninepence, for each of the servants; the horses cost six batz a day; but besides these charges, they added a variety of little pilferings and tricksterings, which is not usually the custom with these people. They have guards in all their towns, and even in these Baths, though merely a village. Every night two patrols go the rounds, taking notice of every house, not so much to guard them from external enemies as to provide against fire or internal commotion. When the clock strikes, one of these sentinels has to call out, at the pitch of his voice, to the other, and ask him what the hour is; and the other has to answer, in as loud a key, what o'clock it is, adding "All's well." The women here wash out of doors, in the street, having a small wood fire near them, on which they heat their water; they get up the linen much better than you have it done for you in the inns in France. Every servant in the inns here has a particular department. One very great misfortune is that, however you exert yourself, it is impossible to extract from the people of the country, unless you happen by great good chance to light upon somebody with a head very much better furnished than the ordinary run of them, any sort of information as to what is worth seeing in each place; they do not understand what you mean by the question. For instance, we had been here five days, making every possible inquiry, yet we did not hear a word of what we ourselves saw the first thing on leaving the town: a stone, of the height of a man, apparently the remains of some pillar, though without any carving or work about it, standing at the corner of a house, abutting on the high-road, on which was a Latin inscription, which I[1] could not make out beyond this, that it is a dedication to the emperors Nerva and Trajan. We passed the Rhine at the Catholic town of Keyserstoul, an ally of Switzerland; and then went along the river side through a flat but pretty country, till we came to the falls, where the water dashes against rocks, and these they call the cataracts, as they do the falls of the Nile. Just below Schaffhouse, the stream goes over a bed of large rocks, which break it up; and below this, among these same rocks, it comes to a descent of about two pikes' length down, over which it dashes, foaming and making an amazing hubbub. This stops the boats, and of course interrupts the navigation of the river. We went on, without baiting, till we got by supper time to

Schaffhouse, four leagues, the capital town of one of those Swiss cantons which hold the religious faith I have mentioned above, that of Zurich. Leaving Baden, we had left Zurich on the right; M. de Montaigne had intended visiting it, as it was only two leagues off, but he was informed that the plague was there. At Schaffhouse we saw nothing remarkable. They are engaged in building a citadel for it, which will be a tolerably fine one. There is a public ground maintained, for practising cross-bow shooting, provided with seats, galleries, and rooms, with shady walks, and excellently fitted up in all respects; and there is a similar place, for hacquebut[2] shooting. There are water-mills for sawing wood, of which we had noticed several elsewhere, and others to pound flax and millet. There is also here a tree, similar to some we had seen at Baden and other places; but not so large. The lowest branches are made use of to form the floor of a round gallery of twenty feet in diameter. The ends of these branches are then bent upwards, and trained as high as possible, to form the sides of the gallery. The branches above these are cut away, up to the height which they wish to give the gallery, about ten feet. Then they take the branches growing above this, and train them over wicker-work, to form the roof of the gallery, and the ends of these branches are turned down, to join the ascending branches, and thus the whole gallery is encircled with a verdant wall. After this, they cut off all the remaining branches of the tree, until just before they reach the top, where they leave the tuft-branches to luxuriate as they please. The tree thus arranged has a very pretty effect. At the bottom of the tree is constructed a fountain, whose waters spout up to a height level with the floor of the gallery. M. de Montaigne paid a visit to the burgomasters of the town, who afterwards returned him the compliment, by coming, attended by other public officers, to sup at our lodgings, and made a present of some wine to him and to M. d'Estissac. Several very ceremonious harangues passed between the parties. The principal burgomaster was a gentleman, who had been bred up as a page with the late M. d'Orleans,[3] but he had already forgotten all his French. This canton professes to be very faithful to us, and indeed has given this recent proof of it, that it refused, in our favour, the confederation which the late Duke of Savoy sought to negociate with the cantons, of which I made mention before. Saturday, 8th of October, we left Schaffhouse, at eight o'clock in the morning, after breakfast, having found very good lodgings there at the Crown.

[1] Montaigne himself is here speaking. The reader will constantly notice this confusion of persons, in the secretary's portion of the journey.

[2] Arquebuss.

[3] Charles, elder brother of Henry II. first Duke of Angoulême, and then Duke of Orleans, died 9th September, 1545

A literary man residing here had that morning a conversation with M. de Montaigne, and among other things told him that, in reality, the inhabitants of that town were very indifferently affected towards our court; so that, in all the public deliberations which had been held respecting the alliance with the king, the majority of the people were, in every instance, desirous of breaking it off, but, by the influence of some of the richer class, the final determination was otherwise. As we were leaving the town, we saw an iron machine, similar to some we had seen elsewhere, by which large stones are raised without the intervention of physical labour, and placed in waggons. We proceeded along the Rhine, which lay on our right, till we came to Stain,[4] a small town in alliance with the Cantons, and holding the same religion as Schaffhouse. On the road we passed a great many stone crosses. We re-crossed the Rhine over another wooden bridge; and, travelling along the banks of the river, which now ran on our left, we went through another little town,[5] also an ally of the Catholic cantons. The Rhine here spreads out to a great width, as our Garonne does at Blaye, and then narrows again till you come to

Constance, four leagues, where we arrived at about four o'clock. This is a town of the size of Chalons, belonging to the Archduke of Austria, and is catholic. It having been formerly, and indeed within the last thirty years, possessed by the Lutherans, who were forcibly dislodged from it by the emperor Charles V., the churches still give evidence of their presence, in respect to the images. The bishop, who is a native of the country, and a cardinal, living at Rome, derives a revenue of full forty thousand crowns from this see. There are canonries, in the church of Notre Dame, which are worth fifteen hundred florins a-year, and are held by lay gentlemen. We saw one of these on horseback, coming out to take the air, gallantly equipped in the military style. They say there are a great many Lutherans in the town. We ascended the bell-tower, which is very lofty, and found there a man placed as sentinel, who never leaves the place, whatever occasion he may have, and indeed is a prisoner there. They are constructing, at the side of the river, a large covered building, fifty paces long and forty wide, or thereabout; here they are going to put twelve or fifteen large wheels, by means of which they will be able constantly to raise an immense quantity of water to a platform above, whence a similar machinery will again raise it to another platform still higher; and the water, thus raised to a height of altogether about fifty feet, will discharge itself into a large artificial canal, by which it will be carried into the town, and there turn several mills. The engineer who constructed this building had five thousand seven hundred florins paid him for his own share, besides being supplied with wine. At the bottom of the river they are sinking some solid works, for the purpose of breaking the force of the current, so that the water may in this sort of reservoir become quiet, and they be able to draw it up the more easily. They are also constructing some engines, by means of which the whole of the machinery may be raised or lowered, according as the river is high or low. The Rhine here no longer retains its name; for at the head of the town it becomes a lake, four German leagues wide and five or six long. There is a fine terrace looking over this large piece of water, where they land the goods; and at fifty paces from the lake, a pretty house, where a sentinel is constantly stationed. Attached to this house is a chain, by means of which they close the entrance to what is used as the port, a part of the lake enclosed by a quantity of piles, within which the boats and vessels that come here are moored, and load and unload their cargoes. In the church of Notre Dame there is a spring which is carried over the Rhine in pipes into the fauxbourg. It was easy to perceive that we were leaving Switzerland, for just before we arrived at this town we saw several gentlemen's seats, on both sides of the road, which are very rarely to be seen in the Cantons; though, as to other private houses, these are, both in town and country, all along the route we had come, without comparison finer than they are in France; all they want is slates. The inns, too, are excellent, for we had everywhere found far better accommodation, in almost every respect, than in France; as to those points in which, according to our notions, they were deficient, this was from no want of means on their part, as was quite manifest from the abundance of other things: you can hardly call that a poor country where most of the people you meet with drink out of large silver cups, generally worked and gilt; they are deficient in these points, simply because 'tis not their custom to have them. The country is very productive, especially in vines. To return to Constance: we were very ill lodged at the Eagle; and we experienced in the landlord a singular instance of the almost barbarian license and assumption of the German character. The affair arose out of a quarrel of one of our footmen with our guide from Basle. The dispute was carried before the judges, to whom the parties thought proper to appeal; and the provost of the place, who is an Italian, but who long since settled as a free burgess, and married here, in reply to M. de Montaigne, who asked whether his servants, who knew something of the matter, could be heard as witnesses in our favour, said they could, provided he previously discharged them from his service; which he would do, as there

[4] Stein.

[5] Steckborn.

was nothing to prevent his taking them back again immediately afterwards. This struck us as a remarkably subtle touch. Next day, Sunday, on account of this dispute, we stopped till after dinner, but changed our lodgings to the Pike, where we got on very well. The son of the commandant of the town, who was bred up as a page in the household of M. de Meru,[1] always attended our gentlemen at their meals and elsewhere; yet he knew not one word of French. The dinners consist of a great many courses. Even after the cloth is removed, they served up, here and afterwards, fresh courses with the wine: first, what the Gascons call *canaules;* then gingerbread; and, thirdly, a sponge cake, cut into slices, though not taken to pieces; between the slices there is a quantity of spices and salt, and the whole is covered with a crust. There are a great number of hospitals for lepers throughout the country, and you are constantly meeting on the road poor devils afflicted with this malady. The country people give their servants for breakfast a thick flat cake, with fennel in it, covered with bits of bacon, minced very small, and heads of garlic. Amongst the Germans, when they wish to show you respect, they go to your left, wherever you may be; they think it matter of offence to take the right hand, for they say that deference to a man requires you should give his right hand free access to his sword. Sunday, after dinner, we left Constance, and, passing the lake at a mile from the town,[2] came to sleep at

Smardoff,[3] two leagues; a small Catholic town, where we lodged at the Coulogne,[4] the posting-house which the Emperor uses when he travels from Italy into Germany, or back. Here, as in several other places, they fill the mattrasses with the leaves of a certain tree,[5] which answers the purpose better than straw, and lasts longer. This town is surrounded with large districts of vineyards, which produce excellent wines. Monday, 10th of October, we set off after breakfast; for M. de Montaigne was tempted, by the fineness of the weather, to change his plan of going to Ravesbourg[6] that day, and turned aside a day's journey to visit Linde.[7] M. de Montaigne himself never ate breakfast; but he had brought a piece of dry bread, which he took on the road, moistening it with grapes, which he picked as he went along, the vintage not being over, and the whole country being covered with vines. Around Linde they raise the vines on trellis-work, and thus make a number of verdant walks through the grounds, which have a very pretty effect. We passed a place named Bouchorn,[8] an imperial and Catholic town, on the banks of the lake of Constance; whither all the merchandize from Oulme,[9] Nuremberg, and other places, is brought in waggons, and thence taken down the Rhine, through the lake. We arrived, at about three o'clock in the afternoon, at

Linde, three leagues; a small town, standing in the lake, at about a hundred paces from the shore, which hundred paces you traverse over a stone bridge; there is only this entrance, all the rest of the town being surrounded by the lake. It is a full league in extent. Behind the lake rise the mountains of the Grisons. The waters of this lake, and of all the rivers hereabout, are low in winter and high in summer; the effect of the snow melting in the latter season. In all this part of the country the women wear fur hats or caps, like our calottes; the outside is of a better sort of fur, generally that of the weazel, and such a bonnet costs only three testons;[10] the inside is made of lambs'-wool. The opening which we have in front of our caps they have behind, and through it they pass all their hair, plaited. They usually wear red or white boots, which are becoming enough. Both religions are practised here. We went to see the Catholic church, which, though built in the year 866, is in complete preservation and order; and we saw also the church where the ministers of the other faith perform their service. All the imperial towns are permitted to exercise two religions, the Catholic and the Lutheran; and the inhabitants of each place favour the one or the other, entirely according to their inclinations and opinions. At Linde there are but two or three Catholics, as the priest told M. de Montaigne. The Catholic clergy, however, continue to receive their revenues freely, and to perform the service, as also do some nuns that are here. Monsieur de Montaigne also spoke to the minister, of whom he learnt no great deal, indeed little more than the common hatred against Zuinglius and Calvin. They say that there are few towns which have not some peculiar features in their belief; and while generally under the authority of Martin,[11] whom they recognize as their chief, they get up an infinity of disputes as to the interpretation of his writings. We lodged at the Crown, a very fine house. Attached to the ceiling there was a wooden cage, large enough to hold a great many birds, with a number of little lanes, made of wire, running from it the whole length of the ceiling, where the birds were able to exercise themselves as much as they liked. The only wood they use, either for furniture or wainscoting, is that of the fir, the principal tree that grows in their forests; but they paint and varnish this up to

[1] Charles de Montmorenci, afterwards Duke of Anville and Admiral of France, son of the Constable Anne de Montmorenci.
[2] Before Morsburg.
[3] Markdorf.
[4] The Cologne Inn.
[5] Those of Indian or Turkey corn.
[6] Ravenspurg.
[7] Lindau.
[8] Buckhorn, also called Friedrichshafen.
[9] Ulm.
[10] A silver coin, worth about 1s. 6d.
[11] Luther.

very great perfection, and take a vast deal of pains to keep it clean; they have fine hair brushes, with which they dust their benches and tables. They grow a great abundance of cabbage, which they cut up very small, with an instrument they have expressly for that purpose; and when it is thus cut up they put a quantity of it into tubs with salt, and of this they make a dish all the winter round.[1] Here M. de Montaigne tried the experiment of covering himself in bed with a feather-bed, as is the custom of the country; and he liked the fashion very much, finding this sort of covering both warm and light. In his opinion, there is nothing to complain of here, except, perhaps, that a person of weakly constitution, or effeminate habits, might not fancy their beds; but, by bringing with them a mattrass, an article not known here, and a curtain, they would remove this objection. As to eating and drinking, they give you a host of things, and diversify their courses with all sorts of soups, meats, sauces, salads, and so on, very far beyond what we do in France. We had one soup made with quinces, and another with roasted apples, cut in slices into the soup, and cabbage-salads. They make also a sort of soup, sometimes with rice, sometimes with other things, which all the guests help themselves to in common (indeed, there is no course served for any guests in particular); and this especially was of such excellent flavour in the better houses we lodged at, that we doubted whether the kitchens even of the French nobility could furnish anything comparable to it. And certainly there are few houses amongst us which have the dining-rooms so well fitted up. They have a great abundance of fish, which they serve up with the meat; they think nothing of trout, and only eat the liver. They have plenty of game, woodcocks, hares, and so on, which they dress in a manner very different from ours, but at the least quite as good. We never tasted meat so tender as it is generally here. They send up stewed prunes, and pear and apple tarts, with the meat; sometimes they serve up the meat first and the soup afterwards, and sometimes the soup first and the meat afterwards. The only dessert they have is pears, apples (which they grow of excellent sorts), nuts, and cheese. Together with the meat, they place on the table a vessel of silver, or pewter, with four compartments, containing different sorts of pounded sweetmeats. Their bread is for the most part made with fennel, and they mix with it cummin, or some other seed of the same kind, to give it a sharp, hot taste. After dinner they place on the table glasses full of different sorts of drinks, so that each person may satisfy his thirst with the beverage he likes best. Mons. de Montaigne found occasion to be vexed at three things in the course of his journey: first, that he had not brought with him a cook, who might learn their mode of dressing different articles, and one day at home give our friends proofs of their excellence in this respect; secondly, that he had not in the outset engaged a German valet, or had not obtained the companionship of some gentleman of the country (for to live at the mercy of a blockhead of a guide he found to be an amazing inconvenience); and, thirdly, that, before he set out on the journey, he had not read such books as would have pointed out to him what were the rare and noticeable features in each place he was going to, or that he had not brought with him a Munster,[2] or some other such book. It is true that, in his judgment upon the things he saw, he might have mixed up somewhat of an acrimonious contempt for his own country, which he holds in hatred and distaste for other causes; but, however this might be, it is certain that he preferred what he found in this country infinitely beyond what he had left behind him in France; and he so entirely conformed himself to their customs and manners as to drink his wine without water. He never drank, however, more than he had been used to do, nor was he ever invited thereto, except as a matter of courtesy and kindliness, and then he was not pressed. Things are dearer in Upper Germany than they are in France; so much so, that of our party each horse and man cost a sun-crown a-day. The landlords, in the first place, charged us four, five, or six batz each for each of the two principal meals at the *table d'hôte*; and they make a separate charge for all you drink before and after these two meals, and for the least draught you take in the intervals, so that the Germans generally set out in the mornings from their inns without drinking any thing at all. Whatever you take after the two chief meals, and whatever wine you drink between whiles, which among these people constitute the principal item of expense, is put down to the account of lunch. But, indeed, when I consider the liberality with which they provide every thing at their *tables d'hôte*, especially wine, even where it is dearest and has to be brought from a great distance, I can very well excuse the high rate of their charges. The hosts themselves invite the servants to drink, and keep their guests at table for two or three hours. Their wine is served up in large pitchers, and it is matter of offence for any one to let his goblet remain long empty; nor will they allow any person to mix water with his wine, unless in particular cases, where the party desiring to do so is one held in very great respect. They have also a separate charge for the oats for the horses, and another for stable-expenses, which include hay. There is this good point about them, that they tell you at once what their charge is, neither more nor less; and you

[1] This is the dish which the Germans now call sauer-croat

[2] That is to say, *The Cosmography of Sebastian Munster*, surnamed the Strabo of Germany.

seldom get any thing by haggling with them. They are vain, choleric, and given to drinking; but, as M. de Montaigne remarked, neither traitors nor thieves. We set out from this place after breakfast, and got, at about two in the afternoon, to

Vanguen,[1] two leagues, where we had to stop, in consequence of our great luggage-box breaking; and we were ultimately obliged to hire a waggon for the next day, at three crowns a-day, the waggoner providing four horses and keeping himself for that sum. This is a small imperial town, which has never received any other religion into it than the Catholic. Here are made those scythes which are so famous that they send them for sale even so far as Lorraine.[2] We left this place the next day, Wednesday, 12th of October, in the morning, and turned off short towards Trante,[3] along the most direct and usual road, and got by dinner time to

Isne,[4] two leagues, a small imperial town, very pleasantly situated. M. de Montaigne, according to his custom, immediately went and found out a divine of this town, in order to pick up what news he could from him, and this gentleman dined with Messieurs. He learned that all the people here are Lutherans, and he saw the Lutheran church, which, like all those they have in the imperial towns, has usurped one of the Catholic churches. Among other topics which they touched upon was the sacrament, and M. de Montaigne mentioned that some Calvinists had told him, on his way, that the Lutherans mixed up with the original doctrines of Martin several adventitious errors, such as ubiquitism; maintaining that the body of Jesus Christ is everywhere, as in the Host; thus falling into the same difficulty with Zuinglius, though in a different way: the one by being too sparing of the presence of the body, the other by being too lavish of it (for by this account the sacrament has no privilege over the body of the church, or a convocation of three elders); and he added that their principal arguments were, first, that the divinity, being inseparable from the body, and the divinity being everywhere, the body must consequently be everywhere also: secondly, that Jesus Christ, being always at the right hand of God, he is everywhere, inasmuch as the right hand of God, who is power, is everywhere.[5] The doctor loudly denied this imputation, and sought to defend himself from it as from a calumny; but M. de Montaigne thought that he made out but a poor case. He then went with M. de Montaigne to visit a very fine and richly decorated monastery, where they were performing mass; and he entered and waited during the service, without taking off his cap, until Messieurs de Montaigne and d'Estissac had finished their devotions. They then went down to a cellar under the abbey, to see a long round stone, without any work about it, which seemed to have been part of a pillar, and on which, in old Latin characters, was an inscription, purporting that the emperors Pertinax and Antoninus had repaired the roads and bridges for eleven thousand paces[6] from Campidonum, which was the ancient name of Kempten, where we were going to sleep. This stone, it was thought, might have been placed at this spot, as marking a stage of the road so mended; for as to the town of Isne, they say it is not very ancient; but when we came to examine the roads towards Kempten, on all sides, besides that there is no bridge at all, we did not discover any appearance of road making or mending, at all worthy of such workmen. There are, indeed, some excavations in the hills, but these present nothing remarkable.

Kempten, three leagues; a town as big as Sainte-Foy, populous, well situated, and very pretty. We went to the Bear, an excellent house. They served up at table large silver cups, of various patterns, richly chased and emblazoned with the coats-of-arms of different gentlemen, such as you rarely meet with even in the best houses. They were placed on the table merely for ornament. Here was afforded an instance of what M. de Montaigne said elsewhere; that what these people omit of our fashions and customs is owing, not to their poverty, but to their different notions; for though they have plenty of pewter dishes and plates, scoured in the same way as at Montaigne, they never make use of any other than wooden plates, prettily fashioned and highly polished. On all the seats in this part of the country they place cushions, and most of their wainscotted ceilings are slightly arched, which produces a graceful effect. As to the linen, of which we complained in the outset, we have since had no fault to find with it; and for my master,[7] I have always succeeded in procuring wherewith to make him curtains for his bed. If one napkin was not enough for him, they changed it as often as he wished. In this town there is a merchant who does a business of a hundred thousand florins in linen. M. de Montaigne, on leaving Constance, would have visited that canton of Switzerland,[8] which furnishes all Christendom with linen, had it not been that, to return thence to Linde, he should have had a four or five hours' passage over the lake. This town is Lutheran; yet, strangely enough, here, as well as at Isne, the Catholic church has its services solemnly performed in the regular form; for the morning after we arrived, on a Thursday, though a week-day, mass was performed at the abbey outside the town, just as it is celebrated at Notre Dame

[1] Wangen.
[2] The reader had need be a deep theologian to understand this *gallimatias*.
[3] Trent. [4] Isni.
[5] A pace, among the Romans, was a measure of five feet.
[6] This makes it evident that our author's secretary was a domestic servant, probably his valet-de-chambre.
[7] St. Gall.

at Paris, at Easter, with music and singing, though the monks only were present. The people, except in the principal towns, have not been permitted to change their religion, and they still go on Sundays and holidays to attend this service. The abbey I speak of is a very fine one. The abbot holds it in principality, and derives from it an income of 50,000 florins. He is a member of the family of D'Estain.[1] All the monks must be of the rank of gentlemen. Hildegarde, wife of Charlemagne, who founded the abbey in 783, is buried here, and deemed a saint. Her bones have been taken from the cell where they used to lie, and placed in a shrine. The same morning M. de Montaigne went to the Lutheran church, which was like the other churches of the Huguenot sect, except that at the altar, which stands at the head of the church, there are some wooden benches, with rails to lean the elbows on, where those who take the sacrament may kneel, as they always do. He found here two aged ministers, one of whom was preaching in German to a smallish congregation. When he had finished, they sang a psalm in German, in a somewhat different way from that in use amongst us. After each verse a fine organ, which seemed to have been just built, played a response. Whenever the minister named Jesus Christ, both he and the congregation took off their caps. After this the other minister went and placed himself at the altar, facing the people, with a book in his hand; a young woman, her head uncovered and her hair loose, then advanced towards him, and making a slight courtesy, in the fashion of the country, stood still. In about another minute a young man, apparently a mechanic, with a sword at his side, came and placed himself by the woman. The minister having whispered some words in their ear, commanded every person present to say the paternoster, and then proceeded to read out of a book certain rules for the guidance of persons marrying; finally, he caused them to touch each other's hand, but without kissing. This ceremony over, the minister left the altar, and M. de Montaigne went up him, and had a long conversation. He took M. de Montaigne with him to his house, into his study, which is a handsome one, and well fitted up. His name, he said, was Johannes Tilianus, Augustanus.[2] M. de Montaigne asked him for a new confession, which the Lutherans have drawn up, and which all the learned men and princes who support that faith have signed, but it is not in Latin. As they were leaving the church, a party with violins and tabors came from the other side of the street, to escort the new-married people. To the question:—"Whether they permitted dancing?" the minister replied: "Why not?" To another question: "Why on the windows, and in the decorations of the new organ, they had painted representations of Jesus Christ and other scriptural subjects?" he replied: "That they did not prohibit images which were merely for the purpose of instructing men; all they forbade was the worshipping of them." To the rejoinder, "Why, then, they had removed the old images from the churches?" he replied: "That it was not they who had done so; but that their worthy disciples, the Zuinglians, incited by the evil spirit, had committed this outrage, as well as several others;" which was the same reply that others of the same profession had already made M. de Montaigne; and, in particular, the divine at Isne, who, when he was asked, "Whether he hated the figure and emblem of the cross?" exclaimed: "How! do you imagine me such an atheist as to hate an emblem so dear and glorifying to all Christian souls?" adding: "that such a thing would be perfectly diabolical." The same person declared very roundly, when at dinner, that he would rather hear a hundred masses than participate in one of Calvin's sacraments. At this place we had white hares served up. The town is seated on the river Isler.[3] We dined there on the Thursday, and afterwards proceeded, through a hilly and sterile country, to sleep at

Frienten, four leagues; a small village, which, like all the rest of this part of the country, belonging to the Archduke of Austria, is Catholic. I forgot to mention, under the head of Linde, that at the entrance to that town there are considerable remains of a wall, which manifests an advanced antiquity, but on which I perceived no inscription. I understand that the name of the place signifies in German *an old wall*, and they tell me the name is taken from this wall. Friday morning, though we were in a very indifferent inn, we did not fail to find plenty of provisions. These people never air either their sheets when they go to bed, or their linen when they get up; and they are vastly offended if you light a fire in their kitchens for this purpose, or even make use of the fire already lighted; this was one of the most fruitful occasions of quarrelling and disputation that we experienced. Here, though in the midst of mountains and forests, where ten thousand feet of fir do not cost fifty pence, they would not let us have a fire, any more than they would elsewhere. Friday morning, we left this place, and took the easiest road, which lay on the left, instead of the mountain road which is on the right, and goes direct to Trante, M. de Montaigne having a mind to make a *detour* of a few days' journey, in order to see several fine German towns, which it had been his original intention to visit, till he changed his plan at Vanguen and altered his route, for which he was sorry now. On our way we saw another of those water-mills, of which we had already noticed several in different places, which derive their water from some neighbouring height, by

[1] De Stein.

[2] John Tilly, of Augsburg.

[3] Ller.

means of a wooden channel or gutter, which is supported on high posts from the place where it receives the water until it reaches the mill, and then pours down the water on to the point where it is wanted, by a direct descent. We got to dinner at

Friessen, one league. This is a small Catholic town belonging to the Bishop of Augusta. We found here a great number of persons, part of the suite of the Archduke of Austria, who himself was at a neighbouring castle with the Duke of Bavaria. We here embarked the baggage on the river Lech, with myself and several others, to convey it to Augsbourg, upon what they call here a float, a number of planks of timber joined together, which take to pieces when they arrive at their destination. There is an abbey at this place, where they showed Messieurs a chalice and a stole, that they preserve as reliques of a saint named Magnus, who they say was son of a king of Scotland, and a disciple of Columbanus; in favour of which Magnus, Pepin founded this abbey, and made him the first abbot of it. At the top of the nave there are these words inscribed, and below them are represented the notes of music to which they are to be chaunted: *Comperta virtute beati Magni fama, Pipinus princeps locum quem sanctus incoluit regia largitate donavit.*[1] Charlemagne afterwards further enriched the monastery, as we are informed by another inscription to be seen there. After dinner we all went on to sleep at

Chonguen, four leagues, a small town belonging to the Duke of Bavaria, and, consequently, rigidly Catholic; for this prince, beyond any other in Germany, has firmly maintained all the places under his rule free from contagion. We found excellent lodging at the Star, and withal a fashion we had not seen before; they ranged the salt-cellars on a square table from one corner to the opposite one, and the candlesticks traversed these from the other corners, so as to form a St. Andrew's-cross. They never use eggs, at least as far as we have seen hitherto, except boiled very hard, and cut into bits to enrich the salads, which are very excellent here, and made of the freshest materials. They drink their wine as soon as it is made. They only thresh their corn in the barns, as they want it, and use the large end of the flail. On Saturday we went on to dine at

Lanspergs,[2] four leagues, a small town of the Duke of Bavaria's, seated on the river Lech, and in every feature, town, fauxbourg, and castle, well worth seeing. It was their market-day, and the place was crowded with people. In the middle of the large square there is a fountain, which spouts out water by a hundred jets to the height of a pike, and scatters it about in a very elaborate way; you can turn the jets in what direction you please. There is a very fine church here. The town, the fauxbourg, and the castle, are all seated on the rise of a hill. M. de Montaigne went to pay a visit to a college of jesuits, who are very comfortably settled here in a new house, and are building a fine church. M. de Montaigne had as long a conversation with them as his time would permit. The Count of Helfestein commands at the castle. If any one even dreams of any other religion than the Roman, he had need keep it to himself. On the gate which divides the town from the fauxbourg there is a great Latin inscription, of the year 1552, which sets forth that "the senate and people of this town have built this monument in memory of William and Louis, brothers, Dukes of the two Bavarias." There are a number of other inscriptions on the same place, as this: *Horridum militem esse decet, nec auro cælatum, sed animo et ferro fretum*;[3] and at the top: *Cavea stultorum mundus.*[4] In another place there are very conspicuously inscribed these words, extracted from some Latin historian, relating to the victory which the Consul Marcellus lost against a king of this nation: *Carolami Boiorumque regis cum Marcello Cos. pugna qua eum vicit*, &c.[5] There are a great number of Latin inscriptions over the doors of private houses. The people hereabout paint all their towns and churches very frequently, which gives them a constantly fresh appearance. The places where we had just been, for instance, had all been entirely renovated three or four years before, as we learnt from the inscriptions which they always put up to commemorate each of these events. The clock of this town, like that of many others in this country, sounds all the quarters; and we were told that the clock at Nuremberch strikes all the minutes. We left this place after dinner, and proceeded through a long uninterrupted plain of pasture-land, which reminded us of the plain of La Bausse, to

Augsbourg, four leagues, which is considered the finest town in Germany, as Strasbourg is deemed the strongest. The first novelty we observed, and which shewed the cleanliness of the people, was the finding, on our arrival, the staircase of our lodging covered with linen for us to walk on, that we might not dirty the steps, which had just been thoroughly washed and scoured, as is done every Saturday. We have never seen any dirt or cobwebs in the houses we have been in. Some houses have curtains to draw before the windows, for those who like to use them. You hardly ever see any tables in their bed-rooms, except one which is attached to the foot of each bed, and, being on hinges, can be put up or down as you think

[1] "King Pepin, having learnt by the voice of fame the great virtues of the blessed Magnus, has endowed with his royal liberality the place which the saint inhabited."

[2] Landsberg.

[3] "A soldier should be regardless of dress and ornaments, and rely only on his courage and his sword."

[4] "The world is a cage of fools."

[5] "Battle of Carolam (or Carloman) and of the King of the Bavarians, against the Consul Marcellus, wherein the latter was defeated," &c. Who this Consul Marcellus may have been, I cannot say. The last of the *Fasti Consulares* is of the year of Christ 341.

proper. The foot of the bed is raised two or three feet above the frame of the bed, and very often as high as the bolster; the wood of which it is made is elaborately carved, and has a good effect enough, but, being only deal, it does not come near the appearance of our walnut furniture. Here they put highly polished pewter plates under wooden ones, almost, it would seem, in sign of their contempt for the former. In many places they have linen curtains against the wall at the bed-side, in order to prevent people from soiling the wall by spitting on it. The Germans are very fond of coats-of-arms; in every inn you will find hundreds that gentlemen who have lodged there have had painted on the walls; and all the windows are decorated with these emblazonments. We found a constant diversity in the mode of serving up meals; here, crabs—amazingly large ones—are served up first; elsewhere they are served up just towards the close of dinner. In many of the large inns, every dish placed on the table has a cover to it. What makes their windows always look so exceedingly bright is that the sashes are not fixed in the way that ours are, but can be taken out when required, and they are for ever cleaning and polishing them. M. de Montaigne next day, Sunday, went in the morning to see several churches, and in the Catholic places of worship, which are very numerous here, he found the service admirably performed. There are six Lutheran churches, with sixteen ministers; two of the six are churches usurped from the Catholics, the other four were built by the Lutherans themselves. He saw one this morning which looked just like the great hall in some college: there were neither images, crosses, nor organ. The walls were covered with passages from the Bible, written in German characters. There were two pulpits, one for the minister, where the sermon is preached, and below that another for the person who leads in singing the psalms. At the end of each verse the congregation waited until this person had given out the words and tune of the verse that followed, and then they sang altogether, without any sort of order or harmony, and those who chose to do so kept their caps on. After this a minister, who till then had been mingled with the crowd, went to the altar, where he read a number of prayers out of a book, at certain of which prayers the people rose and held up their hands clasped, and at the name of Jesus Christ made a low bow. After he had finished reading, which he did uncovered, he turned to the altar, on which was a napkin, an ewer, and a basin, with water in it. A woman, followed by twelve other women, then brought him a child, all swaddled up, except the face, which was uncovered. The minister then dipped all his fingers in the basin three times, and sprinkled the water over the child's face, at the same time pronouncing certain words. This being done, two men approached, and each of them put two fingers of his right hand upon the child; the minister spoke to them a few words, and the ceremony was completed. M. de Montaigne spoke to this minister as he was leaving the church. The ministers do not derive any revenue from their churches, but are paid by the senate. There was a far larger crowd in this one church than in two or three of the Catholic churches put together. We did not see one pretty woman here. Their dresses differ very much among themselves. Of the men it is difficult to distinguish who are nobles, inasmuch as all classes wear velvet caps, and all have swords at their sides. We were lodged at the sign of a tree called the Linden Tree[1] in this country; our inn adjoined the palace of the Foulcres.[2] One of this family dying a few years ago, left his heirs two millions of French crowns; and they, for the benefit of his soul, gave the Jesuits here, very much to their delight and advantage, the sum of thirty thousand florins, ready money. The palace I have mentioned is roofed with copper. In general, the houses are much larger, higher, and handsomer, than those of any town in France, and the streets are far wider; as to the extent of the town, he[3] thinks it is about the size of Orleans. After dinner we went to see the fencing, in a public room they have here for that purpose, where we found a great crowd assembled. You pay on entering, as you do at a play, and you have to pay besides for your seat when you get in. They were practising with the poinard, the two-handed sword, the quarter-staff, and the braquemart;[4] and after this we went to see some matches at cross-bow and long-bow shooting, in a public ground even more magnificent than that at Schaffouse. Thence, from one of the gates of the town, through which we had entered, we observed that, under the bridge we had crossed, there runs a great canal of water, which, flowing from some source in the country, is conveyed over the river by a wooden bridge, built beneath the town-bridge, and is again conveyed over the town-fosse into the town itself, by a similar medium. This current of water then turns a number of wheels, which work several pumps, by means of which the water of a spring, that rises in that place, are raised, through leaden pipes, to the top of a tower, at least fifty feet high. Here the water collects in a large stone reservoir, whence it again descends, through a number of pipes, and is distributed all over the town, feeding the whole of the fountains there. Individuals who are desirous of having the water laid on from this source, in their own houses, can have it, on paying the town ten florins a year, or two hundred florins at a single payment. It is now forty years ago that the town was first adorned with this admirable

[1] The lime-tree.

[2] The Fuggers, the merchant-princes, *par excellence*, of Augsburg, who lent large sums of money to Charles V. during the religious wars, and were ennobled.

[3] Montaigne.

[4] A short, broad-bladed sword.

work. Marriages of Catholics with Lutherans are quite common, the party most eager about the matter submitting to the forms of the other's faith; there are a thousand such marriages: our landlord was a Catholic, and his wife a Lutheran. They dust their glass with a hair-brush, fixed to the end of a stick. We were told that you can get very fine horses here for forty or fifty crowns. The authorities of the town did Messrs. d'Estissac and de Montaigne the honour of sending them as a present, when they were at supper, fourteen large vessels full of their wine, which were brought to Messieurs by seven sergeants, dressed in the civic uniform, under the direction of a superior officer, whom Messieurs invited to supper, as is the custom in these cases; and they gave the porters a crown. The officer who supped with them told M. de Montaigne there were three of them in that town, whose duty it was to pay this compliment to visitors of quality, and that for this purpose they always took pains to ascertain the condition of persons who came to the place, in order that they might observe the particular ceremonies which were due in each case; to some they present more wine than they do to others. When a duke is the visitor, one of the burgomasters attends in person to offer the present: they took us for knights and barons. M. de Montaigne, for some reasons of his own, had desired us not to say who we were, and not to mention the rank of Messieurs; and he walked all day by himself through the town;[1] he conceived that this of itself served to make them be held in more honour. The compliment I have mentioned has been paid them by all the towns in Germany. When he passed through the church of Notre Dame, feeling very chilly (for the cold began to touch them when they left Kempten, though up to that time they had enjoyed the finest weather possible), he, without thinking of it, put his handkerchief up to his mouth, conceiving that, as he was alone and plainly dressed, no one would notice him. However, when he got more intimate with some of the people, they told him that the authorities at the church had been rather scandalized at what they thought his strange procedure; and, in short, he found he had been guilty of the impropriety he was most desirous of avoiding, that of making himself remarkable by some action opposed to the manners and tastes of those among whom he was staying; for, as much as he can, his great anxiety is to conform and adapt himself to the ideas of the place where he happens to be; and thus he wore at Augusta a fur cap, when he walked out into the town. They say at Augusta that they are free, not from mice, but from the large rats which infest every other part of Germany; and they attribute this exemption to one of their bishops, who lies buried here; even the earth round his tomb, they say, has the power of expelling these vermin wherever it is carried, and they sell little bits of it, about the size of a nut, for this purpose. On Monday we went to see, in the church of Notre-Dame, the ceremony of the marriage of a rich young lady, belonging to the town, with one of the Foulcres' factors, a Venetian: we did not observe a single pretty woman in the place. The Foulcres, who are a large family, and all very rich, occupy the principal position in the town. We saw two of the rooms in a house of theirs; one was lofty, large, and paved with marble; the other, a low room, was richly decorated with medals, ancient and modern. At the end of this room there was a small ante-chamber. They were the most splendid apartments I ever witnessed. We also saw some of the German dances; at the close of every measure, they break off, and the gentlemen lead the ladies back to their seats, which are two rows of benches on each side of the room, covered with red cloth. Here the gentlemen leave the ladies, as it is not the custom for them to sit down together on these occasions. After a short rest, the gentlemen return to their partners, and kiss their hands; the ladies do not kiss the hands of the gentlemen, but, putting their hand under their partner's arm-pit, touch cheeks, and then place their right hand upon the gentleman's shoulder. They dance and converse uncovered. The dresses were plain. We saw some more of the Foulcres' houses, in other parts of the town, most of them pleasure-houses for the summer. The town must be greatly indebted to these gentlemen for the expenses they are constantly incurring in embellishing the different parts of it. In one of these houses we saw a clock which is worked by water. In the same place were two great fish-ponds, under cover, full of fish. There are several small pipes, some straight, others bent upwards, through which the water descends into these fish-ponds in a very agreeable manner, some of the pipes discharging the water directly into the ponds; and the others, first throwing it up as from a fountain, to the height of about a pike. Between these two ponds there is a space of some ten paces wide, closely boarded with planks, in which are a number of brass jets, so small that you cannot readily see them. While the ladies are amusing themselves with looking at the fish, those in the secret have only to touch a spring, which sets these jets in operation, and incontinently the petticoats and legs of the fair spectators are invaded with a refreshing coolness from these tiny water-spouts. In another place, where there is a very charmingly constructed fountain, while you are looking at it, any one that likes can play water upon you in a hundred places from invisible jets; over the place there is this Latin sentence: *Quæsisti nugas, nugis gaudeto repertis.*[2] There is also an aviary twenty paces square, and twelve or

[1] This is Montaigne all over. So, too, Horace: "Quicunque libido est, incedo solus," &c. *Sat.* i. 6.

[2] "You were in search of trifling amusements: take them, and make much of them."

fifteen feet high, surrounded on all sides with close-knitted wire-work; inside this are ten or twelve low fir-trees, and a fountain: this immense cage is full of birds. We saw here some Polish pigeons, or, as they call them, Indian pigeons, a sort of bird I have seen elsewhere; birds of a large size, with bills like a partridge. We had here pointed out to us the ingenuity of a gardener, who, foreseeing the early arrival of frost, had transplanted into a small covered place a quantity of artichokes, cabbages, lettuce, spinnage, endive, and other plants which he gathered, as though for immediate use; but, by putting their roots into a particular sort of earth, had hopes of keeping them fresh and good for two or three months; and, in fact, though there were a hundred artichokes which had been thus gathered for more than six weeks, none of them were withered. We also saw a leaden instrument, bent archwise, open at both sides, and pierced with holes; this being filled with water, both ends are held up, and it is then suddenly and dexterously turned down, so as for one end to go into a vessel full of water, while the other discharges the water outside, and the pipe is thus kept constantly filling as fast as it empties itself.[1] The arms of the Foulcres, which the Emperor Charles the Fifth gave them when he ennobled them, are a crown *mi-parti*; on the left, a fleur-de-lys, azure on a field of gold; on the right, a fleur-de-lys, gold on a field azure. We went to see some people who were conveying two ostriches from Venice to the Duke of Austria; the male is of a darkish hue, with a red neck; the female is of a grey colour, and lays a great many eggs. They were conveying them on foot, and told us that the birds got much less tired than they did; they said the beasts were constantly trying to get away from them, but they held them fast by two collars, one of which girded them over the reins above the thighs, and the other above the shoulders, encircling the whole body, and so, by means of these and two long leashes, they were able to stop or turn them as they wished. On the Tuesday, by the courtesy of the authorities of the town, we were shown a postern in the wall, through which, at all hours of the night, any person can enter, whether on foot or horseback, upon stating his name, and the person to whose house, or the inn to which he is bound. Two faithful men, paid by the town, are posted at this gate. Persons on horseback pay two batz for their admission there, and persons on foot one. The outer door, on the other side of the fosse, is sheathed with iron: at the side there is an iron handle, attached to a chain, which the person who wants to be let in pulls; this chain, after winding about a long way, ascends to the bed-room of one of the porters, which is situated at a considerable height above the postern, and there rings a bell. The porter thus roused gets up in his shirt, and, without leaving the room, by means of certain machinery opens the outer door, though distant a good hundred paces from where he stands. The person thus admitted now finds himself on a bridge of about forty feet long or thereabouts, covered over, which crosses the town fosse; along the side of this bridge is a sort of wooden trough through which passes the machinery which opens the outer door, and shuts it again immediately that the person is admitted. The bridge being crossed, the traveller finds himself on a narrow open space, whence he hails the first porter, and tells him his name and address. This being done, the latter, by ringing a bell, gives notice to his companion, who occupies a large room on the lower floor; and he, by a spring which is fixed in the passage adjoining his room, opens, in the first place, a small iron barrier, and then, by working a great wheel, raises the draw-bridge; all of which operations are conducted in such a manner that no one can perceive any of the movements: for they are all worked in the thickness of the walls and doors, and, before you have time to look round, that which has been opened closes with a loud noise. Next, the porter opens a great door of immense thickness, which is made of wood thickly plated with iron. The stranger now finds himself in a room, but neither here, nor any where else, on his progress into the town, does he see any one to speak to. When the door of this room is closed behind him, another similar door is opened, and he enters a second apartment, in which there is a light: here he finds a brass vessel hanging by a chain from an opening in the wall, and into this he puts the fee for his admission. This money is then pulled up by the porter, who, if he is not satisfied, leaves the stranger to kick his heels in the room till the morning; if, on the other hand, he is satisfied, he opens in the same way another great door, similar to the preceding, which instantly closes behind the person admitted, who then finds himself in the town. This is one of the most skilfully-contrived things that can be conceived. The Queen of England[2] sent a special ambassador to request of the municipality of the town to explain to her the mode of working the machinery, but they say they refused to do so. Under this gate there is a vault, large enough to hold five hundred horsemen, by means of which they can receive or send aid in war time, without the knowledge of the town's-people. After this we went to see the church of the Holy Cross, which is a very fine one. They glorify themselves greatly here on a miracle which took place nearly a hundred years ago in this church: a woman not being willing to swallow the body of Christ, and having taken it from her mouth and placed it in a little box covered with wax, afterwards confessed, and the whole was then found to be

[1] The instrument which is here intended to be described is the syphon.

[2] Elizabeth.

changed into flesh. They cite a number of proofs of this miracle, a description of which is written on various parts of the church in Latin and German. They show under a crystal frame the wax, and a piece of something which looks red like flesh. This church is roofed with copper, as the Foulcres' palace is: and indeed it is not uncommon to see this here. The church of the Lutherans immediately joins this church; for here, as elsewhere, they have either taken possession of the Catholic churches, or built their own almost in their very cloisters. At the door of this church they have placed the image of Our Lady holding Jesus Christ in her arms, with other saints and children, and over the whole have inscribed this sentence: *Sinite parvulos venire ad me*, &c.[1] At the house where we lodged there was a machine made of plates of iron closely fastened together, which descends to the bottom of a deep well, and, being worked by a boy at the top, turns round like a wheel and forces the water into a leaden pipe, by which it is conveyed into the kitchens and wherever else it is wanted. They keep a man in their pay, whose business it is to keep the walls constantly whitewashed and clean. They served us up pasties, large and small, in earthen vessels of the colour of, and in every respect made to resemble, pie-crust. There occur very few meals at which you are not presented with comfits and boxes of sweetmeats; the bread is of first-rate excellence; the wines are good, and, as is generally the case in this country, are white; they do not grow them near Augsbourg, but are obliged to fetch their supplies five or six days' journey off. Of every hundred florins that innkeepers expend in wine, sixty go to the republic as duty; private individuals, who expend the same sum in wine for their own consumption, pay only half this duty. They have in many places the custom of perfuming the apartments. The town some time back was entirely Zuinglian, but since that the Catholics have been recalled and have ousted the Lutherans from almost all the places of authority, though the great majority of the town, in point of numbers, still remains of the latter persuasion. M. de Montaigne paid a visit to the jesuits, and found them men of great learning. We breakfasted in their house on Wednesday morning, the 10th of October. M. de Montaigne much regretted, when he left, that, although only a day's journey from the Danube, he had not an opportunity of seeing it, or of visiting Oulm,[2] which he passed by, and some baths at a half day's journey beyond Oulm, at a place called Sourbronne.[3] This bath, which is situated in a flat country, is of fresh water, which is warmed for you, whether you drink it or bathe in it It has a sharp taste, which makes it rather pleasant to the palate, and it is good for maladies of the head and stomach. It is a noted bath, and, as we were told, a place where you are as handsomely and comfortably lodged as at Baden: but the winter was rapidly advancing, and the road to the place was quite out of our way; so much so, that on our return we should have had to come back to Augusta: and M. de Montaigne had a great horror of going the same road twice. I left a copy of the arms of M. de Montaigne fixed over the door of the room he had occupied. They were very well done, and cost me two crowns for the painter, and twenty pence for the man who made the frame. The town is washed by the river Lech, *Lycus*. We travelled through a pretty country abounding in corn-fields, and got by bedtime to

Brong,[4] five leagues; a large Catholic village, charmingly situated, in the Duchy of Bavaria. We left this place next morning, Thursday, 20th of October; and after traversing, first a wide plain of corn-fields (for there are no vines in this part of the country), and then extensive meadow-lands, spreading out on both sides as far as the eye could reach, we got by dinner-time to

Munic, four leagues; a large town, about the size of Bordeaux, and capital of the duchy of Bavaria, where the Electors of that state have their principal residence, upon the banks of the river Yser, *Ister*. It has a fine castle, with the largest and best appointed range of stabling I ever saw, either in France or Italy, all vaulted over, and capable of accommodating two hundred horses. This is a town altogether Catholic, populous, well built, and carrying on a good trade. After you get a day's journey from Augusta, you can live for four livres a day, horse and man, and for forty sous a day *without* a horse. The beds here have curtains, but no tester. Every thing you have furnished you is very comfortable. They clean the floors with boiled saw-dust. Throughout the country they gather in turnips and parsnips with as much care as corn; and when they have collected a quantity, seven or eight men are set to work with large knives to cut them into slices, and put them into vessels, where they are salted and preserved, as the cabbages are elsewhere, for winter food. They fill whole districts of fields with these plants, and have regular harvests of them. The reigning Duke of Bavaria married the sister of M. de Lorraine, and has three children by her, two boys and a girl. Both the brothers were now at Munich, and the day we were there had gone hunting with their suites and a large party of ladies and gentlemen. Friday morning, we set out, and passing through the duke's forests, where we saw an infinite number of fallow-deer congregated in flocks, like sheep, we went on, without stopping, to

[1] "Suffer little children to come unto me." St. Luke, xviii. 16.
[2] Ulm.
[3] Probably Heilbron.
[4] Bruck.

Kinief, six leagues; a miserable little village, in the same duchy. The Jesuits, who have great influence in the government of affairs in this country, have been making a grand movement, which has drawn upon them the hatred of the people, for the purpose of forcing the priests to dismiss their concubines, under great penalties. From the degree in which the priests are sympathised with on this occasion, it would seem that formerly the practice thus invaded was so generally tolerated that it had come to be regarded as perfectly legitimate; and the whole community are at this moment engaged in getting up remonstrances to their duke, in behalf of the priests. We had here the first eggs we have had served up to us in Germany, either on fast-days or feast-days, except such as were cut up in salads. We drank out of wooden goblets, ribbed like barrels, but there were several silver cups on the table. A lady, who resides in the village, sent some wine to Mons. de Montaigne. Early on Saturday morning we left this place; and, after leaving on our right the river Yser, and a great lake at the foot of the Bavarian mountains,[1] and having reached by an hour's ascent the summit of a hill, on which stands an inscription, stating that a duke of Bavaria made some excavations on the road here a hundred years ago, we found ourselves, all of a sudden, in the bosom of the Alps, travelling along an easy and agreeable road, with the accompaniment of a splendid autumnal evening, to help us the more pleasantly on our journey. On descending this hill, or rather little mountain, we came upon a fine lake, a Gascon league long, and as much broad, surrounded by lofty and almost inaccessible mountains. Pursuing our route at the foot of some of these mountains, and coming here and there upon pretty little patches of meadow land, interspersed with houses, we got by bed-time to

Mitevol;[2] a small village, belonging to the Duke of Bavaria, tolerably well situated, on the river Yser. We had here served up to us the first chesnuts we have had in Germany; they were sent up quite raw. In the inn where we lodged they had a stove-room, which travellers are in the habit of using as a vapour-bath, at the charge of a batz and a half each. I[3] went there while Messieurs were at supper. In the room were a number of Germans, who were being cupped and bled. Next day, Sunday morning, we continued our route through the mountains, and passed a gate, with a house over it, which forms a barrier between the country we had been just traversing and the Tyrol. We now entered the latter state, which belongs to the Archduke of Austria, and arrived by dinner-time at

Sefeldene,[4] three leagues; a small village, with an abbey, very pleasantly situated. The church, which is a tolerably fine one, is famous for the following miracle:—In 1384, a certain person, whose name is inscribed somewhere on the outside of the building, not being content, on Easter Sunday, with partaking of the common host, insisted upon having the grand host,[5] and got it into his mouth; but instantly the earth opened beneath him, and swallowed him up; in his descent he caught hold of the edge of the altar, which just gave time for the priest to take the host from his mouth, and the man then disappeared. They still show the hole, which is covered over with an iron grating; and the altar which received the impression of the man's fingers; and the host, which is all red, as though stained with blood. We here saw, too, a recent account, in Latin, of a Tyrolean, who having, a short time back, swallowed a bit of meat which stuck in his throat, and stopped there for three days without moving up or down, invoked the assistance of the patron saint, and then came to pray in this church, where he found himself forthwith cured. On leaving this place we went through several very neat villages, on the heights; and then, after a descent of about half an hour, we came to a pretty little town, well situated, above which, on a precipitous and apparently inaccessible rock, stood a magnificent castle, completely commanding the road by which we had just come, which is cut out of the solid rock, and so narrow that there is scarcely room for an ordinary waggon to pass along it. Indeed, this is so generally the case amidst these mountains, that the waggoners here are accustomed to have their waggons made a foot narrower than they are elsewhere. We now descended into a valley of great extent, through which flows the river Inn, which runs into the Danube at Vienna. Its Latin name was *Cenus*. It is a five or six days' journey by water from Insprug[6] to Vienna. This valley appeared to M. de Montaigne to present the most agreeable landscape he had ever seen; sometimes contracting itself, the mountains on the side appear almost to touch each other; then again spreading out, now on the left of the river, where we were, and now on the right, it creates possession of fruitful soil, even on the mountain sides; where these happen to be less precipitous than ordinary. The landscape is diversified with innumerable castles, villages, and churches, producing an admirable effect, as they present themselves one above the other, on the gradually rising slopes of the valley. The extreme back-ground on both sides consists of ranges of stupendous mountains, whose rocky peaks rise to an infinite elevation. On our side of the river we saw, upon a craggy eminence, upon a point which it was impossible any man

[1] The Tegernsee.

[2] Mittewald.

[3] The secretary.

[4] Seefeld.

[5] That exhibited on the altar. The legend adds, that this reprobate or enthusiast took the desired object by force.

[6] Innspruck.

could attain, unless he were lowered to it by ropes from the still loftier rocks above it, a cross, which, we were told, the Emperor Maximilian, grandfather of Charles V., caused to be erected here, in commemoration of his almost miraculous escape from the perils which surrounded him, when, on a hunting excursion, he lost himself amid these mountains, and was discovered by his attendants close to this spot. The incident has been recorded on canvass, and the picture representing it hangs in the cross-bow practice gallery at Augusta. We got in the evening to

Insprug, three leagues, the principal town of the earldom of Tyrol, *Ænopontum* in Latin. Here resides Fernand, Archduke of Austria. It is a very pretty and well-built town, seated in the very bosom of the valley, full of fountains and running streams, which is an advantage of ordinary occurrence in the towns we have seen in Germany and Switzerland. The streets are almost all in the form of terraces. We lodged at the Rose, an excellent house, where we were served in pewter plates. As to table-cloths in the French fashion, we had already found them in use for several days back. Some of the beds had curtains round them, which furnished a curious illustration of the national peculiarities. They were of a rich and handsome material, a sort of cloth, cut into very elaborate point-work, and so short and narrow as not at all to answer the purpose to which we apply bed-curtains, with a little tester of about three fingers' width, the whole decorated with an infinite number of tassels. The sheets they gave me for M. de Montaigne were edged all round with rich white lace-work, four fingers deep. Here, as in the majority of German towns, there are people who patrol the streets throughout the night, crying each hour as it strikes. Wherever we have been as yet, the custom has been to serve up fish with the meat; but, on fish-days, they do not serve up meat at all; at least they have not done so to us. Monday we left this place, and proceeding along the banks of the Inn, which lay on our left, through the same beautiful valley I before described, we got by dinner-time to

Hala,[1] two leagues, which we went out of our way to visit. This is a small town, like Insprug, the size of Libourne, or thereabout, seated upon the river just named, which we here crossed over a bridge. It is here they obtain the salt with which all Germany is supplied. Every week they make nine hundred pigs of it, which fetch a crown each. These pigs are about the size, and are very much the shape of a half-hogshead, the vessel in which they are moulded being of that form. The revenue accruing from this source goes to the Grand Duke, but the expenses are very great. The quantity of wood constantly required for the preparation of this article is far greater than I ever before saw collected together for any purpose whatever; and no wonder, for the cauldrons in which they boil the salt water, whence they extract the salt, are at least thirty paces in diameter, and there are a number of these in operation. The water itself is fetched from one of their mountains, two leagues off. There are several fine churches here, especially those belonging to the Jesuits, which M. de Montaigne went to see, as he had done those at Insprug. The inmates are magnificently lodged and provided for. After dinner we again went over to that side of the river, as M. de Montaigne wished to pay his respects to the Archduke of Austria, Fernand, who resides there in a splendid mansion. He had called at the palace in the morning, but was informed by a nobleman he spoke to, that the archduke was then sitting in council, and could not be seen. After dinner, then, we again crossed the river, and found the archduke in the garden; at least we thought we caught a glimpse of him there. However this may have been, those who went to tell him that our gentlemen were there and desired to kiss his hand, brought back word that he begged they would excuse him then, but that next day he should be more at leisure: and that, in the mean time, if they had any favour to request, they might communicate it through a Milanese count whom he named. This cold reception, and their not even permitting him to see the castle, somewhat offended M. de Montaigne, and he made a serious complaint of it, in the course of the day, to one of the archduke's officers, who told him that the archduke had said he did not want to see any French people, for that he looked upon the house of France as a bitter enemy. We returned to

Insprug, two leagues. Here we saw in a church eighteen fine statues, in bronze, of princes and princesses of the house of Austria. We went also to a supper given by the Cardinal of Austria and the Marquis de Burgaut, children of the archduke by a mistress of his, the daughter of a merchant of Augsbourg, whom, after having these two children by her, he had married, in order to legitimize them. The lady died this year, and the court was still in mourning for her. The supper was served up in much the same manner as amongst us; the banqueting-room was hung with black cloth, as were also the royal seats and the chairs of the guests. The cardinal, who is the eldest of the two, is, I believe, not yet twenty. The marquis drinks nothing but sugar and water, flavoured with cinnamon, and the cardinal takes very weak wine and water. The princes had no particular covers laid before them, but in other respects the arrangement of the supper was pretty nearly the same as at royal suppers in France. When they took their seats, it was at a short distance from the table, which was then pushed up to them, with the supper already laid. The cardinal sat at the head, which was on your right

[1] Hall.

as you entered the room. We were shown in this palace a large tennis-court and a tolerably fine garden. The archduke is a great mechanist, and has a good head at invention. We saw in his palace ten or twelve field-pieces, carrying a ball of about the size of a large goose-egg. They are mounted on wheel-carriages, elaborately carved and gilt, as are the cannon themselves. They are only made of wood, but the mouth is covered with iron, and all the inside is lined with the same metal; the weight of each is what one man can just carry; they are not fired so often as the regularly cast cannon, but the discharge is almost equally effective. In the fields adjoining the castle we saw two oxen of an unusual size, of a grey colour, with white heads, which M. de Ferrara had given the archduke. The latter prince married one of the archduke's sisters, the Duke of Florence another, and the Duke of Mantua a third. Three other sisters remained at Hala, who were called the Three Queens, for the daughters of emperors are designated by that title, as others are by the title of Countess or Duchess, according to the estates they enjoy. With the title of queens enjoyed by the former, is connected that of the kingdoms possessed by the emperor. Of the three latter princesses, two are dead; and the third, who still lives here, M. de Montaigne could not see, for she is shut up like a nun, and has collected a number of Jesuits around her. It is the opinion of the people here that the archduke cannot leave his estates to his children, and that they revert at his death to the empire; but they assigned no reason for this opinion, and it does not seem likely, for though his lady was not of a suitable rank, yet every one admits that both she and her children were legitimized directly that he had married her; however this may be, it is certain that he is laying by a great deal of money to leave them. Tuesday morning we resumed our journey, and proceeded at first through the same plain I have noticed, but at about a league from the town we came to a hill, which we were an hour ascending by an easy road. On the left we saw several mountains, the sides of which, being of a gradual and gentle declination, were covered with villages, churches, and cultivated fields, almost up to the top, and presented very agreeable and varied prospects. The mountains on the right hand are of a wilder character, and we saw but very few houses among them. We passed several streams, or rather torrents, running in different directions; and throughout the day's journey noticed, at all elevations of the mountains on our left hand, a number of towns, villages, large inns, and, among other objects, two castles, and several gentlemen's seats. About four leagues from Insbroug, on our right, at the opening of a narrow road, we came upon a tablet of bronze, fixed to a rock, and richly worked, upon which was a Latin inscription to this purport: that the Emperor Charles the Fifth, returning from Spain and Italy, to receive the imperial crown, and Ferdinand, King of Hungary and Bohemia, his brother, coming from Pannonia, on his way to see the emperor, after eight years' absence, met on this spot, in the year 1530, and that Ferdinand ordered this memorial of the event to be erected. The brothers are represented on the bronze embracing each other. A little way further on, passing under a gateway that extends across the road, we read upon it some Latin verses, celebrating the return of the same emperor, and his stopping at this place, after he had taken the King of France, and Rome. M. de Montaigne expressed himself greatly pleased with this part of the road, from the infinite variety of objects which constantly presented themselves. The only inconvenience we found, an almost insupportable one, was the dust, which accompanied us on this mountain route in thicker clouds than we had ever yet experienced. We travelled ten hours this stage without stopping, for M. de Montaigne did not think there was anything worth making a delay for on the road. However, according to his custom on all occasions, whether he intended making a long or short stage of it, the horses had had an ample feed of oats before they started in the morning. He himself took nothing all the way, until we arrived late at night at

Sterzinguen, seven leagues; a small and tolerably pretty town on the Tyrol, on the mountain above which, at about a quarter of a league off, stands a fine castle, which has been just erected. The bread they serve you up here is in the form of rolls, a number of which are baked together in strings, and so sent up to table. Throughout Germany the mustard is served up in a liquid state; it has the flavour of the French white mustard. The vinegar everywhere is white. They grow nearly enough corn in these mountains for the consumption of the inhabitants, but they have no vines; you can, however, always command very excellent white wine of different sorts. The roads in all directions are perfectly safe, being constantly frequented by merchants, coaches, and waggons. Instead of the cold we had been taught to expect among these mountains, we found, on the contrary, that the weather was hot to an almost insupportable extent. The women here wear cloth caps, closely resembling our *toques*, and their hair hangs down their backs in thick tresses. M. de Montaigne saw a very pretty girl in a church here, whom he took to be a student, and asked her whether she did not know Latin. They have curtains round the beds here, of thick red cloth, made in alternate four-feet breadths of full cloth, and net-work cloth. Throughout Germany, as far as we have seen, all the bed-rooms and sitting-rooms are wainscotted. The ceilings are mostly very low. M. de Montaigne told us next morning that in the night he had suffered a very severe

attack of cholic, which lasted for two or three hours; and in the morning he passed a stone of middling size, which broke easily. It was of a yellow tinge outside, but whiter inside when broken. He had caught a cold the day before, and was altogether indisposed. He had not had a fit of the cholic before this, since we left Plommieres. The present attack in great measure removed a suspicion he had entertained that at Plommieres more gravel had got into the bladder than had since got out of it, and he had begun to fear that some portion of it had stopped there and fixed itself; but when this stone disengaged itself he felt much relieved, for he reasonably enough considered that, had there been any permanent gathering of gravel, this stone would have attached itself to the mass. On the road he had complained much of pains in the kidneys, and this, indeed, was the reason why he had made so long a day's journey, for he thought he should be more at his ease on horseback than in any other position. In the morning after his arrival he called upon the schoolmaster of the place, for the purpose of rubbing up his Latin; but the man was a fool, who could give him no sort of information about anything he asked him, respecting the country and its principal features. After breakfast, Wednesday, 26th October, we resumed our journey through a valley about a quarter of a league wide, having the river Aisoc[1] on our right. We proceeded along this valley for about two leagues, and saw on the tops of the neighbouring mountains a number of cultivated and inhabited spots, some of them on a level, to which we were utterly at a loss to imagine how people could get. On the way we passed four or five castles. After a time we crossed the river over a wooden bridge, and proceeded along the banks on the other side. We found a number of men mending and levelling the roads, which are very stony, like those in Perigord. By and by, passing through a stone gate, we ascended a height, at the top of which we came to a plain, about a league wide, and saw, on the other side of the river, another plain, at about the same elevation, but both were barren and rocky. The land below, between us and the river, consisted of very fine meadows. We went on, without stopping, to

Brixe,[2] four leagues, which we reached at supper-time. It is a charming little town, watered by the river I have just mentioned, which is crossed here by a wooden bridge. The place is the see of a bishop. We saw two very handsome churches here. We put up at the Eagle, an excellent house. The plain in which this town is situated is not a large one, but the mountains which environ it, even on the left hand, have so gentle an ascent, that the people are able to cultivate them with the utmost ease nearly up to their summits. All the sides of the mountains accordingly are adorned with villages and churches well nigh all the way up, and nearer the town you see a number of gentlemen's houses, handsomely built, and situated in most picturesque points of landscape. M. de Montaigne said: "He had all his life been very chary of taking other people's judgments as to foreign countries; the tendency of most men being to test the merits of what they see, by what they have always been accustomed to see, in their own particular neighbourhood; and that he had, therefore, paid but very slight attention to the accounts he had heard of different places from different travellers; but, he said, when he came to this place, he wondered more than ever at the obstinate imbecility and narrow-mindedness of such people; for he had always been told that the passes of the Alps in this part of the country were full of danger and difficulty, that the manners of the people were wild and uncouth, that the roads were impassable, the inns altogether savage places, the climate insupportable; whereas, for the climate, thank God, he had found it exceedingly mild, inclining rather to an excess of heat, than to that of cold. Throughout our journey, up to this time, we had had but three inclement days, and only one shower of rain, which lasted about half an hour. That, in all other respects, if he wished to take his daughter, a girl of only eight years old, on an excursion any where, he would quite as readily trust her upon these roads, as in one of the walks of his garden. As to the inns, he had never been in a country where they were handsomer, more numerous, and more plentifully provided with wines and provisions of every sort, and he had never met with such excellent accommodation at so cheap a rate." They have a mode of turning the spit here by a machine with several wheels, which work a cord round a large iron engine. The rope works itself out in about an hour, and then the machine is wound up again. They have so great an abundance of iron that, besides having all their windows grated with it in a variety of fashions, their shutters and doors are covered with iron plates. We found vines here, which we had lost sight of just before we got to Augusta. In this part of the country most of the houses have arched roofs at every floor, and, where the declination is very narrow, they make use of pantiles to cover it with, which we in France do not seem to know how to manage; and they do this even on the belfries. Their tiles are smaller and hollower than ours, and they generally plaster them together at the insertions. We left Brixe on the following morning, and proceeded along the same valley, which now spread itself out somewhat. On both sides of the road, as we went along, we observed a number of handsome houses. Keeping the river Eysoc on our left, we passed

[1] Eisak.

[2] Brixen.

through a little town, called Clause,[1] where several manufactures are carried on, and got by dinner-time to

Colman,[2] three leagues, a small village, where the archduke has a country seat. Here we were served in goblets of coloured earthenware, arranged on the table alternately with silver cups. They clean their glasses with salt. The first course consisted of eggs poached in butter, which were served up in a well-polished frying-pan, with a long handle. On leaving this place, the road narrowed again, and before we had got far on our way, the rocks came up so close as to leave the smallest possible space between them and the river; indeed, at several points of the road, it has been found necessary to block out the river by a thick wall, which in some places extends for more than a German league. The rocks which here abut on the road are exceedingly precipitous, and broken by the mountain torrents, which sometimes detach large masses from their foundation, and I should imagine that, in stormy weather, this pass must be a very dangerous one to traverse. The same torrents, when swollen and infuriated by the tempest, occasionally tear up whole forests of trees, and we have seen on our way numbers of firs which, thus up-rent, have fallen from the mountain-heights, bringing with them in their furious descent complete hills of earth, attached to their roots. Yet the country is thickly peopled; beyond these mountains we saw others rising above them in the back ground, cultivated and inhabited; and we have understood that on those distant heights there are broad and lovely plains, which furnish abundance of corn to the towns below them, and which are inhabited by wealthy farmers, who have large and handsome houses there. We passed the river over a wooden bridge, of which there are several on this road. Here we saw, perched on the loftiest eminence before us, at a height, indeed, which seemed inaccessible, a castle, which we were told belongs to a baron of the country, who resides there, and possesses at that great elevation, a rich and fertile demesne, with extensive hunting-grounds. Beyond these mountains, the Alps rise like a border, and block up the pass in which we now were, so that travellers cannot proceed that way, but must return to the valley along which we had come, and continue their journey thence. The archduke derives from this earldom of the Tyrol, the whole of which consists of these mountains, a revenue of three hundred thousand florins a year; and, indeed, he finds this the most profitable portion of his possessions. We once more passed the river over a stone bridge, and got at an early hour to

Bostan,[3] four leagues, a town of the size of Libourne, situated upon the same river. The town is a very disagreeable one, in comparison with the other German towns we have been through; so much so that M. de Montaigne exclaimed, that he saw very clearly we were beginning to leave Germany. The streets are narrower, and there is no handsome square; there are fountains, however, and canals, and the houses are painted and have plenty of windows. They grow so much wine about here, that they are able to supply all Germany. They have the best bread in the world among these mountains. The church at this place is a very handsome one. Among other features, it possesses a large organ, with wooden pipes, which is fixed at some height up a pillar, near the cross, before the high altar. The person who plays it, sits more than twelve feet below it, at the foot of the pillar: and the bellows are outside the wall of the church, more than fifteen paces behind the organist, supplying the organ from pipes under the ground. The hollow in which this town stands, is scarcely more than sufficient to contain it, but the mountains, even those on the right, are very sloping as they approach the town. From this place M. de Montaigne wrote word to Francis Hoffman, whom he had seen at Basle, "that he had experienced so much pleasure in his visit to Germany that it was with great regret he found himself leaving it, even though he was leaving it for Italy; that foreigners had certainly reason to complain of the extortion of the innkeepers there, as well as elsewhere, but that he thought this might easily be corrected by persons who did not place themselves at the mercy of guides and interpreters, who sell them for a share in the profits, but that in all other respects the country was distinguished for comfort and civility, for justice and security." We left Bostan early on Friday morning, and stopped to bait the horses and breakfast at

Brounsol,[4] two leagues, a small village, just above which the river Eysock, which we had followed hitherto, mingles with the Adisse,[5] which itself flows on to the Adriatic Sea, with a broad and tranquil current, altogether different from the noisy and furious course of the streams we had seen in the mountains. Here the plain, of which I have spoken so frequently, and which continues to Trent, begins somewhat to widen, and the mountains, too, draw in their horns a little, bit by bit; and yet their sides are less fertile than those of much greater altitude, that we had passed. There are some marshes in this part of the valley, which occasionally narrow up the road; but in other respects the way is very easy, and almost throughout upon a descent. About two leagues from Brounsol we passed through a large town,[6] where there was

1 Klausen.
2 Kollman.
3 Bautzen.
4 Branzol.
5 Adige.
6 Nieumarkt.

a great concourse of people, in consequence of its being fair-day. Further on, we passed another village, tolerably built, called Solorme,[1] where the archduke has a small castle, on the left, very oddly perched on the crest of a rock. We got by bed-time to

Trante,[2] five leagues; a town somewhat larger than Aagen,[3] and by no means a pleasant place. All the charm of the German towns has here disappeared; the streets are almost all narrow and crooked. About two leagues before we got to the town, we found ourselves saluted in the language of Italy. The people of the town itself speak half of them Italian, and the other half German; one quarter of the town is called the German quarter, with a German church and a German preacher. As to the new religion, we have heard nothing of it since we left Augusta. Trante is situated on the river Adisse. The town-house appears to be a very ancient structure, and near it there is a square tower, which also has every indication of a remote antiquity. We saw the new church of Notre Dame, where our council was held.[4] The organ in this church, which was the gift of a private gentleman, is of unusual beauty and excellence; it stands upon a marble pedestal, enriched with a variety of exquisite sculptures, among which some singing cherubims are especially worthy of notice. This church was built, as the inscription upon it informed us, in the year 1520, by Cardinal Bernard Clesio, bishop of the town, and a native of it. This was formerly a free town, under the charge and authority of the bishop, until the necessities of a war, which they were waging with the Venetians, compelling the citizens to call in the Count of Tyrol to their assistance, that prince, in return for his services, claimed a certain degree of authority and influence over the town. The matter is still in dispute between the count and the bishop; but the bishop, Cardinal Madruccio, has possession of the town. M. de Montaigne remarked that this was the second instance he had met with on his journey, of citizens who had conferred benefits on the place of their birth: at Augusta there were the Foulcres, to whom that town was indebted for most of the embellishments it had received, the streets being full of their palaces, and the churches full of their enrichments; and here, at Tarente, Cardinal Clesio, besides this church and several streets that he built or renovated at his own expense, raised that magnificent structure, the castle of the town. The edifice outside is no great things; but the interior is as commodious and elegant as it is possible to conceive. The walls are all covered with rich paintings and decorations; the raised work throughout is elaborately carved and gilt; the floors are of a particular sort of earth, made perfectly hard and compact, and painted to resemble marble, partly arranged in our fashion, partly in the German way; and there are stoves in all the rooms which require them. One of these, made of earth, of the colour of burnished brass, is composed of a group of figures, nearly the size of life, which, being hollow, receive the heat, while one or two of them, next the wall, serve as receptacles for the water which rises from a fountain in the court, some way below, to moderate the warmth; the design is very good, and well executed. Among other painted ceilings, we saw one representing the celebration of some triumph by night, which M. de Montaigne greatly admired. There are two or three circular chambers; in one of these you read an inscription, running: "In the year 1530, on the occasion of the coronation of the Emperor Charles V., which was performed by Pope Clement VII. on St. Matthew's day, the said Clesius being sent as ambassador there from Ferdinand, King of Hungary and Bohemia, and Count of Tyrol, brother of the said Emperor, and being then Bishop of Tarente, was made a cardinal;" and all round the chamber he has hung the arms and names of the gentlemen who accompanied him on this journey, to the number of about fifty, all of them vassals of the diocese, and all of them counts or barons. In one of the apartments there is a trap-door leading to a passage, by which you can descend into the town, without passing through the gates of the castle. There are exceedingly rich chimney-pieces in two of the rooms. This cardinal was a thoroughly good man. The Foulcres, indeed, raised splendid buildings as well as he, but these were for the use of their children and descendants; the prelate built for the public. He left this castle, furnished with more than a hundred thousand crowns' worth of property of every description, for the benefit of his successors in the see; and besides this, he left a hundred and fifty thousand thalers,[5] ready money, in the bishop's chest, which his successors have enjoyed the free use of, without paying one farthing interest; yet they buried him in a miserably poor way, and have allowed his church of Notre Dame to remain unfinished. Among other noticeable things, there are several portraits in oil, and a great number of cartoons. There are two sets of furniture throughout the castle, one set for the winter months, and the other for the summer; and the entire of this property is inalienably vested in the see, so that each bishop for the time being is thus amply provided with everything he can possibly want of this description. We are now travelling by the Italian mile, five of which make a German mile. The day here is reckoned by counting the twenty-four hours

[1] Saluzzo.
[2] Trent.
[3] Agen.
[4] That is to say, the last Œcumenical Council, which closed its proceedings in 1563, after a duration of nearly eighteen years.
[5] A German coin, worth about 3s. 10d.

throughout, without dividing them into twelve hours for night and twelve for day.[1] We lodged at the Rose, a very good inn. We left Trante, Saturday, after dinner, and took our route along the same valley through which we had been so long travelling, but which was now considerably extended on either side, and flanked with lofty mountains, thickly studded with villages. The river Adisse lay on our right. We passed a castle belonging to the archduke, which commands the road, as is the case with a number of other similar fortresses we have seen on our way, and which are so situated as to be able effectually to command and indeed bar the passage of the roads on which they stand. It was very late, indeed the night damps were falling, which had not before happened to us, so well had we regulated our days' journeys, when we arrived at

Rovere,[2] fifteen miles, a town belonging to the archduke. At the inn here, we again found ourelves back among the fashions and manners of our own country, and greatly missed, not only the German cleanliness in the rooms and furniture, and their agreeable windows, but also their stoves, which M. de Montaigne had found far more pleasant than our fire-places and chimneys. In the article of provisions, the crabs here took leave of us, which M. de Montaigne remarked the more particularly from the circumstance that, ever since he left Plommieres, he had had this fish served up at table at every meal he had taken, on a journey of nearly two hundred leagues. They eat at this place, and throughout these mountains, a snail they find in great abundance, larger and fatter than those in France, but not of so good a flavour. They also eat truffles, which they peel and slice up small into vinegar and oil, which makes a tolerable dish. At Trante they gave us some truffles which had been kept in this way for a year. Here again, very much to M. de Montaigne's satisfaction, we found plenty of oranges, lemons, and olives. The beds have curtains of cloth or serge, made in the form of very wide and deep festoons. M. de Montaigne here found occasion also to regret the loss of the feather-beds, which he had invariably been supplied with as a covering throughout Germany. The beds here are not like ours, but are composed, in the better sort of houses, of very fine down, in white fustian cases. The under-bedding, even in Germany, is not like this, nor will it serve the purpose of a coverlid, with any sort of comfort. I believe, in truth, that had M. de Montaigne been here alone with his own people, he would rather have gone to Cracow or towards Greece overland, than have taken the direct route for Italy; but the pleasure he himself felt in wandering over countries that were new to him, a pleasure which made him forget his age and his maladies, he could not infuse into any others of the party, who were all anxious to go straight on, so that they might the sooner return home. The journey was to him a source of entire delight. When, after having passed a restless night, he in the morning called to mind that he was going to visit a town or a place he had never yet seen, he would leap out of bed as gay as a lark, and as light, and meet his friends in the highest spirits. I never saw him less fatigued, and never heard him complain less of pain. Indoors and out of doors, his mind was ever on the alert, and he was so eager in finding out every possible occasion of conversing with strangers that I have no doubt his malady was relieved by this exercise. When the other gentlemen complained of his leading them dances here and there, to out-of-the-way places, often returning to very near the spot whence he set out (which he always did when he heard of any thing at no great distance worth seeing, or otherwise thought it desirable to change his plan), he would reply: "that, for his part, the particular place where he happened to be, was the place where he had intended to come; that he could not possibly diverge from his route, seeing that the only route he had laid down, was to go about seeing new places; and so that he did not travel twice by the same road, or go twice to the same place, they could not say his plan had failed. That as to Rome, about which all the rest were so eager, he was in the less hurry to see that than other places, because well nigh every body had seen it; and as to Florence and Ferrara, there was hardly a footman to be found, who could not give an account of these places. He added, that he seemed to himself like a person who is hearing a pleasant story, or reading a fine book, and begins to be afraid that he is getting towards the end of it; so he took such delight in travelling, that he hated the very approach to the place where he designed to stay, and he formed several plans for travelling by himself, at his own ease and discretion. Sunday morning, having a wish to see the Lago di Garda, an object of much note in this part of the country, he hired three horses for himself and the Seigneurs de Caselis and de Mattecoulon, at twenty batz each; and M. d'Estissac hired two others for himself and the Sieur du Hautoy; and these gentlemen, leaving their attendants and travelling horses behind them at their inn at Rovere, for that day, rode over to dinner at

Torbole,[3] eight miles, a small village within the jurisdiction of the Tyrol. It is seated in one corner of the head of this great lake, the other corner being occupied by a small town with a

[1] This arrangement is thus explained by M. de la Lande, the celebrated astronomer, in the preface to his *Voyage d'un Francais en Italie, dans les années* 1765 *et* 1766:—"Les Italiens comptent vingt-quatre heures de suite; depuis un jour jusqu'à l'autre. La vingt-quatrieme heure sonne une demi-heure après le coucher du soleil, c'est à dire, à la nuit tombante, et lors qu'on commence à ne pouvoir lire qu'avec peine. Si la nuit dure dix heures et le jour quatorze, on dit que le soleil se leve à dix heures, et qu'il est midi à dix-sept heures."

[2] Roveredo.

[3] Terbola, at the northern extremity of the Lago di Garda.

castle, called *La Riva*, to which, after dinner our gentlemen proceeded over the lake in a boat with five rowers; the excursion occupied about three hours. The distance is ten miles, there and back. They saw nothing at Riva but a tower, which seemed very ancient, and the seigneur of the place, Signor Hortimato Maduccio, brother of the cardinal-bishop of Tarente, whom they met as they were walking round the town. The view down the lake is boundless, for it is thirty-five miles long. The width, as far down as they could see, did not exceed the five miles which they had traversed. The head of the lake is in the county of Tyrol, but the other portion, on both sides, belongs to the seignory of Venice, and this abounds in a variety of fine churches, and infinite plantations of olives, oranges, and other fruits. The lake is subject to extreme and furious agitation, when the weather is stormy. The mountains which belt in the lake are the most rugged that our gentlemen had yet seen. Messieurs, on leaving Rovere, had crossed the river Adisse, and, leaving on the left the road to Verona, had entered a valley, where they passed a small town and a village; and found the road here the roughest they had as yet traversed, and the scenery was wild and forbidding in the highest degree, both of which circumstances were owing to these same mountains, which here abut on the road. Leaving Torbole, they returned to sup at Rovere, eight miles. Here they put their baggage on a raft, the owner of which undertook to convey it to Verona for a florin, and I was the next day charged with the care of it thither. For supper they gave us poached eggs for the first course, and a large pike, with a number of dishes of meat of different sorts, for the second. Next day, Monday, they set out very early in the morning, and continuing their course along the same valley, still very populous, but not quite so fertile, as it was higher up, and flanked on both sides with precipitous and barren mountains, they got by dinner-time to

Bourguet, fifteen miles, which is still in the county of Tyrol. In reference to this county, M. de Montaigne, in answer to a question he put, whether it consisted of any thing but the valley through which we had passed, and the mountains that flanked it, was told, that among those mountains there were several other passes, as extensive and fertile as that we had seen, studded with some fine towns; that, in fact, the Tyrol resembles a gown that we only see plaited up, but that, if it were spread out, it would form a very large country. After dinner they pursued their journey, keeping the river still on their right, through the same class of country, till they came to Chiusa, a small fort, which the Venetians have got possession of, seated in the hollow of a rock overlooking the river, down which Messieurs descended, by a narrow pass, cut out of the solid rock, where the horses had much difficulty to keep their footing. In this fort, the state of Venice, whose jurisdiction they had entered a mile or two after they left Bourguet, keep twenty-five soldiers. The party arrived by bed-time at

Volarne, twelve miles, a small village, where they got into a wretched inn, as indeed all on this road are till you get to Verona. There is a castle here, the seigneur of which was absent, but his daughter sent M. de Montaigne some wine. Next morning, they entirely lost the mountains on their right, and those on their left, which were now at a considerable distance, became little more than low hills. They went on for some time through a sterile flat, but, as they got nearer the river, the land became more fertile, and they found an abundance of vines trained upon trees, as is the fashion in this part of the country. They arrived on All Saints' Day, before mass, at

Verona, twelve miles, a town of the size of Poitiers, and having, like that town, a very large quay along the river, which runs right through the town, and is traversed by three bridges. I also got here safely with the baggage, at about the same time. If we had not been provided with certificates of health, which we procured at Trante, and had confirmed at Rovere, they would not have let us enter the town, and yet there was not the slightest rumour of the plague; but it is the custom here, which is probably kept up for the purpose of cheating travellers out of the fees which they exact for the health-certificates. We went to see the cathedral, where M. de Montaigne was extremely surprised at the manner in which, upon such a day, and at high mass, the persons present conducted themselves; they were standing about in groups, even in the choir, talking to one another in no very under tones, with their caps on, and their backs turned to the altar, and, indeed, appearing to take no heed of the service, except just at the elevation. There was an organ and some violins, which accompanied the service of the mass. We saw several other churches, but remarked nothing particular in any of them; the women were very plain, and indifferently dressed. One of the churches we went into was that of St. George, where the Germans have left several memorials of their having been here, and amongst others a number of their armorial bearings, which are attached to the walls. One of the inscriptions they put up, is to the effect, that certain German gentlemen, who accompanied the Emperor Maximilian on his expedition to take Verona from the Venetians, added some work or other to one of the altars. M. de Montaigne remarked that the seigneury would appear to be somewhat magnanimous in thus preserving in their town the evidences of the defeat they had sustained, as likewise in maintaining entire the magnificent tombs of the poor seigneurs della Scala.[1]

[1] The former lords of Verona, from whom the Scaliger family is assumed to be descended.

It must be admitted, however, that our host of the Nag, which, by the way, is a very excellent house, where we were entertained in superfluous abundance, for which we had to pay three times the cost of tavern-living in France, has been permitted to take possession of one of these tombs, as a vault for himself and his family. We went over the castle, the commandant's lieutenant acting as our guide. The seigneury keep up a garrison of sixty soldiers here, more, as M. de Montaigne was told, to overawe the town, than to defend it from external enemies. We saw a convent of monks here, who call themselves jesuits of St. Jerome. They are not priests, nor do they perform mass or preach, and the great majority of them are mere ignoramuses; they make the most of their money, by their excellence in distilling lemon-flower-water, and similar preparations. Both here and elsewhere, these monks wear a white under-dress, with a robe of dark brown over it, and small white skull-caps; there are some very fine young men among them. Their church is handsomely fitted up, as is their refectory, which was laid out for supper when we went in. We saw here the remains of some structure, as old as the time of the Romans, which the monks told us was an amphitheatre, and other remains of the same edifice are to be seen under ground. On our return to the inn, we found that the people there had perfumed our beds, and we ourselves were asked into an apartment where were rows of vials and earthen vessels, containing different sorts of distilled waters, with which they perfumed us. The finest thing we saw in this place, and, indeed, that M. de Montaigne said he had ever seen in his life, was a place they call the Arena. This is an amphitheatre of an oval form, which the eye embraces entire at one view, with the exception of the extreme end; and the remains are sufficient to give a vivid idea of the whole of the original edifice, and of the purposes to which it was applied. The seigneury employ a few convicts in doing odds and ends of clearings and repairs, but the restorations thus carried on are far from adequate; and, indeed, M. de Montaigne doubted whether the whole town together could effect the great work.[1] The form is oval; there are forty-three rows of seats, rising one above another, and each about a foot high, or somewhat more; the diameter at the top is about six hundred paces. The gentlemen of the neighbourhood still make use of the arena for jousts and other public entertainments. We also went among the Jews, and M. de Montaigne visited their synagogue, and had a long conversation with some of the leading men, respecting their religious ceremonies. There are some fine squares in the town, and a spacious and well-arranged market-place. From the castle, which stands high, we discerned Mantua, which lays in the plain beyond, about twenty miles off, on the right of the road we were going. There is no lack of inscriptions here, for not a gutter is mended but they stick up a memorial of the event, setting forth the why and the when, and the name of the mayor for the time being, and of the person who did the work. They have this in common with the Germans, that every body has a coat-of-arms, men in business, as well as gentlemen; in Germany, indeed, not only the towns, but many of the wards of towns, have special armorial bearings. As we were leaving Verona, we saw the church of Our Lady of Miracles, celebrated for a number of strange things that have taken place in it, in consequence of which the town entirely rebuilt the edifice, of a well-planned circular form. Many of the steeples here are roofed with bricks, laid cross-wise. We proceeded through an extensive plain of various character, sometimes fertile, sometimes the reverse, the mountains laying a long way off on our left, with a few on the right, and went on without stopping to

Vincenza, thirty miles, which we reached at supper-time. This is a good-sized town, somewhat smaller than Verona, full of noblemen's palaces. The morning after our arrival we went to see several churches, and to look at the fair which was being held there; in one of the large squares, workmen were busily erecting a number of temporary wooden shops for the display of goods. We paid a visit to the jesuits, who have a fine monastery here; and were shown the shop at which they keep up a public sale of the various waters they distil. We bought two bottles of perfume for a crown. They also prepare medicinal waters, adapted for every malady. The founder was father Urb. S. Jn. Colombini, who instituted the order in the year 1367. Cardinal de Pelneo is their present protector. They possess no monasteries except in Italy, where they have thirty; the one here is a very handsome edifice. They flagellate themselves, they told us, every day, kneeling in their respective places in the oratory, where they meet at certain hours, and perform their devotions; they do not chaunt any part of their service. The old wine here began to fail us, which greatly vexed and alarmed me for his cholic, which was likely to grow worse from drinking new wine, however good its quality; and we therefore greatly missed those of Germany, notwithstanding that they are mostly spiced and scented; one sort is even spiced with sage, yet the taste is not disagreeable when you get used to it, for it is of a rich and generous tone. We left this place on Thursday after dinner, and travelling along a straight road, somewhat raised above the level of the country through which it passed, with a fosse-way on each side, and overlooking a very fer-

[1] The great work, however, has been effected, and the theatre now displayed in almost all its original extent and magnificence, forming the greatest ornament of Verona.

tile plain, the mountains being, as before, a long way off. We got in the evening to

Padua, eighteen miles. The inns here are in no respect comparable with those of Germany as to accommodation, but then the charges are one-third less, running much the same as in France. Padua is a considerable town, quite as large, I should say, as Bordeaux, if not larger. The streets are narrow and ugly, and you see very few people about. There are hardly any houses worth looking at, but the place is prettily situated in a plain, over which it commands an extensive prospect. We stopped here all next day, and went to see the fencing, dancing, and riding-schools, in which latter we found more than a hundred French gentlemen assembled, and M. de Montaigne observed that he thought it a very great disadvantage to our young countrymen, when on their travels, to associate in this way, almost entirely with one another, inasmuch as they thus never disengage themselves from their own manners and language, and so deprive themselves of opportunities of extending their knowledge, by the observation of foreign manners and languages. The church of St. Anthony struck him as a fine one; the roof is not in one piece, but has a multiplicity of ribs and pannelling. Throughout the edifice are a number of fine works in marble and bronze. Among these, M. de Montaigne paused to contemplate, with a kindly eye, the bust of Cardinal Bembo, a face full of amiability and intellect. The great hall in this town, in which the courts of law hold their sittings, is the largest, unsupported by pillars, that I ever saw. At the upper end of it stands an antique bust of Livy, a thin, wan, studious, melancholy face, but so admirably sculptured that it seems to want nothing but the voice to make it living. Beneath the bust is the inscription which the contemporaries of the historian placed over him, and which his townsmen, at a more recent period, having discovered, placed here, as much to their own glory as to his. The bust of Paul, the jurisconsult,[1] stands at the door, but M. de Montaigne was of opinion that this is quite a modern production. The house which occupies the site of the ancient Arena, and the garden attached to it, are well worth seeing. The students of the university here live at a very cheap rate, paying, in the best boarding-houses, only seven crowns a month the master, and six the servant. We left this place very early on Saturday morning, and proceeded along an excellent causeway, on the banks of the river. The country through which we passed is exceedingly fertile, and shaded by quantities of fine trees; both corn and the vine are extensively cultivated here, and every now and then we came upon a handsome country-seat, and among others had one pointed out to us which belongs to the Contarini family, over the gate of which is an inscription setting forth that the king[2] made a stay here, on his return from Poland. After an agreeable ride, we reached

Chaffousine,[3] twenty miles, where we dined. This is merely an inn, whence people embark for Venice. Here all the boats, coming down the river, are landed by means of a machine worked by two horses, in much the same way as they turn oil-mills; and the boats are then carried on wheels to a place where they are launched on the canal which runs to the sea, near the point where Venice stands. After dinner we hired a gondola, and proceeded to

Venice, five miles. Next day, Sunday morning, M. de Montaigne went to call on M. de Ferrier,[4] an ambassador, who received him with open arms, accompanied him to mass, and kept him to dinner. On Monday M. de Montaigne again dined with him, in company with M. d'Estissac. Among other things the ambassador told him, he was particularly struck with this, that the ambassador held no sort of correspondence with any man in the town; for the authorities here are so suspicious that if one of their people were to speak but twice to him, he would be immediately regarded with distrust. M. de Ferrier said that the seigneury derive a revenue of fifteen hundred thousand crowns from the town. The curiosities of this place are so well known that I need say nothing about them. He[5] said he found it different from what he had imagined it to be, and was indeed somewhat disappointed, after he had visited the various parts of it, which he did with great attention. The system of government, the situation of the place, the arsenal, the square of St. Mark, and the concourse of foreigners, seemed to him the most remarkable features. Monday, 6th November, while he was at supper, he received from Signora Veronica Franca, a Venetian lady, a small volume of letters she had written. He gave the messenger two crowns. Tuesday, after dinner, he had a fit of the cholic, which lasted two or three hours, though it was not apparently a very severe attack in itself, and before supper he passed two great stones, one after the other. He did not think the Venetian women so handsome by any means as he had heard they were, and yet he saw several of the most celebrated of those ladies who make a traffic of their beauty. He was exceedingly struck, indeed, as much so as with any thing else, with the style in which some hundred and fifty or

1 Julio Paulo, born at Padua, an eminent lawyer, who wrote five books of the Digest. The Code is full of his decisions.

2 Henry III. of France.

3 Fusino.

4 "Ce viellard," remarks Montaigne in a side-note, "qui a passé cinquante-sept ans, à ce qu'il dit, jouit d'une age sain et enjoué; ses facons et ses discours ont je ne scais quoi de scholastique, peu de vivacité et de pointe; ses opinions panchent fort evidamment, en matière de nos affaires, vers les innovations Calviniennes."

5 Montaigne.

so of the principal courtesans live; their houses are kept up, and themselves maintained and dressed, quite as magnificently as though they were all princesses, and yet they have nothing to live upon but what they make by their profession. Some of them are kept by Venetian noblemen in the most open and public manner, there being no sort of attempt made to conceal the connexion. M. de Montaigne hired for himself a gondola, which he was entitled to the use of night and day, for two livres a day, about seventeen sous, including the boatman. Provisions are as dear as at Paris; but then, in other respects, it is the cheapest place in the world to live at, for the train of attendants, which you require elsewhere, are here altogether useless, every body going about by himself, and this again makes a great saving in clothes; besides which, you have no occasion for horses. Saturday, 12th November, we left Venice early in the morning, and returned to

Chaffousine, five miles, where we embarked, men and baggage, in a boat which we hired for two crowns. He (Montaigne) has always been afraid of the water, and had a notion that the motion alone, of all others, upset his stomach; he took a fancy here to try whether the motion of this river, which is very equal and uniform, the boat being drawn by horses, would annoy him, and he found that it did not at all affect him. After passing through two or three locks, which open and close for the transit of each boat, we got by bed-time to

Padua, twenty miles. Here M. de Caselis quitted our party, having arranged to stop in this place, where he settled in a boarding-house, at seven crowns a month, for which he would be well lodged and boarded. He might have kept a lacquey for five crowns a month more; and yet this was one of the first houses of the sort in the town, where there was always excellent company to be found. For instance, at the time M. de Caselis joined them, he found there the Sieur de Millan, son of M. de Salignac. It is very unusual for the gentlemen in these houses, to keep servants of their own; there is merely a footman belonging to the house, and sometimes only women, who wait upon the guests; each gentleman has a comfortable room to himself; fire and candle they provide themselves with. The living is exceedingly good, as we ourselves saw; and every thing is so cheap that a great many persons, who are no longer students, come hither to reside. It is not the custom here to ride on horseback in the town, or have servants following you. In Germany I had observed that every body, even workmen, wear swords; in the territories subject to the seigneury, on the other hand, no body wears one. Sunday, 13th of November, after dinner, we left this place for the purpose of visiting some baths that lie on the right, at Abano, whither M. de Montaigne proceeded at once. This is a small village, near the foot of the mountains, just beyond which, at three or four hundred paces' distance, there is a gentle rocky ascent, on the top of which, where there is a tolerably wide space, you find several springs of boiling-hot water, spouting from the rock. The water just at this source is too hot to bathe in, and of course much too hot to drink. The channels, which it forms on its descent to the ground, look quite grey, like ashes, and it deposits a quantity of sediment which takes the form of hard sponge; the taste of the water is salt and rather sulphury. The whole of the neighbouring country is affected by it, for the streams which it forms, and which run on all sides into the plain, carry the heat and the smell a long way round. There are two or three houses at this place, very indifferently adapted for invalids, where they have baths supplied from these springs. The water sends forth a complete cloud of smoke as it issues from the rock; and the rock itself smokes and gives out such a heat at the different interstices that, in a hole which has been excavated, large enough for a man to lie down in, you may take a regular vapour bath; and a very effective one, for you are in a thorough perspiration in a very few moments. He tasted the water, after it had been drawn long enough to lose its excessive heat, and it seemed to him to savour more of salt than of any thing else. Further on to the right we could see the Abbey of Praie, so famous for its beauty, its riches, and its courtesy and liberality towards strangers, but he would not go there, having it fully in his intention to revisit all this part of the country, especially Venice, more at his leisure. He thought nothing of his present visit, and the only reason why he undertook it at all, at this period, was the hunger and thirst he had felt to see Venice; indeed, he frequently remarked, that he could not have been easy at Rome, or any other place in Italy, unless he had first seen Venice; and that had he gone on without visiting it, he should certainly have turned back. In the idea of returning hither, he left at Padua, with M. Francois Bourges, a Frenchman, the works of Cardinal Cusan,[1] which he had bought at Venice. From Abano, we proceeded to a place called San Pietro, which lies very low, though the mountains were still very close to us on the right. The country around is all pasture-land, where, every here and there, springs up one of these warm springs, some quite hot, some tepid, some nearly cold; the taste is insipid, in comparison with that at Abano, with a less smell of sulphur, and almost an entire absence of saline qualities. We saw some remains here of ancient buildings. There are a few miserable little houses scattered about for the accommodation of invalids; but the whole appearance of the place is savage and unpromising in the highest

[1] Nicholas de Cusa. His complete works on Theology and Mathematics were published at Bâle, in 1565, in 3 vols folio.

degree, and I should by no means advise any friend of mine to go there. 'Tis said the seigneury are not very desirous of improving the place, for that they have an objection to any foreign gentlemen taking up their abode there. These last baths, he[1] said, reminded him of those at Preissac, near Ax.[2] The channel in which the water runs has a reddish tinge. The water has no taste; he thought it was chalybeate. We passed a very fine house, belonging to a gentleman of Padua, where M. the Cardinal d'Este, who was ill of the gout, had been staying for more than two months, partly to be near the baths, and still more to be near the ladies of Venice. Close to this is

Bataille,[3] eight miles, where we got by supper-time. This is a small village on the Del Fraichino Canal, which, though not more than two or three feet deep in some places, carries boats of considerable size. We were here served in earthen dishes and wooden plates, for want of pewter, but things were tolerably well in other respects. Monday morning I[4] proceeded on with the mule, and the gentlemen went to see the baths, which are situated five hundred paces from the village, on the causeway along the canal. There is, as he[5] tells me, one house at these baths, with about ten or twelve rooms in it. In April and May, they say, there is a tolerable number of visitors, but the greater part of these lodge in the village, or in the chateau belonging to Signor Pic, in which M. the Cardinal d'Este was living at this period. The water of these baths comes from the edge of a neighbouring hill, whence it flows to the above-mentioned house, by several small canals, and the water when it arrives is more or less warm, according as the length of these canals is greater or less. People do not drink these waters, but, when they want to drink any medicinal waters at all, send for those of Saint Pierre. M. de Montaigne went up to the top of the hill to see the source of this water, but he could not find it, and the people there told him the reason was because it sprung from under the ground. The taste of the water, like that at St. Pierre, is insipid, with very little flavour either of salt or sulphur; and he imagined that the effects of it must be pretty nearly the same as from those of St. Pierre. The water in its course leaves a reddish tinge behind it. In the bath-house here, there are several rooms in which you take shower-baths, so managed that the water is entirely directed against that part of the person which is indisposed; if you are sick with a head-ache, the water is played against the forehead, and so on. At different points, along these bath-canals, they have constructed little stone cells, just large enough to hold one person, in which the patient shuts himself, and then, certain vent-holes connected with the steam being opened, the smoke and heat immediately throw him into a profuse perspiration; 'tis a sort of vapour-bath, of which there are several kinds here. What is principally in use here, however, is the mud-bath, the materials for which are found in ample quantities in a large pond near the house, whence the mud is taken in a particular sort of vessel, into the house. Here the bathers are provided with different sorts of wooden instruments, adapted for the various parts of the person which may require bathing, the instrument being first filled with the mud, and the arm, leg, or other member being then inserted amid the mud; the instrument is emptied and filled again as often as is required. The mud is of a black colour, like that at Barbotan, but not so sandy, and of a richer substance; the heat is temperate, and there is hardly any smell in it. The only convenience about these baths is that they are so near Venice; the place itself is very dirty and disagreeable. Our gentlemen left Bataille after breakfast, and followed the banks of the canal, which is called the Canal of the Two Roads, from the causeways that are on each bank. We saw here a very curious construction; at a particular point of the road, a stream which descends from the mountains, has to traverse the canal in its course; in order to make way for it, without interfering with the canal, the *latter* is carried over it by a viaduct, and again over the viaduct a bridge, so high as to admit of vessels passing under it on the canal, traverses the canal for the use of travellers on land. The stream beneath is at this place contracted in its course by artificial banks, and is thus made deep enough to float boats, so that at one and the same time there may be one boat sailing along the stream, another above it on the canal, and above both there may be coaches rolling along the road. Here are three high-ways, one above another. Proceeding on, keeping the canal always on our right, we passed a small town called Montselisse,[6] which itself lies low, though the walls extend up to the top of the adjoining mountain, enclosing an old castle, which formerly belonged to the seigneurs of the town, but is now in ruins. Leaving the mountains to the right, we turned towards the left, along a handsome, level, raised road, which in summer time must be very agreeably shaded by the trees on each side; on either hand fertile valleys, where, as is the fashion here, amidst the corn fields are numbers of trees, ranged in long lines, for the purpose of serving as supporters for the vines. Immense oxen, of a dun colour, are so common here that, had I seen them before, I should have felt no particular admiration of those I saw belonging to the Archduke Fernand. By and by,

[1] Montaigne.
[2] Dax, or rather d'Acqs, in Gascony.
[3] Battaglia.
[4] The Secretary.
[5] Montaigne.
[6] Mont-celese.

they reached some higher ground, where they found themselves surrounded by marshes more than fifteen miles in breadth, and extending further than the eye could reach. These formerly were enormous ponds, but the seigneury made great exertions to have them drained, in order to apply the land to the purposes of labour, wherever it was possible; and they have succeeded in some few places; but, for the most part, all they have realized is, a vast extent of marshes, which produce nothing but reeds. They have lost more than they have gained, by changing the form of the ground. We passed the river Adisse, which lay on our right, upon a floating-bridge, consisting of two boats, large enough to hold some fifteen or twenty horses, which is worked to and fro by a long rope fixed to long poles on each side of the river, and sustained in the middle of the stream by another pole, fixed in a stationary boat. We got by bed-time to

Rovigo, twenty-five miles, a small town belonging to the seigneury of Venice. We lodged at an inn outside the town. Here they began to serve us up the salt in lumps, which the people make use of in bits, as they do lump-sugar. There is quite as much provision to be got here as in France, notwithstanding all we had been told to the contrary; and their way of not basting their roast meat we found did not at all injure the flavour. Their rooms, from want of glass and proper windows, are not so neat and comfortable as those in France, but the beds are better made, more compact, and with plenty of mattrasses; their curtains, however, are miserable affairs, lamentably bare, and made of wretched materials; and they are exceedingly chary of clean linen. A person travelling by himself, and without attendants, would get none at all. The charges are much the same as in France, perhaps somewhat higher. This is the birth-place of that worthy fellow Celius,[1] who hence took the surname of Rodoginus. The town is a very pretty one, with an exceedingly handsome square; the river Adisse runs right through it. We left this place, Tuesday morning, 15th November, and proceeded for some time along the causeway, which resembles that at Blois. We then crossed the river Adisse, on our right, and, soon after, the Po, which lay on our left. On both bridges there were toll-gates, where you pay for your passage, and they have contrivances whereby they can stop the boats underneath, until they have paid what is due. The different tolls payable, are painted on a board fixed to the bridge. We then descended into a very flat part of the country, where, as it seemed to us, in rainy weather, the roads must needs be altogether impassable; and, making no stoppage in our way, we got in the evening to

Ferrara, twenty miles. Here they kept us waiting a long time at the gates, till they got us passports and certificates of health, and the same was the case with several other people who came up. The town is about the size of Tours, and stands in a very flat country; there are a great number of palaces; the streets are wide and straight, and full of people. Wednesday morning, Messieurs d'Estissac and de Montaigne went to pay their respects to the duke.[2] On his being informed of their arrival at the palace, he sent a gentleman of his court to receive them and conduct them to his own apartment, where he was with two or three other personages. They passed through several private rooms, where they saw a number of handsomely dressed gentlemen. On entering the duke's room, they found him standing at a table, awaiting their arrival. He raised his cap as they entered, and remained uncovered all the while M. de Montaigne conversed with him, which was for a considerable time. He first asked M. de Montaigne whether he understood their language, and on his replying in the affirmative, he told them, in very elegant Italian, that he was always delighted to receive gentlemen belonging to their nation, having the greatest respect for his most Christian Majesty. After conversing upon different topics, Messieurs retired. The duke never once put on his cap while they were in the room. In one of the churches[3] we saw a bust of Ariosto,[4] somewhat fuller in the face than it is represented in his works;[5] he died 6th June, 1533, aged 59. They serve up fruit here on plates. The streets are all paved with brick. The colonnades, which run along each side of every street in Padua, and are extremely convenient, enabling you to walk about in all weathers, free from dirt, are not to be found in Ferrara. At Venice the streets are paved with the same material, and the pavement sloping, there is never any mud to annoy you. Talking of Venice, I forgot to mention that the day we left it, we met on our way several large boats laden with fresh water; a boat-load of this fetches a crown at Venice, and it is used both for drinking and in dying cloth. When we were at Chaffousine, we saw them loading the boats with this water, the product of a neighbouring spring, whence, by means of two horses turning a wheel, it is raised into a wooden pipe, or trough, that discharges it into the boats on the canal, which come up by turns to receive their cargo. We stayed all day at Ferrara, and went to see several fine churches, gardens, and private houses. In the garden of the Jesuits, the most

[1] Ludovicus Celius, surnamed Rodoginus, a learned professor of Padua, and master of Julius Cæsar Scaliger; principally known by his *Lectiones Antiquæ*; he died 1525.

[2] Alphonso d'Este, second of the name, duke of Ferrara, Modena, and Reggio. Died 27th Oct. 1597.

[3] That of the Benedictins.

[4] His bust in white marble, which stands on his tomb.

[5] That is to say, in his portrait, as prefixed to the various editions of his works.

remarkable thing is a rose tree that produces flowers every month in the year. At the time we were there, there was a rose in bloom, which was given to M. de Montaigne. We also saw the state barge, which the duke, in emulation of the Venetian Bucentaur, has had built for his new wife,—who is a pretty woman, much too young for him,—to take excursions in upon the river Po. We also visited the duke's arsenal, where we saw a culverin, twenty-six feet long, and one foot in diameter. The new wine we drank, and the water we got here, brought from the river, alarmed him[1] for his cholic. Over all the doors in the inn is written: *Ricordati della bolleta.*[2] As soon as you have arrived at the town, you must send word to the principal magistrate what is your name, and the number of your attendants, and the magistrate returns permission for the landlord of the inn where you have put up, to entertain you; otherwise he will not allow you to remain in his house. Thursday morning, we left this place, and proceeded through a level and fertile country. The roads here must be very troublesome to pedestrians in wet weather, when the rich soil of Lombardy becomes a thick mass of mud, whence you have no means of escaping, the highways being closed in on either side by ditches; so to remedy this inconvenience, the people of the country make use of small stilts, about half a foot high. We went on without stopping to

Boulougne,[3] thirty miles, which we reached in the evening. This is a large and handsome town, much bigger and more populous than Ferrara. At the inn where we put up we found the Seigneur de Montluc, who had arrived an hour before us, having come direct from France for the purpose of staying at this place some time, to perfect himself in fencing and riding. On Friday we went to see the Venetian fencer, who boasts that he has invented a system of sword-play which will supersede every other system; and certainly his method very much differs from the ordinary practice. The best pupil he has is a young gentleman of Bordeaux, named Binet. We saw here an ancient tower of a square form; so constructed that it leans all on one side, and appears every instant to be about to fall.[4] We went also to see the school of sciences,[5] which is the finest edifice I ever saw dedicated to this purpose. Saturday, after dinner, we went to the play, with which he was greatly amused; but he got a head-ache there, a malady he had not experienced for several years previously; and yet at the same time he felt freer from his pains than he had been for a long time back, and was as well in the stomach as he was on his return from Bannieres. The head-ache left him in the course of the night. The town is full of broad and handsome colonnades, and you everywhere come upon splendid palaces. You live much the same as at Padua, and at a very cheap rate; but the town is not so tranquil, in consequence of the long-standing feuds which exist between the different old families in the place, some of these being partisans of the French, while others favour the Spaniards, a great number of whom reside here. In the middle of the grand square there is a very magnificent fountain.[6] On Sunday, he was about to resume his journey to Rome by the left road, which goes through Imola, the Marches of Ancona and Loretto; but, being informed by a German that he had recently been robbed by banditti on this route, in the duchy of Spoleto, he determined to take the road for Florence, and we accordingly started in that direction, and, travelling along a very rough and mountainous country, got by bed-time to

Loyan,[7] sixteen miles, a small and disagreeable village. There are only two inns here, and these are noted throughout Italy for the deception, which they practise upon travellers, in feeding them with fine promises of every possible accommodation before you dismount, and laughing at you when they have once got you into their houses; the thing is so notorious that it has passed into a proverb. We left this place early next morning, and travelled all day along a road far more rugged and disagreeable than any we had hitherto experienced; in some parts, among the mountains, it was almost impracticable. We got by bed-time to

Scarperia, twenty-four miles, a small town of Tuscany, where there is a considerable trade in penknives, scissors, and similar articles. He was exceedingly amused here at the rivalry among the landlords. It is their practice to send people in search of travellers seven or eight leagues on the road, and to solicit them to put up at their inns. You will frequently meet the landlord himself on horseback; and every here and there well-dressed people, who watch you about, and keep teazing you in favour of their employers. All along the road, he amused himself immensely by hearing what every one of these fellows had to say, and the promises which they respectively lavished; there was nothing which they were not ready to provide you.[8] One man offered to make him a present of a hare, if he would but so much as come and look at his house. Their disputes and rivalry, however, terminate at the gates of the town, upon reaching which they do not venture to say a word more on the subject. They all

[1] Montaigne.
[2] Do not lose sight of your health-certificate.
[3] Bologna.
[4] There are two of these leaning towers standing in the middle of the city, and inclining in different directions; that of Asinelli, 320 feet high, inclines about 8½ feet; that of Garisenda, to which Montaigne refers, is 145 feet high, and inclines 8 feet.
[5] The Scuola, built by Vignole.
[6] That of the Giant.
[7] Loiano.
[8] "Anche ragnaze e ragazzi."

offer to furnish you with a guide on horseback, at their own expense, and for him to carry part of your baggage to the inn where you are going: this is an invariable practice among all of them, and they pay the guide as a matter of course. I did not understand whether they were obliged to do this by the government, in consequence of the insecurity of the roads. We had made a bargain as to what we were to pay, and what we were to have for it at Loian, before we left Boulougne. When we got there, however, though sadly pressed by the people of the house where we stopped, and others, to alight, he sent some of us round to the different inns to see the apartments, the provisions, the wines, and to have the prices named, and he did not dismount till he found out which was the best. It is impossible, however, to make your bargain so as to escape being cheated by them in some way or other; for if you keep them to their agreement in one thing, they rob you in another; if you enforce the wine, provisions, and so on, that you have bargained for, they cheat you in wood, candles, linen, or some other article which you have omitted to specify. This route is very much frequented, for it is the high road to Rome. I was here informed of a piece of stupidity I had been guilty of, in having omitted, when on my way from Loian, to visit the top of a mountain, about two miles out of the road, whence, in stormy and wet weather, you can in the night-time see flames issue, which rise to a great height; and I was told that when the eruption is particularly strong, there are pieces of money sometimes thrown up, with a figure on them.[1] We ought to have gone and seen this. We left Scaperia next morning, our landlord acting as guide, and proceeded along a fine road, between hills, which seemed well cultivated and thickly inhabited. We turned out of our way two miles on the right, to see a palace that the Duke of Florence built here twelve years ago, and has ever since been exercising his seven senses in embellishing. He would seem to have expressly selected an inconvenient site, sterile and rugged, and utterly without water, merely that he might have the pleasure of bringing the water from five miles off, and his other materials of every description from another five miles off, in an opposite direction. There is no unity of design about the place. The view from it consists merely of hills, which is the general feature of the country. The place is called Pratellino,[2] and has a most despicable appearance from the distance; but when viewed nearer it looks handsome enough, though not nearly so well as the better sort of palaces among us in France. The furniture is pretty enough, but does not at all partake of the magnificent. There is, however, a grotto, consisting of several cells, which is the finest we ever saw. It is formed, and all crusted over, with a certain material, which they told us was brought from some particular mountain; the wood-work is all ingeniously fastened together with invisible nails. Here you see various musical instruments, which perform a variety of pieces, by the agency of the water; which also, by a hidden machinery, gives motion to several statues, single and in groups, opens doors, and gives apparent animation to the figures of various animals, that seem to jump into the water, to drink, to swim about, and so on. On touching a spring, the whole grotto becomes full of water, and all the seats spout minute streams against you; and when, flying from the grotto, you seek a refuge on the stairs that lead to the castle, the motion of another hidden spring gives play to a thousand jets of water, that inundate you with their showers, till you reach the top. The beauty and richness of this place cannot be conveyed by any description, however detailed. The approach to the castle is through a walk fifty feet wide, and about 500 paces long, which has been constructed at a very heavy expense. On each side of this walk there are, at every five and ten paces alternately, handsome fountains, standing upon elaborately sculptured stone pedestals, so that as you look down the walk, you see ranges of fountains spouting forth water to a great height on both sides. At the bottom there is a very large fountain, which discharges its waters into an immense bason, by the medium of a marble statue, representing a woman washing. She is wringing a table-cloth, also of white marble, the droppings from which keep the bason full; near this is another vessel, where the water seems boiling, to make lye with. In the dining-room of the castle there is a marble table, with places for six guests; in each of these places, upon raising a small lid, formed in the marble, you find a ring connected with a vessel under the table. From each of these six vessels, on pulling up this ring, there rises a fountain of fresh water, in which you may either cool or cleanse your glass, and in the centre is a similar fountain, or rather well, for the bottle. We also saw some deep pits in the ground, where they preserve a quantity of snow throughout the year, the snow being placed on layers of broom, and the heap, which is made in a pyramidical form, being finally covered over with thatch, like a barn. There are a great many of these snow-pits. They are now erecting the statue of an enormous giant, with one eye, which alone is three cubits wide, the rest of the body being in proportion; this they intend for an immense fountain. There are a thousand reservoirs and ponds, supplied from the two principal fountains, by infinite earthen pipes. We saw a very large and handsome aviary, in which we noticed

[1] Montaigne probably refers to the volcano of Pietra Mala, eight leagues from Bologna.

[2] Pratolino, two miles from Florence, built, according to M. Lalande, in 1575, by the Grand Duke Francis, son of Cosmo the First.

some little birds, like goldfinches somewhat, only they had two long feathers at the tail, resembling those of a cock. We had a very singular sort of stove shown us. We stopped here two or three hours, and then resumed our journey, along several high hills, to

Florence, seventeen miles, a place smaller than Ferrara, situated in a valley, surrounded by richly cultivated hills. The river Arno passes through the town, and is crossed by several bridges. We saw no fosse round the walls. To-day he (Montaigne) passed two stones, and a quantity of gravel, without having had any other notice of it than a slight pain in the lower part of his stomach. The same day we went to see the Grand Duke's stables, which are very large, with arched roofs; there are very few horses of any value here; at least, there were not, when we went over them. We were shown a sheep of a very strange form; together with a camel, several lions and bears, and an animal as big as a large mastiff, but of the form of a cat, all striped black and white, which they called a tiger. We looked over the church of St. Lawrence, where the flags are still hanging, which we lost under Marshal Strozzi, in Tuscany.[1] In this church, there are several excellent pictures, and some statues by Michael Angelo. We went to see the cathedral, a magnificent structure, the steeple of which is faced with black and white marble; it is one of the finest and most sumptuous churches in the world. M. de Montaigne said he had never been in a country where there were so few pretty women as in Italy. The inns are far less convenient than those in France and Germany; the provisions are not half so plentiful as in Germany, and not near so well dressed. They do not lard the meat in either country; but then in Germany it is far better seasoned, and there is an infinite variety of soups and sauces, which is not the case here. The houses, too, in Italy are very inferior; there are no good rooms; and the large windows have no glass or other protection against the weather, but an unwieldy shutter, which excludes the light, at the same time that you use it to keep off the wind or rain; an inconvenience which we found still more intolerable than the want of bed-curtains in Germany. The bed-rooms are mere cabins, and the beds wretched pallets, running on castors, with a miserable canopy over them; and heaven help him who cannot lie hard! There is a great deficiency of linen too. The wines, generally speaking, are far inferior to those of Germany; and at this time of the year, in particular, lamentably insipid and mawkish. The charges, it is true, are somewhat less. Florence, for instance, is considered the dearest city in Italy, and the bargain I made here, before my master arrived at the inn, the Angel, was for seven reals[2] a day, man and horse, and four reals a day for a man without a horse. The same day we went to see the duke's palace. This prince spends a good deal of his time in making imitations of oriental precious stones and chrystal: he has a great taste for alchemy and the mechanical arts, especially architecture, of which he has a more than ordinary knowledge. Next day, M. de Montaigne ascended, the first of us, to the top of the cathedral, where there is a ball of gilt brass, which, from below, seems about the size of your head, though when you get up to it you find it capable of holding forty persons. He here observed that the marble with which this church is covered, even the black compartments, for it is alternate black and white, is already beginning, in many places, to give way, and to open in large crevices, under the influence of the frost and the sun; which induced him to doubt very much the genuineness of the marble. He went also to see the palaces of the Strozzi and the Gondi, where some of each family still remain, and paid another visit to the duke's palace. In one of the apartments Cosmo,[3] his father, has had painted the taking of Sienna,[4] and the battle we lost;[5] yet in many parts of the town, and on the old walls of the palace itself, the fleurs-de-lys occupy the most honourable position.[6] Messrs. d'Estissac and Montaigne went to dine with the grand duke, for such is his title here. His wife[7] occupied the post of honour; the duke sat on her right, next to him sat the duchess's sister-in-law, and next to her her husband, the duchess's brother. The duchess is a handsome woman, according to the Italian notion of beauty, with a countenance at once agreeable and dignified, and a bosom of the most ample proportions. M. de Montaigne had not been with her long, before he thoroughly understood how she had managed to wheedle the duke into entire subjection to her will, and he had no doubt she would be able to retain him at her feet for a long time to come. The duke is a dark stout man, about my height, with large limbs, and a countenance full of kindliness: he always takes his cap off when he meets any one, which, to my mind, is a very agreeable feature in his character. He looks like a healthy man of forty. On the other side of the table were the cardinal,[8] and a young man of about eighteen,[9] the duke's two brothers. When the duke or his wife want to drink, they

[1] In the battle of Marciano, in which Pietro Strozzi was defeated by the Marquis de Marignan, Aug. 2, 1554. Strozzi was not a marshal of France at the period of the battle; but he was created one by Henry II. the same year.

[2] A Spanish coin, worth at the present time about 2½d.

[3] Cosme II.

[4] This place was defended by Blaise de Montluc, and did not surrender (in 1554) till after a siege of ten months.

[5] In the same year.

[6] On account of the alliance between Francis I. and the house of Medicis.

[7] The celebrated Bianca Capello.

[8] The Cardinal de Medicis, afterwards Grand Duke, under the title of Ferdinand I.

[9] Probably one of the two sons that Cosmo, the Grand Duke's father, had by Camilla Marelli, whom Pope Pius V. obliged him to marry.

have presented to them a glass of wine and a decanter of water, in a sort of bason; they take the wine, and pour as much of it as they do not want into the bason, filling the glass up with water; and when they have drunk it, they replace the glass in the bason, which a page holds for them. The duke took a good deal of water; the duchess hardly any. The fault of the Germans is to make use of glasses out of all proportion too large; here they are in the extreme the other way, for the glasses are absurdly small. I do not understand why this city should be called, *par excellence*, the Beautiful: it is handsome, no doubt, but not more so than Bologna, and very little more so than Ferrara; while Venice is, beyond all comparison, superior to it, in this respect. No doubt the view of the city and its suburbs, from the top of the cathedral, has an imposing effect, owing to the immense space which the suburbs occupy, covering, as they do, the sides and summit of all the neighbouring hills for two or three leagues round; and the houses being so close to each other that they look almost like streets. The city is paved with flat stones, but in no sort of method or order. After dinner, the four gentlemen hired a guide and post-horses to go to a country place of the duke's, called Castello. The house itself is not worth looking at; but there are several gardens admirably laid out, all of them on the slope of a hill, so that all the straight walks are upon a descent, but a very gentle and easy one; the cross walks are level and terraced. In every direction, you see a variety of arbours, thickly formed of every description of odoriferous trees, cedars, cypresses, orange trees, lemon trees, and olive trees, the branches of which are so closely interwoven that the sun, at its meridian height, cannot penetrate them. These arbours will only hold three or four people. In the centre of one of the pieces of water, there is an artificial rock, which looks all frozen over, an effect produced by means of the same material with which the duke has covered his grottoes at Pratellino; and at the top of this rock there is a statue in brass, representing a very old grey-haired man, seated in a melancholy attitude, with folded arms, from whose beard, forehead, and face, the water is incessantly running, drop by drop, so as to represent tears and perspiration; and these are the only outlets by which the fountain discharges its contents. In another place, they had an amusing experience of the trick I have mentioned before; for as they were walking about the garden, looking at the various objects of interest, the gardener, who had just before left them for the purpose, while they were standing to admire some marble statues they came to, discharged upon them, from under their feet and legs, an infinity of springs of water, so small that, till you looked closely, they were invisible, and which had just the appearance of small rain, and they got regularly wet through, in the lower part of their persons. The springs which the gardener worked were more than two hundred paces from the spot; but they were so ingeniously planned, and so well made, that with the least motion he set them in operation, or stopped them, just as he pleased, and in a moment. They have this sort of trick in a good many places in this part of the country. We went to look at the principal fountain, which discharges its contents through two large figures in bronze, the lower of which has taken the other in his arms, and is squeezing him with all his might;[1] the latter, almost senseless, has his head thrown back, and discharges the water from his mouth; and the machinery is so powerful that the fountain rises to a height of two hundred and twenty-two feet above the figures, which themselves are twenty feet high. In another part of the gardens there is a small room, constructed among the branches of an evergreen tree, of a foliage much fuller than any they had ever seen before, so full that you cannot see out of the room through its thick green walls, except by pushing the smallest of the branches aside. In the centre of this, by some means which you are not made acquainted with, there rises a small fountain of water, through a marble bason, into which it falls. They have some machinery here for water-music; but they had not time to go and see it, for it was getting late, and we had to ride back to the city. They saw the duke's coat of arms here, over the gate, formed of the branches of trees, which are so trained by exquisite art as to compose the different parts. The time of year was that most unfavourable to gardens, which made them wonder all the more at the condition in which they found this. There is also a very handsome grotto, in which are to be seen all sorts of animals, sculptured the size of life, which are spouting out water, some by the beak, others by the mouth, or the nails, or the nostrils. I forgot to mention, that in one of the rooms of the palace there is to be seen, placed upon a pillar, the body of an animal of a very strange form; the breast is all covered with scales, and all up the back-bone there grows a sort of excrescence, like a horn. They told us it was found in a cavern, among the mountains, some years ago, and brought here alive. It is now bronzed over. We went to see the palace[2] where the Queen Mother[3] was born. In order to ascertain all the particulars respecting the mode and expense of living in this place, he went to look at several apartments that were to be let, and at several boarding-houses, but he did not see anything at all desirable. The only rooms that are to be let here, he was told, were at the inns, and all those he saw were

[1] The *Hercules and Antæus*.

[2] The palace Pitti.

[3] Catherine de Medicis.

exceedingly dirty and inconvenient, and far dearer than at Paris, or even at Venice; and the style of living at the boarding-houses is miserable, though they charge for gentlemen more than twelve crowns a month. There is nothing to amuse you here, or to exercise either body or mind; there is neither fencing, nor riding, nor literature. Pewter is very scarce all about here; you are seldom served in any thing but coloured earthenware, and that generally dirty. Thursday morning, 24th November, we left this place, and proceeded through a country which did not appear to us very fertile, though it was cultivated on all sides, and thickly inhabited. The road was rough and stony, and, though we went on without stopping, it was not till very late that we got to

Sienna, thirty-two miles, four posts; for the posts here are eight miles, which is longer than ours are. Friday morning he went over the town very minutely, being more especially desirous of seeing every part of it, from its connexion with our wars. It is a very irregular town, built upon the ridge of a hill, along which the best streets lay; the other streets run down the two sides, in different directions, some of them turning back, and coming half way up again. It is reckoned among the handsome towns of Italy, but not in the first class: it is not so large as Florence; it has every appearance of being a very ancient place. There are a vast number of fountains, from which most of the inhabitants have water laid on in their own houses. They have plenty of excellent cool cellars. The cathedral church, which is very little inferior to that of Florence, is coated inside and out with the same marble of which I spoke before; with which, cut into square pieces, some a foot thick, others less, they face, as with a veneer, buildings constructed with brick, which is the ordinary material used in this country. The handsomest part of the town is the circus, three of whose sides bend towards the palace, which forms the fourth side, and which itself is slightly semicircular in its form, though less so than the other sides of the circus. Opposite the palace, at the upper end of the circus, there is a magnificent fountain, which, through a number of spouts, fills a large vessel, whence all who choose may draw very admirable water. Several streets terminate in this circus, to which you ascend by steps. There is an immense number of streets, many of them extremely ancient. The principal street is called the Piccolomini; the next the Tolomei; the next the Colombini; the next the Cerritani;[1] and so on. We saw clear evidences, in several places, of an antiquity of three or four hundred years. The standard of the town, which you see in a variety of places, is the wolf of Rome, the foster-mother of Romulus and Remus. The Duke of Florence treats the noblemen here, who sided with us, with much courtesy, and he has placed near his person Silvio Piccolomini, one of the most accomplished men of the age, and eminently skilled in the science of arms; a useful precaution, perhaps, in a prince who has to guard himself chiefly against his own subjects. He leaves to the towns the care of fortifying themselves, and pays his whole attention to the citadels, which are kept constantly provisioned and garrisoned in the completest manner possible, and with such jealous watchfulness that hardly any person but the garrison is permitted to approach them. This article of expenditure amounts to a great deal every year. The women mostly wear a sort of hat: we observed that some of them took off these hats at the elevation of the host, in the same way that the men did. We lodged at the Crown, a tolerable inn, except that here, too, we were unprovided with windows, or even window-frames. When M. de Montaigne was at Pratellino, after he had expressed to the housekeeper his admiration of the beauty of the place, he animadverted upon the defects of the doors and windows; great planks of deal, without form or covering, and great uncouth locks, no better than our village barn-doors; and he objected further to the hollow tiles, saying, that if they could not get slate, or lead, or copper, they ought, at all events, to have adopted some architectural modification, which would have concealed the tiles from the eye of the spectator, which points the housekeeper said he would mention to his master. The duke has not removed any of the ancient mottoes and emblems which, throughout the town, enjoin the love of liberty; yet the tombs and epitaphs of the French who died there, have all been carried off and hid in some place in the town, under pretext that the church where they were was going to be altered and repaired. Saturday, 26th, after dinner, we set off, and, passing through the same sort of country as before, got by supper-time to

Buoncouvent, twelve miles, a *castello* of Tuscany, for so they call such fortified places as are too small to merit the appellation of towns. Monday morning, very early, we left this place, and, as M. de Montaigne wished to see Montalcin,[2] from its connexion with French history, he turned out of the road on the right, and, with Messrs. d'Estissac, de Mattecoulon, and du Hautoi, went to this place, which they described as an ill-built town, about the size of St. Emilion, standing on one of the highest mountains in that part of the country, yet not very difficult of access. When they got there, they found that mass was celebrating, so they attended it. At the end of the town, there is a castle, in which the duke keeps up a garrison; but, in his[3] opinion, the castle would be of small service, the place being completely commanded by another mountain, not more than a hundred paces from the duke's territories.

[1] These are all names of illustrious Siennese families.

[2] Mont Alcino.

[3] Montaigne's.

They retain so affectionate a memory of the French here, that you can hardly mention the name of our countrymen to them, without bringing tears into their eyes, war itself wearing a more genial aspect to them, when accompanied with some approach to liberty, than all the blessings of peace, when enjoyed under the government of a despot. M. de Montaigne enquired whether any French had been buried here, and was told that there had been several of their tombs in the church of St. Augustin, but that these had all been dug into the ground by order of the duke. The road we now passed along was steep and stony, and it was not till the evening that we reached

La Paille,[1] twenty-three miles, a small village, consisting of some five or six miserable houses, seated at the foot of a barren mountain. We resumed our journey next morning early, along a deep, narrow road, where we passed and repassed, fully a hundred times, a mountain torrent which accompanies the road, now on one side, and now on the other. By and by, we came to a large village, built by the present Pope Gregory,[2] which marks the boundary of the territories of the Duke of Florence, and we now entered the states of the Church. Passing through Aquapendente, a small town, so named, I believe, from a torrent, which here precipitates itself over the rocks into the plain beneath, we went on to St. Laurenzo, a *castello*, and through Bolseno, another *castello*, and then, following the lake, which is called the Lake of Bolseno, and is thirty miles long and ten broad, and in the middle of which rise two rocks like islands, where they told us there are two monasteries, we went on, without stopping, through the same steep and miserable road, to

Montefiascon, twenty-six miles, a small town perched on the pinnacle of one of the highest mountains in this part of the country. The town has every appearance of great antiquity. We left it next morning, and went through a level and fertile country to Viterbo, which stands partly on the side of a mountain. This is a pretty town, about the size of Sanlis. We saw here a great number of handsome houses, plenty of work going on, and very agreeable streets; there were three fine fountains in different parts of the town. He would have stopped in this place, on account of its beauty, but his baggage-mule, which was on in front, had passed through the town before he had made up his mind. We here began the ascent of a high mountain, at the foot of which, on this side, is a small lake called Vico. Thence, through a pleasant valley, flanked on one side by hills covered with wood, an article of very rare occurrence about here, and on the other side by the lake, we got early in the evening to

Rossiglione,[3] nineteen miles, a small town with a castle belonging to the Duke of Parma; there are several other small towns and estates, belonging to the Farnese family, in this neighbourhood. The inns all along this route are of the best description, owing to its being the high post-road. They charge you five Julios a horse, each post of two miles, and you can hire one at the same rate for two or three posts, or for several days, without putting you to any trouble about the care of the horse at the end of the journey, for the landlords here all take charge of one another's horses; and if the one you have hired fails you before it has reached its destination, you are entitled, by the terms of the agreement in all these cases, to replace it by another, at any of the inns on your route. We ourselves saw a case, at Sienna, of a Fleming, who joined our company, and who, though alone and a stranger, altogether unknown to every person there, was trusted with a horse which he hired to carry him to Rome, the only thing he was required to do before he started, being to pay the amount of its hire; as to the rest, the horse is wholly at your mercy, and it entirely depends upon your sense of honesty to leave him at the place where you have undertaken to deposit him. M. de Montaigne congratulated himself upon the custom here of dining and supping late, which is quite to his taste; in good families they do not dine till two o'clock in the afternoon, nor sup till nine; so that, where there are actors, they do not commence the performances till six in the evening, by torchlight; the play lasts for two or three hours, and then you go home to supper. He remarked that it was a capital country for idle people, for they rise very late. We started next morning, three hours before day, so anxious was he to get once on the pavement of Rome; but he found the morning dewy, very nearly as bad for his stomach as that of the evening, and he was exceedingly indisposed with it till the sun came out, though the night was a very mild one. When we got within fifteen miles of Rome, we caught a glimpse of the Eternal City, but presently lost sight of it again for a long time. There are several villages and inns on the way. We passed over some bits of road, raised, and paved with large stones, smacking very much of the ancients; and, nearer the city, we saw some buildings manifestly of great age, and some stones which successive Popes have caused to be erected in honour of various events of the old time. Most of the ruins are of brick, such as the *Termes* of Dioclesian, a brick small and simple like ours, and not large and thick, like those which we find in the classic ruins in France and elsewhere. Rome did not seem to us to make much of an appearance as we approached it from this road. Far away on the left lay the Appennines; the aspect of the

[1] La Paglia.
[2] Gregory XIII.
[3] Ronciglione.

fore-ground was exceedingly unpleasant to the eye; hilly, with every here and there deep marshes, altogether unfit for military operations or marches; the country all around us, for ten miles in every direction, was open, barren, and altogether destitute of trees, and almost equally so of houses. After travelling for some distance through this sort of country, we arrived at about twelve o'clock, on the 30th of November, St. Andrew's-day, at the Porto del Popolo and

Rome, thirty miles, where we had, as elsewhere, some difficulty in procuring admittance, on account of the plague which they said was raging at Genoa. However, we got in at last, and went to the Bear, where we staid that day and the next, but on the 2nd of December hired apartments at the house of a Spaniard, opposite the church of Santa Lucia della Tinta. We were here provided with three handsome bed-rooms, a dining-room, closet, stable, and kitchen, for twenty crowns a month, for which sum the landlord agreed to include a cook, and fire for the kitchen. The apartments at Rome are generally furnished somewhat better than those at Paris, the people here having great quantities of gilt leather, with which the higher class of rooms are lined. For the same price we gave for these lodgings, we might have had some at the Golden Vase, close by, hung with cloth of gold and silk, quite like a royal palace; but, besides that the rooms here were less independent of one another than those we took, M. de Montaigne was of opinion that all this magnificence was not only quite superfluous, but that we should find it very troublesome with reference to taking care of the furniture, for there was not a bed in the place which was not of the estimated value of four or five hundred crowns. At our lodgings we bargained for a supply of linen, much the same as in France, a necessary precaution in a place where they are somewhat chary of this article. M. de Montaigne was annoyed at finding so many Frenchmen here; he hardly met a person in the street who did not salute him in his own language. He was very much struck with the sight of so crowded a court, so peopled with prelates and churchmen; it appeared to him that there were more rich men and more rich equipages here, by far, than in any other court he had ever been at. He said that the appearance of the streets, especially from the number of people thronging them, reminded him more of Paris than any town he had ever seen. The modern city lies along the river Tiber, on both sides. The hilly quarter, where the ancient town stood, and to which he daily made visits, is cut up with the gardens of the cardinals, and the grounds attached to various churches and private houses. He judged, from manifest appearances, and from the height of the ruins, that the form of these hills, and their slones, had altogether changed from what it was in the old time, and he felt certain that in several places, the modern Romans walked on the tops of the houses of their ancestors. It is easy to calculate, from the Arch of Severus, that we are now-a-days more than two pikes' length above the ancient roofs; and, in point of fact, almost every where you see beneath your feet the tops of ancient walls which the rain and the coaches have laid bare. He had an argument with some people who said there was as much freedom at Rome as at Venice; in contradiction of this opinion, he pointed out that, in the former, private houses were so insecure that whoever came there, with a larger sum than ordinary, was immediately counselled to deposit his money with some banker in the place, as the only means of securing his house from being entered and his strong box broken open, which has happened in a great many cases; *item*, that in Rome it is not at all safe to be in the streets at night; *item*, that on the first of this very month of December, the general of the Cordeliers had been suddenly deprived of his place, and put in prison, for having, in a sermon delivered before the Pope and the Cardinals, accused the prelates of the church of idleness and luxuriousness, without particularizing any individual person or instance, but merely making use of the most ordinary common-places upon this topic, in a somewhat angry tone of voice; *item*, that his[1] coffers had been opened at the gate of the city by the custom-house officers, and every article in them, down to the minutest trifle, rummaged and tumbled over; whereas, in many of the other Italian towns, the officers wait quietly while you yourself show them what you have; that, besides this, they had taken away all the books they found there,[2] for the purpose of examining them; which they were so long about that a man, whose business called him elsewhere, might very well give them up as lost; and that, moreover, the regulations were so extraordinary that our prayer-book, because it was printed at Paris, and not at Rome, was looked upon with a very suspicious eye; as were several books written by German divines against the heretics, for this excellent reason, that, in order to combat errors, these divines had of necessity mentioned what the errors were. In this respect, he congratulated himself exceedingly that, though he had had no idea of what sort of search he was to undergo, and though he had passed through Germany, where his curiosity might very naturally have induced him to pick up one or two of the prohibited books, yet it so happened that he had not one of them with him. However, as to this, he was told by several gentlemen of the place that, even had this been the case, all he would have been subjected to in consequence, would have been the loss of the prohi-

[1] Montaigne's.

[2] Among others there was the *Essays*, the two first books of which had just been published at Bordeaux,

bited books. Twelve or fifteen days after our arrival, he was taken ill, and, alarmed by an unusual defluxion of the reins, which threatened him with an ulcer, he was induced, at the solicitation of the French physician of the Cardinal du Rambouillet, aided by the dexterous management of his apothecary, to swallow several large pills of cassia, which he put into his mouth on the end of a wet knife, and got down very easily. He had two or three stools in consequence. Next day, he took of Venetian turpentine, which they say comes from the Tyrol mountains, two large pills done up in a wafer, which he put into his mouth in a silver spoon, with some drops of syrop; but he did not observe any effects from this dose, except that it gave his water the scent of violets. After this, he took at three times, though not one after another, a sort of drink which looked and tasted just like almonds,[1] and his physician told them that these were the only ingredients; but he could not help thinking there was some *quatre-semances-froides*[2] in it. There was nothing out of the way or inconvenient about this recipe, except the time of taking it, which was early in the morning, three hours before breakfast. He did not derive any sensible benefit from this posset, for the indisposition did not leave him; and on the 23d December he had a very severe attack of cholic, which made him go to bed at mid-day, where he remained till the evening, and then he discharged a quantity of gravel, and after that a large stone, hard, long, and solid, which had been five or six hours passing. All this time, however, ever since he had taken the baths, his stomach had been in good order, so that he was not afraid of matters going worse with him in other respects. He frequently avoided taking his meals, omitting sometimes supper, sometimes dinner. On Christmas-day, we went to hear mass performed by the pope at St. Peter's, where he got a place, whence he could see all the ceremonies at his ease. There are several special forms observed on these occasions; first, the gospel and the epistle are said in Latin, and then in Greek, as is also done on Easter Sunday and St. Peter's Day. The pope then administered the sacrament to a number of persons, associating with him in this service the Cardinals Farnese, Medici, Caraffa, and Gonzaga. They use a certain instrument for this purpose, from which they drink from the chalice, in order to provide against poison. Monsieur de Montaigne was somewhat surprised to remark that, at this and other masses which he attended, the pope, the cardinals, and other prelates were seated during nearly the whole mass, with their caps on, talking and chatting together. These ceremonies appeared to him altogether to partake more of magnificence than of devotion. He did not observe any particular beauty in the women, at all justifying that pre-eminence which common fame has assigned to the ladies of this city above those of all the rest of the world; and, after all, as at Paris, the greatest beauty here is to be found among those women who put it up for sale. On the 29th December, M. d'Abein, our ambassador at Rome at this time, a gentleman well read, and an old and intimate friend of M. de Montaigne, came and proposed to him to go and kiss the pope's feet; and accordingly M. d'Estissac and he got into the ambassador's carriage, who took them to the palace, and, having first obtained an audience of the pope, sent for them almost immediately by the chamberlain. They found the pope and the ambassador alone together, as is the etiquette in these cases; his holiness has a small hand-bell near him, which he rings when he wants any one to come. The ambassador was seated on his left, uncovered; the pope himself never takes off his cap to any body, nor does any ambassador, from whomsoever, ever think of putting on his hat in the pope's presence. M. d'Estissac entered the presence-chamber first, after him M. de Montaigne, then M. de Mattecoulon, and lastly M. du Hautoi. After advancing a step or two in the chamber, the pope being seated in one of the corners, those who have been admitted place one knee on the ground, and wait in this position until the pope has given them his benediction, which he does forthwith; then they rise and advance to about the centre of the room. Most persons do not advance straight towards him at once, across the room, but first sideways along the wall a little way, and then advance; however, when they are in the centre of the room, they again kneel on one knee, and receive a second benediction. This done, they rise, and advance towards him to the edge of a rich velvet carpet, on which he is seated, and which extends some seven or eight feet before him. Upon this carpet, they again kneel, this time upon both knees. Here the ambassador, who had presented our gentlemen, knelt on one knee, and turned back the pope's robe from the right foot, on which was a red slipper with a white cross upon it. Those who have been introduced advance on their knees until they reach his holiness's foot, and then bend down to kiss it. M. de Montaigne said that he slightly raised his foot. Each gentleman, after he had kissed the foot, withdrew on one side, still on his knees, to make room for his successor: when they had all gone through this ceremony, the ambassador covered the pope's foot, and, again seating himself, recommended Messieurs d'Estissac and de Montaigne to his holiness's protection, in suitable terms. The pope then, in the most courteous tones, exhorted M. d'Estissac to pursue his studies and to keep in the paths of virtue; and M. de Montaigne to persevere in the devotion

[1] Almond-milk.

[2] The composition thus entitled consisted of the seeds of cucumber, melon, gourd, and pumpion.

he had ever manifested in the cause of the church and the service of his most Christian Majesty; assuring them both that he should be ever ready to promote their interests, whenever an opportunity presented itself; the usual phrase among the Italians, when they wish to appear civil. The gentlemen made no reply, as is the custom; but having, still on their knees, received another benediction, which is an intimation for them to withdraw, retired in the same way they had advanced. The manner of withdrawing is quite a matter of individual taste and discretion; however, the most usual mode is to walk backwards, or at any rate sideways, so as to keep your face towards the pope. When you reach the centre of the room, you again kneel on one knee and receive another benedicite, and on reaching the door, you again kneel for a final blessing. The pope speaks Italian, but it is an Italian that reminds you, in every sentence, of his Bolognese origin, a place where they have the worst jargon in Italy, and besides this, he has an impediment in his speech. As for the rest, he was a very fine old man, of the middle height, holding himself very upright, with a majestic countenance, and a long white beard. He was at this time more than eighty years old, but looking as healthy and vigorous as a man need wish to be at that age, without gout, or stone, or indigestion, or any bodily infirmity whatever. He is of a gentle disposition, troubling himself very little about politics, but a great deal about building, in which particular he will leave, at Rome and elsewhere, memorials greatly redounding to his honour. He is charitable even to an excess.[1] Among other proofs of this, there is no girl of the lower orders who is going to be married whom he will not assist with money to furnish with, if her circumstances require it; and his liberality in this respect is so much a matter of course, that girls reckon it as ready money. Besides this, he has built colleges for the Greeks, the English, the Scotch, the French, the Germans, and the Poles, each of which he has endowed with upwards of ten thousand crowns a-year in perpetuity, besides the enormous expense he was at in building them. His object, in founding these, was to recal to the bosom of the church the children of those nations who, corrupted by evil opinions, have wandered from the true faith; and here these children are lodged, fed, clothed, educated, and provided with every thing they need, without having to advance one farthing of their own, from first to last. The tiresome charge of public business he transfers to other people, having a great indisposition to give himself any trouble. He is, however, always ready to accord his ministers and others an audience; his answers are short and resolved, and they do but lose time, who seek by new argument to make him revise his decision. To what he deems just, he adheres firmly; and even for the sake of his son,[2] though he loves him vehemently, he would not step aside one foot from the strict rule of right. He advances his relations [but never to the detriment of the rights and interests of the church, which he preserves inviolable. He exhibits the most magnificent taste and spirit in the erection of public buildings, and in the improvement, and in many cases renovation, of the streets[3]]; and though his life and conduct have exhibited no very extraordinary features one way or the other, yet, on the whole, their general tendency has been towards virtue. On the last day of December, they two[4] dined with M. the Cardinal de Sens,[5] who observes the Roman usages more than we have noticed any other Frenchman here to do. The blessing and the grace, which are both very long, are said by two chaplains, who make responses to one another, in the same way as in the church service. During dinner, they read a comment, in Italian, upon the gospel for the day. They washed their hands and face here both before and after dinner. Each guest has a napkin placed before him to dry himself with; and before those to whom they are desirous of showing special honour, who are seated either at the side of, or immediately opposite the host, they place large square silver salt-cellar stands, in the same way as in France before the higher nobility. Upon this, they place a napkin folded in four, upon which are laid your bread, knife, fork, and spoon. Upon these again is laid another napkin, which you take and make use of, leaving the other napkin where it is; for after you are seated, the attendants place, by the side of the silver salver, a silver or earthenware plate, out of which you eat. Whatever is served up, the carver distributes on plates to those who are seated at the head of the table, no one else there touching the dishes; the dish which is placed immediately before the master of the house is generally reserved for himself. The way in which they gave M. de Montaigne his wine was this, and the same etiquette is observed at our ambassador's house—they brought him a silver salver, on which was a wine glass with wine in it, and a small bottle, about the size of an ink bottle, full of water. He took the glass in his right hand, and the bottle in his left, and having poured as much water into his wine as he thought proper, replaced the bottle on the salver. While he was drinking, the attendant held the salver under his chin, and then received the glass also on the salver. This ceremony, however, is only observed towards one or two of the guests, those seated close to the master of the house. After grace was said,

[1] He is said to have expended in charity fully two millions of crowns a-year.

[2] Jacopo Buoncompagno, whom the pope had born to him before he entered holy orders.

[3] The words within brackets were added by Montaigne himself in the margin of the manuscript.

[4] Messieurs d'Estissac and de Montaigne.

[5] Sens.

the guests rose immediately, and the chairs were arranged along one side of the apartment, where the cardinal seated himself, and invited the company to follow his example. Shortly afterwards, two men, well dressed in canonicals, with something or other in their hands, I could not make out what, entered the room, and, advancing to the cardinal, knelt on one knee, and gave him notice that some particular service was performing in one of the churches. He did not say anything to them, but merely raised his cap slightly, as they rose and withdrew. By and by, his eminence took Messieurs with him in his coach to the Hall of the Consistory, where the cardinals were assembled to go together to vespers. The Pope soon after arrived in his robes, to accompany them. The cardinals did not kneel when he gave them his benediction, but received it with a very low inclination of the head.

On the 3rd of January, 1581, the Pope passed in procession before our house. Before him rode about two hundred persons, belonging to the court, churchmen and laymen. At his side rode the Cardinal de Medici, with whom he was going to dine, and who was conversing with him; his eminence was uncovered. The Pope, who was dressed in his usual costume of red cap, white robes, and red velvet hood, was mounted on a white palfrey, the harness of which was red velvet, with gold fringe and gold lace-work. He gets on his horse without assistance, though he is in his eighty-first year. Every fifteen yards or so, he stops and gives his benediction to the assembled people. After him, came three cardinals, and then about a hundred men-at-arms, lance on thigh, and armed at all points, except the head. There was another palfrey, of the same colour and with the same harness as that he rode, following him, together with a mule, a handsome white charger, a litter, and two grooms, who carried portmanteaus at their saddle-bow. The same day M. de Montaigne took some more turpentine, without any other reason for it than that he had a cold, and soon afterwards he passed a good deal of gravel.

On the 11th of January, in the morning, as M. de Montaigne was leaving his house on horseback to go to the banker's, there came by the officers of justice who were taking to the place of execution, Catena, a famous robber and captain of banditti, who had kept all Italy in terror, and of whom they relate some frightful murders, especially of two capucins, whom, under the promise of sparing their lives, he induced to deny God, and whom he then murdered, without any provocation either of gain or revenge. He waited to see the spectacle. Besides the forms observed in France on these occasions, they carry before the criminal a tall crucifix, covered with black cloth; and on both sides of him walk a number of men with linen robes and masks, who, he was told, were Roman gentlemen, who have formed themselves into a society for the purpose of accompanying criminals to the place of execution and returning with their bodies. Two of these, or two monks, he could not tell which, were in the cart with the criminal, preaching and praying, one of them keeping constantly before his face, and causing him every minute to kiss, a picture representing our Saviour; this is done that the spectators may not see his face. When they got to the gallows, which is formed of a cross-beam resting on two supporters, they kept this picture close before his face, till he was thrown off. He made a common-place death of it, neither moving nor speaking; he was a dark man, about 30 years old. After he was strangled, they cut his body into four quarters, for they simply inflict death upon criminals, reserving any punishment beyond that for the dead bodies, and M. de Montaigne remarked here, what he had said elsewhere,[1] that punishments so inflicted have a vast effect upon the populace; for the spectators here, who had not evinced the slightest commiseration while the living man was being strangled, burst out into piteous cries and groans at every blow that was given, when they were cutting up his dead body. As soon as the execution was over, several jesuits, or whatever they were, mounted upon tressels at different points, and began exhorting the people to take warning by the example they had just witnessed. We remarked in Italy, and especially at Rome, that there were hardly any bells for the service of the church; there are fewer of these at Rome, than in the most insignificant town in France; neither are there any images in the churches, except some that have just been erected. Many of the older churches have none at all.

On the 14th of January, he took another dose of turpentine, without producing any apparent effect. On the same day, I witnessed the execution of two brothers, servants of the governor's secretary, who had killed their master a few days before, within the very palace of Seigneur Jacomo de Buoncompagno, the Pope's son. They first tore their flesh with red-hot pincers, and then cut off their right hands, in front of the palace; and after they had cut off their hands, they killed a couple of capons, which they ripped open, and applied to the criminals' bleeding stumps. They were then taken to the scaffold, where they were first knocked down with a heavy club-stick, and then had their throats cut; a mode of punishment, I was told, sometimes practised at Rome, though I was also informed that it was a mode of punishment adapted to the particular offence, the men having assassinated their master in the same manner.

As to the size of Rome, M. de Montaigne said that "the space encircled by the walls, two-thirds of which are unoccupied, compre-

[1] In his Essays.

hending both ancient and modern Rome, might about equal the extent of Paris, including all the fauxbourgs from one end to the other; but if you estimate the size by the number and crowding of houses, he thinks that Rome is not a third the size of Paris; though in the number and grandeur of public buildings, and in the beauty of the streets and houses, Rome is far superior."

He found the winter nearly as cold as that of Gascony. There were some severe frosts about Christmas-day, and some almost insupportably cold winds. Yet, at the same time, there are frequent storms of thunder, lightning, and hail. The palaces have a great number of suites of apartments, one after another; you have to go through three or four rooms, before you arrive at the principal apartments. In some houses, where M. de Montaigne was invited to state dinners, the side-boards are not in the dining-rooms, but in an ante-room, and they fetch your wine thence as you want it; it is in this room that the services of plate are displayed.

Thursday, 26th of January, we went to see Mount Janiculum, on the other side of the Tiber, and closely examined the various objects of curiosity there. Among other things, he saw a large bit of old wall, which had come to light two days before. From this elevation you can contemplate, at one view, the whole extent of Rome, which you cannot do near so well from any other point. On leaving this place, he went to the Vatican, to see the statues which stand in niches in the Belvidere, and the fine gallery of paintings that the Pope is collecting from all parts of Italy, and which is nearly finished. Somewhere or other in this excursion, he lost his purse and its contents; and he imagined that in giving alms, which he had done two or three times, and the weather being wet and disagreeable, in his hurry to replace his purse it had slipped down his breeches, instead of going into his pocket. Every day, he amused himself with going about and studying every part of Rome in detail. When he first arrived, he had hired a Frenchman for a guide, but this fellow having taken himself off one day in consequence of some pique, M. de Montaigne determined to do without any guide at all, beyond some maps and books that he bought, and used to read over night, putting the information he had thus acquired into practical use the next day; and in this way he soon made himself so thoroughly a master of the matter, that he could have guided his guide.

He observed: "that there is nothing to be seen of ancient Rome but the sky under which it had risen and stood, and the outline of its form; that the knowledge he had of it was altogether abstract and contemplative, no image of it remaining to satisfy the senses; that those who said that the ruins of Rome at least remained, said more than they were warranted in saying; for the ruins of so stupendous and awful a fabric would enforce more honour and reverence for its memory; nothing, he said, remained of Rome but its sepulchre. The world, in hatred of its long domination, had first destroyed and broken in pieces the various parts of this wondrous body; and then, finding that, even though prostrate and dead, its disfigured remains still filled them with fear and hate, they buried the ruins itself; that the few indications of what it had been, which still tottered above its grave, fortune had permitted to remain there, as some evidence of the infinite greatness which so many ages, so many intestine and parricidal blows, and the never-ending conspiracy of the world against it, had not been able entirely to extinguish; but that, in all probability, even the disfigured members that did remain, were the least worthy of all those that had existed, the malignant fury of the enemies of that immortal glory having impelled them to destroy, in the first instance, that which was finest and most worthy of preservation in the imperial city; that the buildings in this bastard Rome, which the moderns were raising upon, or appending to, the glorious structures of the antique world, though they sufficed enough to excite the admiration of the present age, yet seemed to him to bear a close resemblance to those nests, which the rooks and the swallows construct upon the roofs and walls of the churches in France, which the Huguenots have demolished. Nay, when he considered the space which this tomb occupies, he feared that the real extent, even of that, was not known; he doubted whether the greater portion of the grave itself had not been buried; it appeared to him that the enormous pile which, years ago, was formed merely of such miserable diggings-up, as bits of tiles and broken pots, a pile which had attained the height and size of many natural mountains[1] (for he considered it to be as high as the hill of Gurson,[2] and twice as large), was an express ordinance of fate, to let the world thoroughly understand, by this strange and amazing proof of grandeur, how surpassing was the glory and pre-eminence of the city against which they had conspired. He said he could not at all comprehend, when he saw the limited space of some of these seven hills, especially the most famous, such as the Capitoline and the Palatine, how they could have held so great a number of buildings as have been ascribed to them. Merely looking at the remains of the Temple of Peace, the site of the Forum Romanum, the ruins of which look like a mighty mountain, just fallen asunder, he could hardly understand how two such edifices could stand even on the whole space of the Capitoline-hill, yet, besides these, there were on the hill twenty-five or thirty temples, besides a number of private houses. But, in truth, many of the conjectures which one has formed from pictures of the ancient city, are

[1] The *Monte Testaceo*. [2] In *Perigord*.

not at all borne out, when you get there, for even the site has undergone infinite changes; some of the valleys are filled up, even the deepest of them, such, for instance, as the *Velabrum*, which, on account of its lying so low, was selected as the main sewer of the city, and formed a water-course, even this has now become as high as the other natural mountains which surround it, and this has solely been done by the gradual agglomeration of the ruins of old Rome; so, the *Monte Savello* is nothing but the heaped-up ruins of part of the theatre of Marcellus. He fully believed that an ancient Roman, could one be brought back, would not be able to recognize the place. It has more than once happened that, after digging a long way down, the workmen have come to the top of some high column, which still remained standing on its base far beneath. The modern architects never think of looking for any other foundation for their houses than the tops of old buildings, the roofs of which ordinarily form the floors of modern cellars, deeming it in no way necessary to make any examination as to the foundation of the old edifice itself, or the stability of its walls; they securely base their own structure upon the ruined tops of the structure below, just as chance has happened to dispose them during the lapse of ages, and here they raise their modern palaces, as firm and safe as though the foundations were solid rocks. There are many whole streets, that stand above the old ones, full thirty feet."

On the 28th of January, he had an attack of the cholic, which, however, did not prevent him from pursuing his usual avocations, and in the afternoon he passed a tolerably large stone, with several smaller ones. On the 30th, he went to see the most ancient religious ceremony in existence, the circumcision of the Jews; a ceremony which he regarded with great interest and attention, and which he was provided with a convenient place to witness. He had previously attended their synagogue one Saturday morning, and seen them at prayers, their practice in which, resembling that of the Calvinist church, is to sing, at the pitch of their voice, various passages from the Bible, in the Hebrew tongue. They observe the cadences, but there is sad discord, owing to the confusion of so many voices of every age; for the children, even the youngest amongst them, take part in the concert, and moreover, the great majority of the congregation have but a very indifferent knowledge of Hebrew. They pay no more attention to their service than we do to ours, talking among themselves of quite different matters, and exhibiting but very slight reverence for their mysteries. They wash their hands on coming in, but never take off their caps while at their devotions, for that they consider would be a crying sin. They bow the head, however, and kneel at particular parts of their service. Upon their shoulders, or on the head, they wear a sort of linen shawl, with long fringe;—but it would take up too much time to give an account of all he remarked. After dinner, the principal divines among them take it by turns to read comments, in the Italian language, upon the passages in the Bible set apart for that particular day. After he has finished, some other rabbi present selects one of the party, and sometimes two or three, one after another, to argue with the reader upon the various opinions he has expressed. The person who read the lesson, when we were there, seemed to M. de Montaigne to display very considerable eloquence and power of mind, in the arguments he put forward. As to the operation of circumcising, it is performed in the child's house, in the most convenient and lightest room they have. In the house where he went to see this ceremony, as there was no room in it well adapted for the purpose, the operation was performed in the passage. There is a godfather and a godmother, as among us, and the godfather names the child. Circumcision takes place on the eighth day after the birth. The godfather sits down on a table, and puts a pillow on his knees; the godmother brings him the child, and then leaves the room. The child is swaddled in the same way that ours are; the godfather takes off the wrappers, and meanwhile the person who is to perform the operation, and all the other persons present, begin to sing, and continue to sing all the time the operation lasts, which is about a quarter of an hour. The officiating person need not be a rabbi, and the office is one greatly sought after, it being considered great good luck to be often called upon to perform it; so much so that it is a frequent practice to purchase the invitation to officiate, by offering to bestow a dress, or some other present, on the child. They believe that he who has circumcised a certain number, I did not hear how many, when he is dead has this privilege, that his mouth is never eaten by worms. Upon the table, where the godfather is seated, are displayed the various instruments made use of on the occasion; and, besides these, a man standing by the table has a vial of wine, and a glass. On the ground there is a chafing-dish, at which the operator, before he commences proceedings, warms his hands. The child being by this time stripped, the godfather places him firmly on his knee, with his head towards himself. The officiating friend then completes the operation, which appears to require some dexterity, and to be rather a painful one; but they never find it to be at all dangerous, and the wound heals in four or five days. The child makes an outcry, but hardly more than our own children do, when they are baptized. There is one part of the operation very curious; as soon as the gland is laid open, they present the officiator with wine, which having taken a small portion of, he sucks the bleeding gland, and spits out

the blood; this he repeats three times. They then give him, on a bit of paper, a red powder, which they call dragon's-blood, with which he covers the wound, and then envelopes the part operated upon in strips of linen, cut in a particular fashion for the purpose. After this, they give him a glass of wine, over which he pronounces some prayer, which is supposed to confer a blessing on the wine. Then, having first sipped the wine, he dips his finger in it three successive times, and each time moistens the child's mouth with it; the glass is then taken to the mother and her female friends, who are assembled in another part of the house, and they drink the remainder of the wine. Then some one takes a silver instrument, as round as a ball, with a long handle; and this instrument, which is full of little holes, like our vinaigrettes, is put first to the nose of the officiator, then to the child, and then to the godfather, the notion being that the odour it exhales has a power to fortify and raise the mind for devotion. The blood which has adhered to the officiator's mouth is not cleansed away till after the ceremonies are completed.

On the 8th, and on the 12th, he[1] had a slight attack of cholic, and passed several stones, without much pain.

The carnival at Rome this year was, by the Pope's permission, more unrestricted than has been known for several years past, but it did not appear to us any great things. Along the Corso, which is one of the largest streets here, and which takes its name from the circumstance, they have races, sometimes between four or five children, sometimes between Jews, sometimes between old men stripped naked, who run the whole length of the street. The only amusing thing is to see them run past the place where you are. They have races also with horses, which are ridden by little boys, who urge them on with incessant whipping; and there are ass-races, and exhibitions of buffaloes, which are driven along at full speed by men on horseback, armed with long goads. There is a prize assigned for each race, which they call *elpalo*; it consists generally of a piece of velvet or cloth. In one part of the street, where there is more room for the ladies to look on, the gentlemen run at the quintain, mounted upon splendid horses, in the management of which they exhibit much grace; for there is nothing in which the nobility here more excel than in equestrian exercises. The scaffolding which M. de Montaigne had set up for himself and his friends cost them three crowns; but then it was situated in one of the best parts of the street. On this occasion, you have an excellent opportunity for seeing the pretty women of Rome at your leisure; for in Italy they wear no masks, as they do in France, but show the whole face. As to any rare or perfect beauty, he observed, you do not find it here any more than among us; and, indeed, except in three or four instances, he had seen nothing remarkable in this way; but the general run of women here are agreeable-looking, and you do not see so many ugly faces as in France. The head, and the figure below the girdle, are far more becomingly arranged than among us; but their custom of having the waist exceedingly loose gives them all the appearance of being with child: the expression of the countenance among them, for the most part, is softer and gentler, yet at the same time more majestic, than is the case with the ordinary run of Frenchwomen. As to their dress, there is no comparison between them and our women: every article of it is resplendent with pearls and precious stones. Wherever they show themselves in public, whether taking the air, or at festivals, or at the theatre, they keep apart from the men; but in their dances they mingle unrestrictedly. The men are very plainly dressed on all occasions, in black and Florence serge; they are somewhat darker complexioned than we. The nobles among them, dukes, marquisses, counts, seldom make use of their titles, which I was rather surprised at, seeing that ordinarily there was little else by which to distinguish them, for they are somewhat mean-looking. They are very kind and courteous, despite what is said of them by some of our countrymen, who call all men rude and ungracious who do not choose to put up with their impertinence. We do all we can to get ourselves into ill odour in Italy; but they have still so much of their old respect and affection for France, as makes them welcome and treat kindly all those of our countrymen who choose to behave with ordinary decency.

On Shrove Tuesday he (Montaigne) went to an entertainment given by the governor, where the preparations were on a very grand scale. Amongst the rest, he particularly admired an arena of an oval form, richly fitted up for tilting: the sports here took place in the evening, before supper. Another thing he was especially struck with was the manner in which they covered the floor, in less than half an hour, with an infinite variety of devices, of a red colour. The floor had previously been covered with a thin white plaister; upon this they laid pieces of parchment, or leather, in which various devices were cut out; and then, passing a brush with red paint over this open work, the devices became instantly transferred to the white floor; and this was done so rapidly that in two hours' time the whole nave of a church could be thus painted. At supper, the ladies were waited upon by their cavaliers, who stand behind their chairs, ready to hand them wine, or whatever else they require. There were a great number of roasted fowls served up, with all their feathers on, as when alive; capons cooked entire, in glass cases; a vast quantity of hares and rabbits, with some live kids stuck up to the necks in paste. He noticed that the

[1] Montaigne.

table-linen was admirably folded. The ladies' table, when dinner was over, was taken away in pieces, and underneath it appeared another, ready laid and covered with sweetmeats and confections. There were two parties of gentlemen running at the quintain. They have plenty of horses here, and much finer ones than ours.

[*The Secretary's labours, it will be seen, terminated here. The rest of the work was written by Montaigne's own hand.*]

Having sent home the person who has hitherto undertaken this fine piece of work, and seeing that he has got so far with it, I must needs continue it myself, though I by no means relish the trouble.

On the 16th of February, as I was returning from a walk, I saw in a small chapel a priest in his robes, busied in curing a demoniac; the patient seemed a man overwhelmed, and, as it were, half dead with melancholy. They were holding him on his knees before the altar, with some cloth or other round his neck, by which he was secured. The priest first read out of his breviary a vast number of prayers and exorcisms, commanding the devil to quit that afflicted body. Then speaking to the patient, addressing first himself, and then the devil which possessed him, he repeated his commands to the devil to withdraw, and attacked the poor patient with his fists, and spat on his face, by way of assailing the demon. The demoniac every now and then returned some unmeaning answer to the priest's questions; replying, sometimes for himself, to explain what were the symptoms of his malady; and sometimes for the devil, to express how the said devil feared God, and how he dreaded the exorcisms which were being denounced against him. After this had gone on for some time, the priest, as a last effort, went to the altar, and taking the pix, which held the *Corpus Domini*, in his left hand, and a lighted taper in the other, which he held down so that it might burn away, he said several prayers, and at the end of them pronounced a fierce anathema against the devil, with as loud and authoritative a voice as he could assume. When the first taper was burnt down nearly to his fingers, he took a second, and afterwards a third. Then he replaced the pix, and came back to the patient, whom, after addressing a few words to him simply as a man, he caused to be untied, and directed his friends to take him home. He told us that this was a devil of the worst sort, a terribly obstinate devil, whom it would be a very difficult thing to dislodge. He then gave ten or a dozen gentlemen, who were present, an account of several cases that had been entrusted to him; he mentioned, in particular, that the day before, he had freed a woman from a very big devil, that had been molesting her, and who, as he was quitting her, discharged through her mouth a quantity of nails and pins, and a lock of his hair. He added, that the woman's friends had come to tell him that she was not quite recovered yet, but that he had explained that this was only because a smaller and less malicious demon had taken possesion of her that morning; but that this sort of devil, for he knew all the different sorts, and the particular distinctions between them, was very easy to dislodge. However, I saw no more of his conjurations. The man I spoke of did nothing but grind his teeth and make faces when they presented the *Corpus Domini* to him; every now and then he muttered *si fata volent*,[1] for he was a notary, and knew a little Latin.

On the 1st of March, I went to St. Sixtus's. The priest, who was performing mass, stood behind the great altar, with his face towards the people. There was no one behind him. The Pope came here the same day; it was only a few days before that he had removed the nuns, who previously lived there, and had fitted up their part of the building as a hospital for the poor people, who till then were begging about the city, and a very comfortable place he provided for them. The cardinals had each contributed twenty crowns towards the expenses, and other private persons had made handsome donations for the same purpose. The Pope himself endowed the hospital with five hundred crowns a month. There are at Rome a number of private establishments which exhibit the utmost piety and charity. I should say, that the great body of the people here are less religious than in the large towns in France, but as for the forms of religion, they are no where more numerous, or better kept up. I am writing this in full liberty of conscience, and I will give two examples of what I have just said. A certain friend of mine was in bed with a wench, and exercising her in her profession, when the bell rung to *Ave Maria;* whereupon the girl leaped up from the bed, and threw herself on her knees to say the prescribed prayer. On another occasion, the same gentleman was with a girl, when all at once the mama (for most of these girls live with some old woman, whom they call mother or aunt) came thundering at the door, and, on being admitted, rushed up to the girl in a perfect fury, and tore from her neck a ribbon from which hung a small Madonna, which she feared might be contaminated by the impurity of the wearer; and the girl herself manifested extreme contrition at having forgotten to take it from her neck, as it was her custom to do upon these occasions.

The ambassador from the Muscovite came also to this church to-day, dressed in a scarlet mantle, and a cassock of cloth of gold, with a hat like a night-cap, also of cloth of gold, edged with fur, and beneath this, another cap of cloth of silver. This is the second ambassador from Muscovy to the Pope. The first was in the time of Paul III. The general notion was

[1] "*If the fates will have it so.*"

that his business with the Pope was to get him to interpose in the war which the King of Poland was waging with his master, the ambassador alleging that Muscovy had to sustain the first shock from the Turk, and that if the Pole succeeded in weakening him, he should be unable to encounter any other enemy, which would be opening a wide window for the Turk to get through to attack Christendom; and the ambassador, as a further inducement, offered to make some compromise or other as to the the differences between the Church of Rome and the Greek Church. He had apartments assigned him in the governor's house, the same as those the ambassador in Paul the Third's time had, and was entertained at the Pope's expense. He had stickled a long time at kissing the Pope's feet, insisting that he would only kiss his right hand; and he would not give way, till it was shown him that the emperor himself was liable to this ceremony, for the example of kings was not sufficient for him. He knew no other language than his own, and had come unprovided with an interpreter. He had only three or four men in his train, who said they had passed through Poland in disguise, threatened every hour with great dangers. His nation is so ignorant of the affairs of this part of the world, that he brought with him to Venice letters from his master, addressed to the chief governor of the seigneury of Venice. When he was asked what this inscription meant, he told them that the people of his country thought that Venice was a place under the dominion of the Pope, and that he placed governors over it, as over Bologna and other cities. God knows how the magnificos relished this specimen of ignorance! He brought presents, both to them and to the Pope, of sables and black fox-skins, a fur still more rich and rare than the other.

On the 6th March, I went to see the library of the Vatican, which occupies five or six rooms, going one out of another. There are a great number of books fastened to desks; and others in coffers, which were all opened for me; there are also a quantity of manuscripts, among which I especially noticed a Seneca, and the Opuscula of Plutarch. The other remarkable features were a statue of the good Aristides, with a fine bold head, thick beard, high forehead, and a countenance full of gentleness and true majesty: his name is inscribed on the pedestal of the statue, which is a work of great antiquity; a Chinese book, in rude characters, written upon some peculiar material, softer and finer than our paper; and, as the leaves are too thin to bear the ink on both sides, only one side is used; the leaves are all rolled up. They say that this paper is the bark of some tree. I also saw here a bit of the ancient *papyrus*, on which were written some unknown characters. This also is the bark of a tree. I was shown, too, the breviary of St. Gregory, in manuscript: it bears no date, but they maintain that it has descended from him to the present Pope, from hand to hand, in regular succession.[1] It is a missal, much the same as ours; and was brought to the last Council of Trent, as an authority for regulating our religious ceremonies. I saw also a book by St. Thomas Aquinas, in which the author has made several corrections with his own hand; he seems to have been a very bad scribe, making use of a small and illegible character, even worse than my own. *Item*, a Bible printed on parchment, one of those that Plantein not long since printed, in four languages,[2] and which King Philip sent to the present Pope, as is stated in an inscription on the binding. *Item*, the original of the book that the King of England[3] wrote against Luther, and which he sent, about fifty years ago,[4] to Pope Leo X., subscribed with his own hand, with this fine Latin distich, also in his own hand-writing.

Anglorum Rex Henricus, Leo decime, mittit
Hoc opus, et fidei testem et amicitiæ.[5]

I read the prefaces, the one to the Pope, the other to the reader; the royal author claims that the defects of his work may be excused, by reason of his other occupations, and his own want of capacity; the book is written in good scholastic Latin. I had no difficulty in getting access to the library; indeed, any body can go there, and make what extracts he pleases; I was shown over the whole place by a gentleman, who invited me to come again as often as I thought fit. Our ambassador, who left Rome about this time, had complained to me that he had not been able to visit the library, without previously making court to the Cardinal Charlet, the librarian, which he did not choose to do; so that he had thus been prevented from looking at the manuscript Seneca, which he had a great desire to see; and 'twas only fortune that led me to make the attempt, which otherwise his representation had almost made me give up the idea of, in despair. All things are thus easy to certain turns of mind, and impracticable to others. Opportunity and importunity have their privileges, and frequently bestow upon individuals what they refuse to kings. Curiosity sometimes stands in its own way, as well as grandeur and power. I saw here, too, a manuscript Virgil, written in a very large hand, and in those long thin characters which we see in the inscriptions of the time of the emperors; for instance, those of the period of Constantine, which have begun to

1 Does Montaigne refer to St. Gregory, surnamed the Great, or to Gregory II., who is also revered as a saint?

2 The Polyglot Bible, the edition called Philip II.'s, printed by Christopher Plantin, at Antwerp, in 1569, in 8 vols. folio.

3 Henry VIII.

4 Pope Leo X. died 1521

5 The learned will discover a false quantity in these lines, but crowned heads are not bound to attend to such trifles. Perhaps, for *decime* should be read *maxime*.

lose the square proportions of the antique Latin writings in the Gothic form. This Virgil confirmed the opinion I have always held, that the first verses[1] they print in the Æneid are suppositious; this copy has not got them. There is also a copy of the Acts of the Apostles in Greek, written in beautiful gold letters, as fresh and bright as though it were a work of yesterday. The letter is considerably raised, lying so solid upon the paper that, if you pass your hand over it, you can feel the relief. I believe we have lost the use of this sort of writing.

On the 13th of March, an old patriarch of Antioch, an Arabian, thoroughly versed in five or six of the Eastern languages, but utterly unacquainted with Greek and most of the other European tongues, with whom I had become very intimate, gave me a mixture for my stone, with written directions how to use it. He put it into a little earthen pot, where he told me it would keep ten or twenty years; and he said he had such confidence in its virtue, that he had little doubt it would effect a thorough cure in a very short time. Lest I should lose these directions, I will put them down here: take of the drug, a piece of about the size of two peas, and dissolve it in warm water; this will make a sufficient quantity for five doses, which you are to drink every other night, on going to bed; you must make but a very light supper on these occasions.

Dining one day at Rome with our ambassador, in company with Muret and other learned men, I turned the conversation upon the French translation of Plutarch;[2] and arguing with those who thought less of it than I did, I maintained that, at least, where the translator has missed the real meaning of Plutarch, he has substituted one that looks very much like a real meaning, and is in close congruity with what has gone before and what comes after. In order to show me that, even in this respect, I assigned the translator more than his due, they quoted two passages; the one, the detection of which they attributed to the critical eye of the son of M. Mangot, an advocate of Paris, who had just left Rome, occurs in the *Life of Solon*, about the middle, where he says that Solon "se vantoit qu'il avoit affanchi l'Attique, et avoit osté les bornes qui faisoient les separations des heritages." Now here he is quite mistaken; for the Greek term signifies certain marks that were placed upon lands that were mortgaged or chargeable with a quit-rent, in order that persons about to purchase them might be aware of the circumstance. What the translator has substituted as to limits, is not at all reconcileable with the true meaning, for it would tend to make it appear that the lands were not free, but common. Stephen's Latin version comes much nearer the mark. The second passage occurs at the end of the treatise *on the Nurture of Children*; "D'observer," says the translator, "ces regles, cela se peut plus tost souhaiter que conseiller." Now the Greek text, these gentlemen told me, has it: "Is more to be desired than hoped for." The meaning which the translator has substituted for this clear and obvious sentence, is strangely incorrect and feeble; and, taking for granted that their version of the Greek text was the right one, I readily conceded that their objection was good.

The churches in Rome are not so handsome as those in the other better sort of towns in Italy; and, in general, it may be said that the churches, both in Italy and Germany, are inferior to those of France. At St. Peter's, at the entrance of the new church, you see a number of flags hanging over your head, on either side, as trophies: an inscription states that these banners were taken by the king from the Huguenots; but it does not specify where or when. Close to the Gregorian chapel, where there are a vast number of pictures fixed against the wall, there is a miserable, ill-painted representation of the battle of Moncontour.[3] In the room facing the chapel of St Sixtus, fixed against, or painted on, the wall, are a number of other pictures, representing events with which the Holy See has from time to time been closely connected,—such, amongst others, as the naval battle fought by John of Austria.[4] There is also a picture of the pope,[5] treading under his feet the head of the emperor,[6] who came to solicit his pardon, and to kiss his holiness's feet; but it does not give the words which history reports to have been used on the occasion.[7] There are two pictures of the death of the Admiral de Chatillon, very well and correctly painted.

On the 15th of March, M. de Monluc came to me at day-break, to fulfil the plan we had formed the day before, of going to see Ostia. We passed the Tiber by the bridge Nos-Signora, and quitted Rome through the Porta del Porto, anciently called *Portuensis*. Thence we rode, for about eight miles, through a tract of hilly and indifferently fertile country; and then, coming once more to the Tiber, we descended into an extensive plain of pasture-

[1] The four which commence thus:
Ille ego qui quondam fragili modulatus avenâ, &c.

[2] By Jaques Amyot. The first edition was published at Paris, by Vascosan, 1567-1574, 13 vols. 8vo.

[3] A town of Poictou, near which the Huguenot army, commanded by the Admiral de Coligny, was defeated by the army of Charles IX., 3rd Oct., 1569.

[4] That of Lepanto, gained over the Turks, anno 1571. The picture mentioned by Montaigne, it is said, does not now exist, but there is one on the subject, painted by Georgio Vasari, in the Great Hall of the Vatican.

[5] Alexander III.

[6] Frederic Barbarossa, who came to Venice in the year 1177, to receive absolution from the Pope.

[7] These words were: *Super aspidem et basiliscum ambulabis, et conculcabis leonem et draconem.* Psal. 90, v. 13. The picture is no longer at St. Peter's, but the subject is painted in the Hall of the Vatican.

land, at whose extremity once stood a large town, some fine ruins of which are still to be seen, bordering on the lake of Trajan, an arm of the Tuscan Sea, which vessels formerly ascended; but the sea bestows but a very poor supply of water upon it now, and still less to another lake a little beyond it, called the Arch of Claudius. We might have dined here with the Cardinal of Perugia, who was stopping at the place; and, indeed, nothing can be more courteous and hospitable than the reception which these dignitaries and their household give you. His eminence sent me word by one of my people, who happened to meet one of his officers, that he had just right to complain of me, for not calling upon him; my servant himself was taken to the cardinal's buttery, and presented with wine and other things; yet the cardinal had no sort of acquaintance with me, and only exercised herein the ordinary hospitality observed towards all strangers of the better class; but I was desirous of getting on, lest we should not have time to complete our excursion that day, for we had gone somewhat out of our way to visit these ruins. After a short ride, we entered the Sacred Isle, which is about a Gascon league in extent, and consists of pasture land. Here are a number of marble columns, and other remains of an ancient town of Trajan, which once occupied the site of Porto: something or other is dug up every day by the pope's direction, and sent to Rome. When we got to the other side of this tract, we found that we had the Tiber to cross; and as we had no means of doing so with our horses, we were on the point of retracing our steps, when, by good luck, who should arrive on the opposite shore but the Sieurs du Bellay, the Baron de Chassai, M. de Marivau, and others. Upon seeing them, I crossed the river, and made an exchange with them of our horses for theirs; so that they returned to Rome with our equipage, and we proceeded on to Ostia, whence they came, with theirs.

Ostia, fifteen miles from Rome, is situated on what was formerly the shore of the Tiber; for the river has somewhat altered its course since the town was built, and is still constantly quitting its ancient banks. We made a hasty breakfast at a small tavern here. Further on, we observed La Rocca, a small and tolerably strong fortress, where, however, no garrison is kept up. The popes, especially the present, have built on this coast large towers, at distances of about a mile from one another, to prevent the descents which the Turks have been in the frequent habit of making, particularly during the vintage, on which occasions they have often carried off considerable plunder, and numbers of prisoners. These towers, by means of cannon shots, communicate the alarm from one to the other with such rapidity, that notice of any apprehended danger is almost immediately carried to Rome. Round Ostia, are the salt marshes, which supply all the States of the Church with this article. The road from Ostia to Rome, *Via Ostiensis*, is crowded with evidences of its former magnificence and beauty; fine causeways, the ruins of a stupendous aqueduct, extending the whole way; at every quarter of a mile the remains of extensive private edifices, and more than two-thirds of the road still paved by those large square slabs, with which the Romans used to pave all their highways. The whole appearance of this route fully justifies the opinion, that formerly, the entire distance from Rome to Ostia exhibited two lines of fine houses and other structures. Among other ruins, we saw, about half-way, on our left, the splendid tomb of a Roman prætor, the inscription on which still remains entire. In Rome, you lose many of these inscriptions, and all that remains of a large portion of the city is massive walls; it was their method to make immense thick brick walls, which they faced with marble, or some other white stone, or hard cement; and where this outer crust has fallen off, or been destroyed, as is the case in most instances, by the lapse of ages, the inscriptions which were upon them have of course disappeared also, and we have thus been deprived of the source of a vast extent of information, upon an infinite variety of matters. These inscriptions only remain in cases where the structures they illustrate, were built of some massive and solid substance. The different entrances to Rome are almost all naked and uncultivated, owing to the want of proper ground, or, more probably, as I take it, to the circumstance that the city contains a very small proportion of men who live by the labour of their hands. As I was coming here, I passed on the road a number of countrymen, making their way from the Grisons and Savoy, to obtain some employ in the vineyards and gardens about Rome, and they told me that this was their mode of obtaining their livelihood. The city is nothing but court and nobility; everybody in it participates in the universal tone of ecclesiastical idleness. There is no trading street to be seen, except, perhaps, a small one or two in the suburbs: there is nothing but palaces and palace-grounds. They have no Rue de la Harpe or Rue St. Denis here; I was reminded of nothing at Paris but the Rue de Seine, or the Quai des Augustins. There is hardly any difference discernible between a holiday and a work-day; all the week through there is something or other going on, in the way of festival or show, and as great a crowd of spectators on one day as on another: the whole population seems made up of prelates, nobles, and ladies riding about in carriages, and forming processions, and of idle sight-seers looking at them. We got back by bed-time to

Rome, 15 miles. On the 16th March, I took it into my head to try one of the Roman vapour-baths, and went to that of St. Mark, which is considered the best: I was treated with tolerable respect and attention, though I went there

unattended. There is no objection to your taking a female friend with you into your bath-room; the lady being, like yourself, waited upon by male attendants. At this place I had mentioned to me the material for making the depilatory generally used here: it consists simply of two parts hot lime and one part arsenic, which being applied to the hair you desire to remove, accomplishes the object in less than a quarter of an hour. On the 17th, I had a fit of the cholic, which lasted for five or six hours, but in a tolerably mild form; and soon after I passed a stone, about the size of the kernel of a pine-apple, and much the same shape. There were roses and artichokes to be had here in plenty at this time; but, for my part, I did not find the weather at all too warm, and wore just the same clothes and covering as when at home. They have less fish than we have in France; and as to their pike, they are of such inferior quality, that none but the poorer people ever touch them. They have soles and trout, but in no great quantity; and barbel, which are excellent, and much larger than those you get at Bordeaux,—but then they are dear. Dorees are held in very great estimation here, as are their mullet, which are a great deal bigger than ours, and somewhat firmer. The oil here is excellent, and leaves none of that disagreeable feeling in the throat, which I experience elsewhere after taking much of it. They have fresh grapes all the year round; at this very moment there are plenty of fine bunches hanging from the vines. The mutton is very bad, and is scarcely thought anything of. On the 18th the Portuguese ambassador did homage to the Pope, on behalf of King Philip,[1] for the kingdom of Portugal. It was the same ambassador who attended at this court to represent the late king, and the States in opposition to King Philip. On my return from St. Peter's, I met a man who mentioned two curious things: that the Portuguese paid their homage in Passion-week; and that on this particular day the Pope's visitation was to the church of St. John *Porta Latina*, in which church a party of Portuguese, some years ago, entered into a very extraordinary society. They married one another, man to man, before the altar, with the same ceremonies that we observe at our marriages; received the sacrament together; read the same marriage service, and then went to bed and lived together. The Romans remarked hereupon that, as, in the other conjunction of man and woman, it is marriage alone that makes the connection lawful, so these worthies had taken it into their heads that the other connexion might be legitimized in like manner, by preluding it with the ceremonies of the church. Eight or nine Portuguese, belonging to this respectable community, were afterwards burnt. I was present at the homage. A salvo was fired from the castle of St. Angelo and from the palace,[2] and the ambassador was escorted by the Pope's trumpeters, drummers, and archers. I did not go to see the ceremony inside. The Muscovite ambassador, who was seated in an opposite window, dressed in his state robes, said he had been invited to witness a grand assemblage; but that in his country, when they spoke of troops and horses, they always meant twenty-five or thirty thousand; and he made a jest of the whole affair, as I learnt from the gentleman who had been appointed to converse with him, by an interpreter. On Palm-Sunday, at vespers, I saw in one of the churches, a boy, seated on a chair at the side of the altar, clothed in a large robe of new blue taffeta, with a crown of olive round his head, and holding in his hand a lighted white wax taper. It was a lad of about fifteen, who had that day, by the pope's order, been liberated from the prison, to which he had been committed for killing another boy of his own age. At St. John Latran there is to be seen some transparent marble.[3] Next day, the pope made the visitation of the seven churches. He wore white boots, with a cross on each foot made of leather, still whiter than the boots themselves. He has generally with him a Spanish horse, a hackney, a mule, and a litter, all harnessed and accoutred in the same manner; but on this occasion the horse was not present. His squire, who awaited him at the bottom of St. Peter's stairs, had two or three pair of gilt spurs in his hand, but the pope would not have any of them put on, and got, instead, into his litter, in which I observed there were two scarlet hats, nearly of the same pattern, hanging against the sides on nails. The same day, in the evening, they returned me my Essays, marked with the *ex purgata*, suggested by the judgment of the learned monks. The *Maestro del Sacro Palasso* had no means of forming an opinion on the subject, but from the report made him by a French monk, for he did not understand a word of our language himself; he was so well satisfied, however, with the explanations I gave upon every article objected to by the Frenchman, that he left it to my conscience to correct what I should, on consideration, see was in bad taste. I begged him to take the opinion of the person he had appointed to read the book, rather than to leave the matter to me; for I told him that as several of the points which were objected to, such as the use of the word fortune, the quoting heretical poets, the apology for the Emperor Julian, the remark as to people who are at prayers being exempt from vicious inclinations at the time; *item*, the opinion that all punishment beyond the infliction of simple death is cruelty; *item*, as to the education of children; that in these, and several other points, I had expressed my firm opinion, and that neither when I wrote them, nor now, did I regard them as errors;

[1] Philip II.

[2] The Vatican.

[3] Probably alabaster.

and, as to a number of other points, I denied that the censor had at all understood my meaning. The *Maestro*, who is a clever man, entered very much into my views, and gave me to understand that he was by no means an advocate for insisting upon these emendations; and he, moreover, went, in my presence, into an able argument, in my behalf, with another person, also an Italian, who supported the views of the censor. They kept back my copy of the History of the Swiss, the French translation, merely because the translator is a heretic; his name, it is true, no where appears in the book, but it is amazing how familiarly they seem to know the names and places of pretty well all the men among us who have made themselves in any way noticeable; the best of it was, that no sooner did they see the book, than they told me off-hand, that the preface was condemned. The same day, in the church of St. John Latran, instead of the Penitentiaries, who usually perform this office in the churches, Monseigneur the Cardinal St. Sixtus, who was seated in a corner of the church, touched, with a long wand he held in his right hand, the heads of all the passers-by, men and women, looking at each more or less smilingly and graciously, according to their respective quality and beauty. On Wednesday, in Holy-week, I went the round of the seven churches, before dinner, in company with M. de Foix; it took us about five hours. I dont understand why some people should be so scandalized at hearing the vices of individual prelates commented on, when they are well known to the public; for, on this occasion, both at St. John Latran and at the church of the Holy Cross of Jerusalem, I saw stories, written in detail on conspicuous places, about Pope Silvester the Second, as discreditable as any that can well be imagined.

The circuit of the city, on the one side of the river, from the Porta del Popolo to the Porta San Paulo, may be made, as I have several times found, in about three hours and a quarter, riding at a quiet pace; and the portion of the city which lies on the other side of the Tiber may be compassed in the same way in somewhat less than an hour and a half. Among other entertainments that Rome provided me withal, in Lent, were the sermons. There were excellent preachers to be heard every day, and one in particular, a converted rabbi, who addresses the Jews every Saturday afternoon, in the quarter called the Trinity. There are sixty Jews always present, who have agreed to hear his reasonings. This man was a very noted doctor among them; and from their own arguments, from their own rabbis, and from the text of the Bible, he confutes their tenets; and he is amazingly versed in the deep learning, and the various languages, which are essential to the performance of his task. There was another preacher, who preached before the pope and the cardinals, named Father Toledo, a man of rare knowledge and ability; another, a most eloquent and popular man, who preached before the jesuits, and exhibited a masterly command of language; both the latter are jesuits. 'Tis amazing what a position this society has attained throughout Christendom; never, I believe, was there any community amongst us that ever occupied so high a place, or that ever produced such immense effects as these will do, if their plans are not interrupted. They occupy well nigh all Christendom, and daily send forth from amongst their body, great men in every class of greatness. It is the part of our system which threatens the greatest danger to the heretics of our time. One of the preachers jestingly said that we turned our coaches into observatories; and, in point of fact, the prevalent occupation of the Roman population, high and low, seems to be lounging about in the streets, in coaches, on horseback, or a-foot; they are constantly going out, not with any definite intention of calling any where, but simply to pass through one street into another, and so on; and there are two or three streets which are in particular favour, as lounging places. As to my own taste, I must confess that the main enjoyment of this way of passing the time is to look at the ladies at the windows on each side of the street, especially the courtesans, who show themselves from behind their blinds with such skilful generalship, that it seems impossible not to be attracted; yet when, as was often the case, I alighted from my horse on the spot, and obtained admission to the ladies whose appearance had so charmed me, I have often been amazed to find how much handsomer they had contrived to seem, than they really were. They have an extraordinary faculty of letting you see only their best features, when you are looking at them from any distance; they will manage to show only the upper part of the face, or the lower, just as the one or the other is the most favourable, so that in a whole street, you will not see an ugly woman at a window, whatever you may find them to be when you come nearer. There is no end to the bows and salutations, and gracious glances, which are exchanged between these ladies and the gentlemen, who pass beneath their windows; for one of the privileges which you obtain for the crown or the four crowns you have given for passing the night in one of these houses is that of paying this public court to your fair hostess the next day. Here and there you see ladies of quality at the windows, but they are easily distinguishable from their frail neighbours. The best view you have is on horseback; but this is an equipage only adopted by poor devils like myself, or by young gallants, as a method of displaying the caracolings of their steeds, and the graces of their own persons. With the exception of these latter, the upper classes all ride in coaches; and many of the gayer sort of men, in order to have a good view of the ladies, have little windows in the roofs of their coaches;

which was what the preacher referred to, when he talked of their coaches being observatories. On Maundy-Thursday, in the morning, the pope, in full pontificals, placed himself in the first portico of St. Peter's, on the second flight, with the cardinals round him, and holding a torch in his hand. A canon of St. Peter's, who stood on one side, then read, at the pitch of his voice, a bull in the Latin language, excommunicating an infinite variety of people, and among others the Huguenots, by that term, and all the princes who detained any of the estates belonging to the church; at which last article the Cardinals de Medici and Caraffa, who stood close by the Pope, laughed heartily. The reading of this anathema takes up a full hour and a half; for every article that the clerk reads in Latin, the Cardinal Gonzaga, who stands on the other side with his hat off, repeats in Italian. When the excommunication is finished, the pope throws the lighted torch down among the people; and, whether in jest or otherwise, the Cardinal Gonzaga threw another; for there were three of them lighted. Hereupon ensues a tremendous struggle among the people below, to get even the smallest piece of this torch; and not a few hard blows with stick and fist are given and returned in the contest. While the curse is read, a large piece of black taffeta hangs over the rails of the portico before the pope; and when the reading is over, they take up this black taffeta, and exhibit one of another colour under it; and the pope then pronounces his public blessing on all the faithful members of the church. This same day, they show the Veronica, the *Vera Effigies*, the representation of a face, worked in sombre colours, and enclosed in a frame like a large mirror; this is shown to the people, with much ceremony, from the top of a pulpit, about five or six paces wide. The priest who holds it, has his hands covered with red gloves, and there are two or three other priests assisting him. There is nothing regarded with so much reverence as this; the people prostrate themselves on the earth before it, most of them with tears rolling down their cheeks, and all uttering cries of commiseration. A woman who was present, and who they said was a demoniac, got into a tremendous fury on seeing this effigy, yelling and throwing herself into infinite contortions. The priests take the effigy round the pulpit, and at every step or two, present it to the people who are standing in that particular direction, and on each of these occasions, the crowd raises a loud cry. They also show at the same time, and with the same ceremonies, the head of the lance,[1] enclosed in a crystal bottle. This exhibition takes place several times during the day, and the assemblage of people is so vast, that outside the church, as far as the eye can reach down the streets, you can see nothing but the heads of men and women, so close together that it seems as though you could walk upon them. 'Tis a true papal court; the splendour and the principal grandeur of the court of Rome consists in these devotional exhibitions. And, indeed, it is a very striking sight to witness, on these occasions, the infinite religious fervour of this people. In Rome, there are more than a hundred religious societies, with one or other of which almost every person of quality is connected. Some of these establishments are appropriated to foreigners. Our own kings belong to the society of the Gonsanon. All these private fraternities perform various religious ceremonies, though for the most part only in Lent. On this particular occasion, they all walk in procession, clothed in linen robes, each company having a different colour, some black, some white, some red, some blue, some green, and so on; they nearly all cover their faces with their cowls. The most impressive sight I ever saw, here or elsewhere, was the incredible number of people, who thronged every square and street, all taking an earnest part in the devotions of the day. They were flocking up towards St. Peter's all day long, and on the approach of night the whole city seemed in flames; for every man took part in the procession of each religious community, as it marched up in its order towards the church, bore a lighted flambeau, almost universally of white wax. I am persuaded, that there passed before me not fewer than twelve thousand of these torches, at the very least, for, from eight o'clock in the evening till midnight, the street was constantly full of this moving pageantry, marshalled in such excellent order, with every thing so well timed, that though the entire procession, as I have said, was composed of a great number of different societies, coming from different parts, yet not for one moment did I observe any stoppage, or gap, or interruption. Each company was attended by a band of music, and chaunted sacred songs as they went along. Between the ranks, walked a file of penitents, who every other minute whipped themselves with cords; there were five hundred of these, at least, whose backs were torn and bleeding in a frightful manner. This part of the exhibition is a mystery I have not yet been able to make out; they are unquestionably most terribly mangled and wounded, yet, from the tranquillity of their countenances, the steadiness of their motion and of their tongue (for I heard several of them speaking), you would have formed no idea they were engaged even in a serious occupation, to say nothing of a very painful one, and yet many of them were lads of but twelve or thirteen years old. As one of them, a mere child, with an exceedingly agreeable and unmoved countenance, was passing just close to where I stood, a young woman near me uttered an exclamation of pity at the wounds he had inflicted on himself, on which

[1] The head of the lance with which the soldier, Longis, pierced the side of our Saviour.

he turned round and said, with a laugh: *Basta, disse che fo questo per li lui peccati, non per li miei.*[1] Not only do they exhibit no appearance of pain, or of being reluctant thus to mangle themselves, but, on the contrary, they seem to delight in it; or, at all events, they treat it with such indifference that you hear them chatting together about other matters, laughing, running, jumping, and joining in the shouts of the rest of the crowd, as if nothing ailed them. At certain distances, there are men walking with them, and carrying wine, which they every now and then present to the penitents; some of whom take a mouthful. They also give them sugar-plums. The men who carry the wine, at certain intervals, moisten with it the ends of the penitents' whips, which are of cord, and get so clotted with gore that they require to be wetted before they can be untwisted. Sometimes the wine is applied to the sufferers' wounds. From the shoes and the breeches worn by these penitents, it is easy to perceive that they are persons quite of the lower class, who, at all events the greater number of them, let themselves out for this particular service. I was told, indeed, that the shoulders were protected by some flesh-coloured covering, and that the appearance of the blood and wounds was artificial; but I was near enough to see that the cuts and wounds were quite real, and I am sure that the pain must have been very severe; and, besides, where is the merit of these penitential exhibitions, if they are merely a trick and imposition? There are several other remarkable features in this procession, which I cannot stay to describe. After one company has seen *el Viso Santo*, the *Sacra Effigies*, it moves on, and gives place to another company, and so on. The ladies, on this occasion, are at liberty to go about as they please, and the streets all night long are full of them; they are almost all on foot. The church that looks finest on this occasion is that of Santa Rotonda, by reason of its illuminations. It is covered from top to bottom with moving lamps, which keep turning about all night long. On Easter-Eve, I went to see, at St. John Latran, the heads of St. Paul and St. Peter, which are exhibited here on that day. The heads are entire, with the hair, flesh, colour, and beard, as though they still lived; St. Peter has a long pale face, with a brilliant complexion, approaching the sanguine, with a grey, peaked beard, and a papal mitre on his head; St. Paul is of a dark complexion, with a broader and fuller face, a large head, and thick grey beard. These heads stand in a recess, some way above you. When they are shown, the people are called together by the ringing of a bell, and a curtain is then slowly pulled down, behind which you see the heads, placed side by side. The time allowed for viewing them, is that in which you can repeat an *Ave Maria*, and then the curtain is again raised; shortly after the curtain descends, and once more ascends; and this is repeated thrice; so as to afford every one present an opportunity of seeing. This exhibition takes place four or five times in the course of the day. The recess is about a pike's length above you, and there is a thick iron grating before the heads. Several lighted tapers are placed in front of them, outside the recess, but still you cannot very well distinguish the particular features. At least, I could not, and I saw them two or three times. There was a bright polish over the faces, which made them look something like our masks.

On the Wednesday after Easter, M. Maldonat,[2] who was then at Rome, asked my opinion as to the manners and character of the people there, more particularly as to religion; and he found that my opinion entirely coincided with his own: namely, that the lower classes are, beyond comparison, more devout in France than here; but that the richer people, especially the courtiers, are somewhat less so. He told me, that whenever he heard it said, as he often did, particularly by Spaniards, of whom there are a great number in his society, that France was sunk in heresy, he always maintained that there were more truly religious men in Paris alone, than in all Spain put together.

The boats here are drawn up the Tiber, by ropes attached to three or four pair of buffaloes, as the case may be. As to the air of Rome, I do not know what other people may think of it, but I found it extremely pleasant and healthy. The Sieur de Vielart said he had lost his tendency to head-ache here; which would seem to corroborate the popular notion that Rome is bad for the feet and good for the head. There is nothing more injurious to my health than *ennui* and idleness; here I had always some occupation, if not altogether as pleasant as I could have wished, yet very well answering the purpose of relieving me from any access of tedium; such as looking at the antiquities, and walking through the vineyards, which here assume the form of pleasure-grounds, and are places of singular beauty; and here I first learnt how much art can do in transforming rugged, hilly, and uneven spots into delightful gardens, which even borrow an infinity of graces, not known among us, from the very irregularity of the surface. Amongst the handsomest of these pleasure-grounds, are those of Cardinal D'Este, at Monte Cavallo; of Cardinal Farnese, on the Palatine Mount; of the Cardinals Ursino, Sforza, and Medici; that of Pope Julius; that of Madame;[3] the gardens of Farnese, and of the Cardinal

1 "Pshaw; tell her I'm not doing this for my own sins, but for hers." Montaigne's Italian is never the most correct in the world.

2 The celebrated jesuit, whom Montaigne also met at Epernay.

3 So called from having belonged to Madame Marguerite, Duchess of Parma.

Riario at Transtevere; and that of Cesio, outside the Porta del Popolo. These beautiful spots are open to whomsoever chooses to visit them, and you can do what you like there, and even sleep there with your mistress, when the proprietor is not there, as is mostly the case: there are plenty of ways of passing the time there, either in listening to sermons, which are always going on, or to controversial discussions; or to chat with some *bona roba*, on which occasions I have sometimes been put out by finding that they charge as dear for their conversation (which was what I mostly wanted, for I liked to hear their sharp tongues at work) as they do for the other favour, and are even more chary of it. These various amusements sufficed to keep me in occupation; and neither in-doors nor out, was I ever troubled with melancholy, which is death to me, or with any feeling of annoyance. So you see, this is by no means an unpleasant place to live at; and, moreover, it is to be remembered that while I was at Rome, I only saw it in a general and public sort of way, as any obscure stranger might have done: if I had stayed long enough to see more of Rome, as it is seen and enjoyed by its own population, I cannot tell how much more delighted I might not have been. On the last of March, I had an attack of cholic, which lasted all night, but was not very severe; it stirred up my stomach, however, very much, and made my water sharper than usual. I passed some large gravel, and two stones. On Low Sunday, I saw the ceremony of the Virgin's alms. The pope, on this occasion, beside his usual train, has twenty-five horses led before him, richly caparisoned in cloth of gold, and ten or twelve mules decorated with crimson velvet; each of these animals being led by one of the pope's lacqueys on foot. His own litter was also covered with crimson velvet. He was immediately preceded by four men on horseback, each bearing, at the end of a truncheon, also covered with red velvet, and profusely ornamented with gold, a red hat: he himself rode on a mule, as did the cardinals who followed him, all apparelled in their robes of state: the tails of which were fastened with tags to their mule's bridle. The virgins were a hundred and seven in number, and each was accompanied by an elderly female relation. After mass, they left the church, and, forming in procession, filed off. As they left the choir of the church of Minerva, where this ceremony takes place, each kisses the pope's feet, and he, after blessing them, gives to each with his own hand, a purse of white damask, containing an order upon his banker for the amount of her dowry. It is understood, that all the girls who present themselves, are about to be married, and come here for their marriage dowry, which is thirty-five crowns a head, besides a white dress, which each has presented to her on the occasion, and which is worth five crowns more. Their faces are covered with white linen veils, which have only an opening for them to see out at.

One of the great advantages of Rome, is that it is one of the least exclusive cities in the world; a place where foreigners at once feel themselves the most at home; in fact, Rome is, by its very nature, the city of strangers. Its sovereign is sovereign also over entire Christendom; his jurisdiction generally subjects to his authority all Christians, wheresoever they are, even in their homes in the most distant countries, as much as in Rome itself; and as to all the princes and grandees of his court, the consideration as to whence they came, is of no sort of weight. The free government of Venice, and the advantages for trade there, crowd it with strangers; but they all have the effect of not being at home there. Here, they have all got charges, offices and places; at least, all such as are in any way connected with the church; for this is the throne of the ecclesiastical class. You may see quite as many, if not more, foreigners at Venice (as to the number of foreigners in France, or Germany, and other countries, it does not at all come into comparison), but resident, domiciled foreigners, are far more numerous here. The common people take no more notice of our fashion of dress, or of the Spanish or German, than they do of their own; and you hardly come across a beggar that does not ask you for charity in your own language.

I set all my wits to work to obtain the title of Roman citizen, if only out of respect for its former dignity, and the once sacred character of its authority. I had some difficulty in the matter, but I succeeded, at least, without having recourse to any grandees' favour, and without even mentioning the subject to any Frenchman. The authority of the pope, however, was called into requisition by the medium of Philippo Mussotti, his major-domo, who had taken a particular fancy to me, and exerted himself very zealously in my behalf. The favour was granted me on the 13th of March, 1581, and I received the official document on the 5th of April, couched in the same complimentary terms that were addressed on the like occasion to the Signor Jacomo Buoncompagnone, Duke of Sero, the pope's son. 'Tis an empty title; but yet I felt infinite delight in having obtained it.

On the 3rd of April, I left Rome, very early in the morning, by the Porta S. Lorenzo Tiburtina, and proceeded along a tolerably level road, with corn-fields on each side, but, like the other approaches to Rome, with but very few habitations to be seen. I passed the river Teverone, the ancient Anio, first over the bridge of Mammolo, and then over the bridge of Lucan, which still retains its ancient name. On this bridge there are some old inscriptions, the principal of which is quite legible. You pass three old Roman tombs on this road, but there are no other traces of antiquity, and but

very little of the old Roman pavement; yet this is the *Via Tiburtina*. I got by dinner-time to

Tivoli, fifteen miles. This is the ancient Tiburtum,[1] a town seated on the very roots of the mountains, just where the first rise takes place, so that the views from it, and the situation itself, are exceedingly rich and picturesque; an uninterrupted prospect over a vast plain, with that fine old Rome full in the distance. Before you the eye reaches as far as the sea; behind you rise the mountains. It is bathed by the Teverone, which river, just at this place, takes a tremendous leap from the high ground down into a bason of rock, five or six hundred paces below,[2] and then flows on into the plain, where, after infinite meanderings, it joins the Tiber, a little above the town. Here are to be seen the famous palace and gardens of the Cardinal of Ferrara; a fine work, but incomplete in many of its parts; nor does the present Cardinal have anything done towards finishing it. I examined every feature with great attention; and I would attempt to give some description of the place here, but there are already accounts of it in books, and representations of it in pictures. The water-works here, which send forth an infinite number of streams on your touching only one spring, and that at a good distance, I had seen elsewhere during my journey, both at Florence and at Augusta, as I have mentioned There is a real organ, which plays real music, though always the same tune, and this is effected by the means of water, which, falling in a large body, and with a sudden descent, into a round, arched cave, strikes upon the air in it, and compels it to make its exit through the pipes of the organ, which are thus supplied with wind. Another fall of water turns a broad wheel, furnished with teeth, so fixed in it as to strike in due order the keys of the organ, and thus produce the tune to which the wheel is set; and by the same machinery they imitate the sound of trumpets. In another place, you hear the notes of birds blended in harmony, an artificial effect, produced by the same means, on a smaller scale, as those I have just described; on touching a spring, you give motion to an artificial owl, which on presenting itself on the top of a rock causes a sudden cessation of the previous harmony, the little birds being supposed to have become alarmed at his presence; then, on touching another spring, the owl retires, and the birds re-commence, and you can continue this sport as long as you like. In one place, you hear a roaring sound, like artillery; in another, you are startled with the sharper discharge of gun-shots; both of these sounds being also produced by water, which falls into hollow places, and ejects the air. All these contrivances, or similar ones, I had seen elsewhere; but there was one thing in particular, that I had never before observed: there are several large water-tanks, or reservoirs, with a margin of stone all round them; on this margin stand a number of high stone pillars, at about four paces one from the other. From the top of these pillars the water dashes out with great force; but, instead of spouting up, the current discharges itself into the reservoir. These various streams cross each other midway in the air, and produce a continuous and heavy rain, which descends violently into the water below, and the rays of the sun falling upon it, produce a rainbow well nigh as brilliant as that we see in the sky. Under the palace, are constructed a number of hollow places and air-holes, which communicate in the hottest weather a most refreshing coolness throughout the lower part of the mansion; this part of the structure is, however, not quite completed. I saw several excellent statues here; especially a sleeping nymph, a dead nymph, a Minerva, a model of the Adonis at the Bishop of Aquino's; one of the bronze wolf, and another of the Youth extracting a thorn, the originals of which are at the Capitol; another of the figure of Comedy, also at the Capitol; one of the Laocoon, and another of the Antinous, at the Belvidere; another of the Satyr, at Cardinal Sforza's country-seat; another of the new production, the Moses, the original of which is in the church of St. Pietro *in Vincula*; and another, of the fine female figure, that lies at the feet of Paul III. in the new church of St. Peter. These are the statues that pleased me most at Rome. A very natural comparison arises in the mind between this place and Pratolino. In the variety and beauty of its grottoes, the Florentine grounds infinitely surpass the Ferrarese; in the abundance of water, the latter have the advantage; in the variety of amusing and agreeable water-works, they are about equal; if the Florentine artist, perhaps, displays somewhat more elegance in the arrangement of his details, the Ferrarese compensates for this by his fine statues and the splendour of his palace. The Ferrarese, in charm of situation and beauty of prospect, far surpasses the Florentine; and I should be inclined to say that, in every respect, nature had given him greatly the advantage, were it not that, with the exception of one small fountain, rising in a small garden on an eminence, the water of which is conducted into one of the apartments of the palace, all the water here is river water, derived from the Teverone by means of a canal cut for that purpose. Were this water as clear and drinkable as it is otherwise, the place, in all natural qualifications, would be incomparable, more especially from its grand fountain, which is the most extraordinary construction, and the most beautiful of its kind, that ever I saw, here or elsewhere. At Pratolino, on the contrary, all the water is

[1] The Latin name is not *Tiburtum*, but *Tibur*.

[2] Montaigne refers to the celebrated cascade of Tivoli, whose performance so delighted Wilson the painter, that he rapturously exclaimed, "Well done, water, by God!"

spring-water, which is brought from a good distance off. As the Teverone approaches Tivoli by a rapid descent from the mountains, several of the inhabitants of the place make use of it in the same way that the cardinal has done, so that his water-works do not create so much surprise, as they would do, were there no similar pieces of art to be seen about here. I left this place the next day, after dinner, and passed, on the right hand, an immense ruin, which they say extends over six miles, and looks as big as a town; this was the *Prædium*[1] of the Emperor Adrian. Further on, a sulphurous stream crosses the road. Its borders are all whitened with the sulphur, the smell of which is perceptible for half a league round; but they make no use of it medicinally. In this stream they find small substances, formed of the scum of the water, which resemble our comfits so much that almost any one would be deceived; and the people of Tivoli form them into all sorts of shapes, and sell them in boxes, of which I bought two at seven sous six deniers each. There are several antiquities at Tivoli, such as two termini of a very early form, and the remains of a temple, several pillars of which are still standing entire; they say this was the temple of their Sybil. Upon the cornice you can still distinguish five or six large capital letters, which it is evident concluded the inscription, whatever it may have been, for the rest of the wall on the right is entire; the other end of the cornice, however, is broken off, so that other letters may have preceded these: however, all that now remain are: ELLIUS, L. F. I don't know what the meaning is. We returned in the evening to

Rome, fifteen miles. I travelled all the way back in a coach, and, contrary to my ordinary experience, found myself very comfortable in it. They are far more attentive to their health in this city, than in any other place I ever saw or heard of. Each quarter of the city, each street, nay, each portion of each house, is marked by them with some distinctive character as regards health, and every body, that can at all do so, changes his residence with the seasons. Some gentlemen keep up two or three palaces, at a very great expense, so that they may be able to move about from one to the other, according to the season and their physicians' orders. On the 15th of April, I went to take leave of the *Maestro del Sacro Palazzo* and his colleague, who begged me to pay no attention to the censure of my books, which, they told me, several Frenchmen had since informed them, exhibited very great ignorance and imbecility; they assured me that they held in high honour and esteem my intentions and my ability; and that they had no doubt of my affection towards the church; adding, that they had such confidence in my conscientiousness and candour, that they would leave it entirely to myself to omit or correct, in my book, when I wished to reprint it, what I should, on consideration, think too free-spoken; and they referred me, among one or two other points, to my treatment of the word fortune. I thought they seemed very well pleased with me. To excuse themselves for having so minutely examined my book, and condemned it in some things, they mentioned several books, written in our own time, by cardinals and other ecclesiastics of good reputation, which had been censured in like manner for some of their details, but which censure was not considered as at all affecting the reputation of the author, or of the book generally. In conclusion, they entreated me to assist the church by my eloquence (these are their *mots de courtoisie*), and to take up my abode in their peaceful city, far removed from the troubles which agitated my own country. Both these were persons high in authority, and eligible for cardinals.

We had artichokes, beans, and peas here, in the middle of March. In April, daylight begins at their ten o'clock;[2] and, I believe, in the longest days, at their nine o'clock. About this time, I made acquaintance, among others, with a Pole, who had been Cardinal Hosius's[3] most intimate friend, and who presented me with two copies, corrected by his own hand, of the pamphlet he has drawn up, giving an account of the cardinal's death. The longer I staid in this city, the more did I become charmed with it; I never breathed air more temperate, nor better suited to my constitution. On the 18th April, I went to see the interior of Signor John George Cesarin's palace, which contains a great variety of rare antiquities, more especially the genuine busts of Zeno, Possidonius, Euripides, and Carneades, whose names are inscribed thereon in very ancient Greek characters. He has also a number of portraits of the handsomest living Roman ladies, among others, that of Signora Clælia Fascia Farnese, his wife, who, if not the most lovely, is beyond comparison, the most amiable woman in Rome, or, for any thing I know to the contrary, elsewhere. This nobleman claims to be of the race of the Cæsars, and bears of right as such the banner of the Roman nobility. He is a very rich man. His arms have the bear and the column, and above the column an eagle displayed.

One of the great sights of Rome is the gardens and pleasure-houses, but these are seen to most advantage in the height of summer.

Wednesday, 19th of April, I left Rome after dinner, and was accompanied as far as the bridge of Mola, by Messieurs de Noirmontiers, de la Tremouille, du Bellay, and other gentle-

[1] The country-house.

[2] About half-past four, A.M.

[3] A Polish cardinal, who opened the proceedings of the Council of Trent, as legate of Pope Pius IV. Gregory XIII. made him Grand Penitentiary of the Roman Church. He died at Rome, 1579.

men. On passing this bridge, we turned to the right, leaving on the left, the high road to Viterbo, by which we had come to Rome, and on the extreme right, the Tiber and the mountains. We went along an open and irregular road, through a country unfertile and uninhabited. We passed the place called *Prima Porta*, the first gate, at about seven miles from Rome. Some say that the walls of ancient Rome extended as far as this, which, however, does not appear to me at all likely. Along the route, which is the ancient *Via Flaminia*, there are some fine remains of antiquity, very little known. We got by bed-time to

Castel-Novo, sixteen miles, a small fortified town belonging to the Colonna family, completely buried among the hills, in a situation that reminded me very strongly of the fertile passes through our Pyrenean mountains, on the road to Aigues-Caudes. Next day, 20th April, we went on through the same hilly country, which, however, was on both sides of us fertile, thickly populated, and very agreeable in its aspect; and then descending into a small valley, along which ran the Tiber, we came to

Borguet,[1] a small castle and village belonging to the Duke Ottavio Farnese. After dining here, we continued our journey through a very pleasant valley, and passed the Tiber at Corde,[2] where you still see the large stone piers, the remains of the bridge that Augustus built here, to connect the country of the Sabines, that into which we were now entering, with that of the Falisci, on the other side of the river. A little way on, we came to Otricoli, a small town belonging to the Cardinal of Perugia. Close to this place, seated in a very beautiful spot, there are the ruins of some very large and important structure. The scenery all along this route, is hilly and very picturesque; and the land seems exceedingly fertile, even on the higher slopes of the ascents. You see houses in every corner; and we passed on the way an inscription in Latin, purporting that the pope[3] had put this road into complete repair, and given it the name of the *Via Buoncompagnone*, after his own patronymic. This custom of setting up inscriptions to give notice to posterity of the share you have had in such works, which prevails very generally throughout Italy and Germany, acts as a very useful incentive; for many a man, who does not care a straw for the public, has been induced, by this hope of lasting fame, to execute works which are productive of the greatest advantage to society. As to the road I was traversing, it was now available even for coaches as far as Loretto, whereas before it was almost entirely impracticable. We slept at

Narni, ten miles, *Narnia* in Latin, a small town belonging to the Holy See, built on the summit of a rock, at the foot of which runs the river Negra,[4] *Nar* in Latin. One part of the town looks over a very beautiful plain, where this river is seen making an infinite variety of complicated twistings and turnings. In the public square there is a very fine fountain. I went to look at the church, where I saw some tapestry, in which the writing, both prose and poetry, is in the ancient French language. I could not learn whence this tapestry came;[5] all I collected from my inquiries on the subject was that the people here seem to have an hereditary attachment to our nation. The tapestry in question represents the Passion, and occupies the whole of one side of the nave. Having read in Pliny an account of a particular sort of earth here which, he says, is softened by heat and dried by rain, I asked the people about it, but they had never heard of any thing of the sort. About a mile hence there are some cold springs, which produce the same effect as our hot springs; they are used by a few people, but have attained very little note. The inn we were at was a very good one for Italy. We had no candles, the whole house being lighted with oil. On the 21st, very early in the morning, we descended into an exceedingly pretty valley, watered by the river Negra, which we passed over by a bridge, at the gates of Terni. In the public square of this town, we saw a very ancient column still standing. I could perceive no inscription on it, but at its side is the statue of a lion, beneath which, in old characters, there is a dedication to Neptune, with a roughly carved representation of the god himself and all his train. In the same place there is a pedestal, which has been set in a prominent spot, on which I read an inscription purporting that "to A. Pompeius, A. F., the inhabitants of this town (here called Interamnia, a name derived from the river Negra, that washes it on one side, and another stream which runs by it on the other) have erected a statue, in commemoration of the services he has rendered them." There is no longer any statue, but I judged that the inscription was very old, from the use of the diphthong in *periculeis* and similar words. This is a pretty little town, singularly well placed. On the one side, whence we had approached it, there is a very charming and richly cultivated valley, with a large population, who, among other products, pay particular attention to their olive plantations, which present a very beautiful appearance. Every here and there, among the smaller hills, there rises one of tolerable height, which in almost every instance is cultivated, and yields abundance of produce of various descriptions, up to the very summit. I was at this time suffering from a

[1] Borghetto.
[2] Orta.
[3] Gregory XIII.
[4] Nera.
[5] It was not improbably brought here by the French, who often passed into Italy in the wars under Charles VIII., Louis XII., and Francis I.

severe attack of my malady, which had now lasted twenty-four hours, and was getting to its height; yet, for all my pain, I could not help feeling delighted at the beauty of the place. Shortly after leaving Terni, we found ourselves more decidedly entering upon the Apennines, and then we began thoroughly to appreciate the advantages of the excellent new road that the pope has formed here, at such expense and labour. The people in the neighbourhood of the road all along, did the repairs and improvements by their forced labour; but they do not complain so much of having been obliged to work without being paid for it, as they do at being compelled to give up pieces of fertile and cultivated land, where these were required for forming the new road. On our right we noticed a hill, with a village on its summit. This hill the people here call Colle Scipoli, and they say that its ancient name was Castrum Scipionis. The other mountains, which are much higher than the one I have mentioned, are all barren and rocky. Following our road, which lay between these and the bed of a winter torrent, we reached

Spoleto, eighteen miles, a celebrated and commodious town, seated amidst the mountains. We were here called upon to produce our certificate of health, not on account of the plague, which at this time did not prevail in any part of Italy, but by reason of the fear which the people here are in of one Petrino, a fellow-townsman of their's, the most noted robber now in Italy, and of whom some tremendous stories are told. All the places about are in constant dread of being surprised by this man and his band. There are inns at short intervals all along the road and over the country; and in some places, where there is no regular house, you will find a hut formed of the branches of trees, where you can be supplied with boiled eggs, bread, cheese, and wine. They have no butter here, using oil instead, for all purposes. On leaving the town, which we did the same day after dinner, we found ourselves in the valley of Spoleto, as lovely a place as it is possible to conceive, about two Gascon leagues broad. The mountain sides are every here and there dotted with houses. The road along which we were now proceeding is a continuation of that of which I have already spoken, and runs as straight as a line. We passed a number of towns lying on either hand, and, among others, had another view of Terni. Servius, in his notes upon Virgil, says that this is the *Olivi favæque musticæ*, of which the poet speaks in Book vii., but others are of a different opinion. However this may be, it is certain that it is a town built upon a high mountain, on the sides of which it extends until it reaches nearly half-way; and the beauty of the scene is completed by the plantations of olive trees, which occupy all the other parts of the ascent. We got in the evening to

Foligni, twelve miles, a handsome town, standing in a plain; the general appearance strongly reminded me of St. Foi,[1] though the surrounding country here is far richer, and the town itself, beyond all comparison, prettier and more populous. A streamlet called Topino waters the place. This town was anciently named Fulignium, or, according to other authorities, Fulcinia, and was built on the site of Forum Flaminium. The inns on this route are much about the same as those in France, except that the horses can seldom get any thing but hay to eat. They have very little fresh fish in these parts. Throughout Italy, they serve up the beans and peas undressed, and their almonds in a green state, and very seldom dress artichokes. Their rooms are floored with tiles. They guide their oxen by a rope fastened to an iron ring, which is passed through the muzzle of the nose, in the same manner that buffaloes are kept in. The carrier-mules, which are very numerous here, and very fine, are not shod in front in our fashion, but wear round shoes, bigger than the feet, and quite encompassing them. Every here and there you meet, on the road, monks who give holy water to travellers, and expect alms in return for it; and there is no end to boys, who run along by your side, begging charity, and promising to say for you, in return, an infinity of *paternosters*, on the beads which they carry and hold out to you as a proof of their good faith. The wines are very indifferent. The next morning, soon after resuming our journey, we left the beautiful valley I spoke of, and proceeded up the mountains, where, however, we at intervals came upon other valleys, more or less agreeable. For the greater part of the morning, we were never tired of gazing at the lovely scenery which presented itself on either side of us; in every direction you see hills completely covered with fine fruit-trees and corn-fields, even in spots so abrupt and precipitous that it seemed a miracle how any horses or oxen could ever get there; between these hills meander charming valleys, watered by an infinity of streams, and with so many villages and single cottages scattered about, that I should have been reminded of the approach to Florence, but for the entire absence of palaces and the better sort of houses, and that, near Florence, the land is mostly uncultivated, whereas here not one single inch of ground is lost. It is true that the season of the year was more favourable to the landscape, which so excited my admiration here. Very frequently, at a great height above us, we would see a handsome village perched on the mountain's edge; and looking down far beneath us, as it were at the Antipodes, the eye fell upon another village, embosomed in a deep valley. One circumstance that greatly aided the effect was that, behind these fertile and smiling hills, the Apennines showed their rugged and inaccessible peaks, whence we could

[1] St. Foi, in Perigord, near Montaigne's residence.

discern those very torrents rush foaming down, which, after having exhausted their original power and fury, modified themselves into the gentle streams which refreshed and adorned the valleys beneath us. Among the distant heights we could every now and then discern rich and fertile plains, many of which appeared to be of considerable extent. I do not conceive that any description, either on paper or on canvass, could at all convey to the eye or the mind the surpassing loveliness of the scenery. We got by dinner-time to

La Muccia, twenty miles, a small town seated on the river Chiento. After dinner, we went on along an easy road, running low among the hills; and should have made a longer day's journey, but that, having given our *vetturino* a box on the ear, which is considered a great outrage in this country, as was shown in the affair of the vetturino who killed the Prince of Tresignano for having struck him, and having lost sight of the man, I conceived somewhat of an apprehension that he might be plotting some mischief against me, and so, contrary to my first plan, which was to go to Tolentino, I stopped to sleep at

Val-Chimara, eight miles, a small village, though the post-town, standing on the river Chiento. Next morning, Sunday, we went on through the same valley to Tolentino, beyond which the ground grew flatter, and there was soon nothing but slight undulations on either side, which gave the country very much the appearance of the Agenois, where it is prettiest, along the Garonne; except that, just as in Switzerland, you do not see here any castles or gentlemen's houses, but only villages or small towns. The road, which followed the river, continued to be a very fine one, and towards the end was paved with brick. We reached by dinner-time

Macerata, eighteen miles, a pretty town, the size of Libourne, seated on an eminence rising in a cone. There are very few fine houses here, but among them I remarked a gentleman's mansion, built of freestone, the walls of which were all cut out into points, diamond fashion; the form of the house altogether was like that of Cardinal d'Este at Ferrara, and is a construction which makes an exceedingly good appearance. At the entrance of the town there is a gate recently erected, on which is inscribed, in golden letters: "Porta Buoncompagno." Here terminates the line of road which the pope has reconstructed. This town is the seat of the legate for the Marches of Ancona. In this part of the country, they boil all their wines till at least half the quantity evaporates, imagining that they concentrate the strength and flavour of the whole in the portion which remains. It was now very easy to perceive that we were approaching Loretto, from the extent to which all the roads were crowded with people going and coming, numbers of whom, not merely single travellers, but whole companies of rich men, were performing the journey on foot, dressed as pilgrims. Some of these companies were preceded by a man with a banner, and by another man bearing a crucifix; and all the persons composing each company were dressed alike. After dinner, we went on through a common-place sort of country, but tolerably fertile, exhibiting the ordinary proportions of river, hill, dale, and level ground, the road itself being almost all the way paved with bricks placed edgewise. We passed through the town of Recanati, a long straggling place, built on an eminence, whose turnings and twistings it follows closely, and arrived in the evening at

Loretto, fifteen miles, a small town, enclosed within walls, and fortified against the incursions of the Turks. It stands on a rising ground, overlooking a fine plain, and beyond this, at no great distance, the Adriatic Sea, or Gulf of Venice; which indeed is so near that, in clear weather, you can see the Sclavonian mountains on the other side of the gulf. The town altogether is exceedingly well situated. There are very few inhabitants, beyond those who are actually engaged in the services of devotion; or indirectly, as innkeepers (whose houses are far from eligible places of resort), and dealers in wax candles, images, beads, *Agnus Dei*, *Salvators*, and such commodities, for the sale of which there are a number of fine shops, handsomely fitted up; as may well be, for they drive an excellent trade. I myself got rid of fifty good crowns in this way, while I was there. The priests, the churchmen, and the college of Jesuits, all live together in a large modern palace, where also the governor resides, himself a churchman, who has the ordering of all things here, subject to the authority of the legate and the pope. The place of devotion is a small brick house, very old and very mean, much longer than it is broad. At the head of this, is a projection, the two sides of which are iron doors, the front consisting of a thick iron grating; the whole affair is exceedingly coarse and antiquated, without the slightest appearance of wealth about it. This iron grating reaches across from one door to the other, and through it you can see to the end of the building, where stands the shrine, which occupies about a fifth part of the space, and is the principal object with the pious visitors. Here, against the upper part of the wall, is to be seen the image of our Lady, made, they say, of wood; all the rest of the shrine is so covered with magnificent *ex-votos*, the offerings of princes and their subjects in all parts of Christendom, that there is hardly an inch of wall discernible, hardly a spot that does not glitter with gold and silver and precious stones. It was with the utmost difficulty, and as a very great favour, that I obtained therein a vacant place, large enough to receive a small frame, in which were fixed four silver figures; that of Our

Lady, my own, that of my wife, and that of my daughter. At the foot of mine there is engraved in silver: *Michael Montanus, Gallus Vasco, Eques Regii ordinis*, 1581;[1] at the foot of my wife's: *Francisca Cassaniana uxor*;[2] and at that of my daughter: *Leonora Montana filia unica*;[3] the figure of Our Lady is in the front, and the three others are kneeling side by side before her. Besides the two doors I have mentioned, there is another door into the chapel, and as you go in at this door, you may see my offering on the left hand, fixed against the wall, to which I had it firmly nailed. I at first had a small silver chain and ring attached to the frame, that it might be hung up against the wall upon a nail, but the person who put it up preferred nailing it directly to the wall. In this place is the chimney, which you can see on lifting up some old drapery that hangs before it. Very few persons are permitted to enter this sanctum; indeed over the door, which is covered with metal plates richly worked, with an iron grating before it, there is a notice forbidding all persons to enter without express permission from the governor. Among other richer presents, they carefully preserve, for the singularity of the thing, a large wax candle, which had not long before been forwarded there by a Turk, who had vowed to make this offering to Our Lady, on an occasion when, finding himself in some extreme emergency, he was willing to catch hold of every string that he thought would help him. The remaining portion of this edifice is used as a chapel, into which no daylight enters, except what may get in through the grating of which I spoke, close to which the altar stands. There is no chair, no bench, no painting, no tapestry, no ornament of any sort, in this chapel. You are not permitted to wear any description of weapon in this sacred place; and, once within its threshold, all distinctions of rank are for the time laid aside. We received the sacrament in this chapel, a privilege not acceded to every body; there is another place devoted to this purpose, for ordinary cases, on account of the vast number of persons who are anxious to communicate here. There is such a crowd of people congregating in this chapel at all hours, that you had need to be early stirring to secure a place there. It was a German Jesuit who officiated when I received the sacrament. The people are strictly prohibited from taking even a scratching of plaster from the walls; if any thing of this sort were once permitted, there would not be one stone left on another in three days. Every step in this place is celebrated for miracles, for which I refer to the printed accounts; there are several quite recent cases, exhibited in the mishaps which have occurred to persons who, from a spirit of devotion, have carried away some bit of the building, even though by the pope's consent; and one little bit of brick, that was carried off at the time of the Council of Trent, has been brought back by some miraculous agency. The little building which contains the shrine is surrounded and covered over by a square marble structure of the richest and most ornate description; there are very few structures at all comparable to it. This structure again is enclosed in a magnificent church, around which stand a number of beautiful chapels and funereal monuments, and, among others, one erected to the memory of the Cardinal d'Amboise by M. the Cardinal d'Armagnac. The square building which encloses the shrine is, as it were, the choir of the church; there is, however, a choir belonging to the church, but this is in a corner. The whole interior of the church is hung with pictures, portraits, and historical pieces of every description. There are a great many rich ornaments, too, but by no means so many as I should have expected to find, considering the great fame this sacred edifice has for so long a period enjoyed. I am inclined to suspect that many of the older ornaments are melted down and applied to other uses. The annual donations in ready money are estimated at ten thousand crowns. There are more of the externals of religion here than in any place I was ever at. Whatever is lost here, whether money or otherwise, which elsewhere would be appropriated by the finder, the person who picks it up puts it into a public open box, kept for that purpose, and any other person may there go and take possession of it, without asking or being asked any questions, it being understood, as a matter of course, that he is the owner. While I was at the place, there were a number of things, beads, handkerchiefs, and purses, which lay there ready for the first person who chose to take them. Whatever you purchase here and actually leave for the service of the church, the seller will charge no profit upon, in order, as the idea is, to participate in the blessing which may be obtained; you only pay for the materials: in the same way, the people connected with the church, who are zealous and active to a degree, will take nothing of you for confession, the sacrament, and other religious services, which they are ever ready to perform. The usual way is for you to give to one or other of them, a sum of money to be distributed in your name among the poor, when you have left the place. While I was in the *sacrarium*, there came in a man who offered the first priest he met a silver cup, which, he said, he had made a vow of; and as his vow was to the value of twelve crowns, and the cup had not cost quite so much, he paid over the difference in money to the priest, who audited the calculation of the value of the cup, and the balance remaining, as a matter due of course,

[1] Michael de Montaigne, Frenchman and Gascon, knight of the order of the King, 1581.

[2] Frances de la Chassaigne, his wife.

[3] Leonora de Montaigne, their only daughter.

and having thereby satisfied the donor that he had scrupulously fulfilled his vow, he led him to the shrine, where, in his name, he offered the cup to Our Lady, adding a short prayer, and threw the money into the common box. Things of this sort are to be seen every day. The gifts proffered are received with the utmost indifference; indeed, it would seem rather a matter of favour for them to be received at all. I stopped all Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, until after mass, when we left. I have a word to say here, in celebration of a place where I myself experienced very great gratification. While I was at Loretto, there was also there Michael Marteau, Seigneur of La Chapelle, a Parisian, a very rich young man, who was accompanied by a large train. From him and from his attendants, I had a very particular and curious account of the cure of his leg, which he ascribed to the virtues of this holy place, and certainly it was impossible for a miracle to be more clearly made out in all its effects, than in the account which these people gave. They said, that all the surgeons of Paris and Italy had entirely failed; the young man had spent more than three thousand crowns in seeking a cure, yet, for the last three years, his knee had been getting worse and worse, more swollen, more painful, more inflamed, until at last it threw him altogether into a dreadful fever. At the time of his cure, he had taken no physic, or other external remedy, for several days; he was lying asleep when, all of a sudden, he dreamed that he was cured, and thought he saw a great flash of light; he awoke up, exclaimed that he was cured, called his people, got up, and walked about the room, a thing he had not done since he was seized with the malady; the swelling from that time began to subside, the withered and well nigh dead skin to resume its healthy tone, and his cure was rapidly compleetd, without any sort of mortal aid. He was at this time in perfect health, for his cure took place a month or two before the time of which I write now, and he had since that been at Rome, where he was at the same time with us. From the account which he and his people gave, never was there a clearer case made out. The miracle by which the *Santa-casa*, which they hold to be the house at Nazareth in which Jesus Christ was born, was transported thence, first to Sclavonia, then to a place near Loretto, and lastly to Loretto itself, is written on large marble tablets along the pillars in the church, in the Italian, Sclavonian, French, German, and Spanish languages. In the choir, is suspended the banner of our kings, being the only royal arms that is to be seen there. I was told that, every now and then, large hordes of Sclavonians make a pilgrimage hither, who set up loud cries at sea as soon as they come within sight of the church, and fall to all sorts of protestations and promises to Our Lady, entreating her to return amongst them, and bewailing themselves for having given her cause to abandon them. I was informed that you can go from Loretto to Naples along the sea-shore in eight easy days' journeys, an excursion I have a great fancy to make. You must go through Pescara to the city of Chieta, where there is a conveyance that sets out every Sunday for Naples. I offered money to several priests, but most of them refused it, and those that did accept it, were only prevailed upon with the utmost difficulty in the world. They keep their corn here in cellars, running under the street. It was on the 25th of April that I offered my *ex-voto*. To come from Rome to Loretto, which occupied us four days and a half, cost me six crowns fifty sols each, the persons who let us the horses keeping both them and us. This sort of bargain, however, is exceedingly inconvenient, inasmuch as they hurry you on as much as possible to save expense, and, moreover, give you but shabby entertainment on the way. On the 26th, I went to see the port, which is three miles off, and is a handsome one enough; there is a fortress overlooking it, which belongs to the people of Ricanati. Don Luca-Giovanni, the incumbent, and Giovanni Gregorio da Calli, keeper of the sacristy, on my leaving the place, gave me their addresses, that I might write to them, did I require any thing done for myself or others; both these gentlemen had shown me much kindness. The former of them has the charge of the little chapel, and would take no fee from me in respect of it; I shall always feel grateful for their politeness and attention. On Wednesday, as I before said, after dinner, I left this place, and, proceeding through a varied and fertile country, got by supper-time to

Ancona, fifteen miles. This is the principal town of the marches, in Latin, *Picenum*. It has a large population, a considerable portion of whom are Greeks, Turks, and Sclavonians, for the place carries on a good trade. The town is well built, and is flanked by two eminences, which run down into the sea. On one of these, by which we entered, there is a large fort, and on the other a church. The town is seated partly on the slopes of these two hills; but the principal portion is in the valley between them, and along the sea-side. There is a good port here, where may still be seen a fine arch, erected in honour of the Emperor Trajan, his wife, and his sister. I was told that the passage over to Sclavonia is often performed in eight, ten, and twelve hours. I have no doubt I could have got a vessel here, which would have carried me to Venice for six crowns or a little more. I gave thirty-three demi-pistoles for the hire of eight horses to Lucca, about eight days' journey, the vetturino to keep the horses, and if I was four or five days on the journey, beyond the eight specified, I was to have the horses for the same money, on paying for their keep and the attendance on them. The country abounds with excellent setters, which may be had for about six crowns each. There is an amazing

number of quails caught here, but they are very poor. I remained till after dinner, on the 27th, to have a thorough examination of the beauties of the place. At St. Creaco,[1] the church which I mentioned as standing on the hill, there are more relics of note than in any church we ever saw. We learnt that the quails come over here in large flocks from Sclavonia, and that every night they are caught in nets on the sea-shore, by men who allure them in their flight by imitating the quail's notes. In September, these birds return to Sclavonia. In the night, I heard the report of a cannon, as far off as from the Abruzzi, in the kingdom of Naples, and beyond that city. Every league along the coast there is a tower; the first of these that discovers a corsair at sea, by firing a gun, gives a signal to the next tower, and so on, and in this way the alarm spreads with such rapidity that in one hour's time, it reaches from the other end of Italy to Venice. Ancona takes its name from the Greek word (Ἀγκων, *elbow*), from the form of the sharp bend of the sea in which it stands. There is a Greek church here. On an old stone, in the principal gate, I saw some characters, which I took to be Sclavonian. The generality of the women here are good-looking, and most of the men have the appearance of honest industrious artisans. The sea here is much calmer than our ocean-tide. After dinner, we proceeded along the shore, which is cultivated almost down to the water's edge, and by bed-time reached

Senigagla, twenty miles, a pretty little town, seated in a fair valley, quite at the sea-side. There is a very good port here, for the place is also washed by a river, which flows hither from the mountains. They have formed a large dock, surrounded with walls on every side, where vessels can ride in shelter, and the entry to which may be closed. I saw no remains of antiquity here. We put up at a good inn, the only one they have, which stands outside the town. The place was anciently called *Senogallia*, from some of our ancestors, who came and founded the place, after they had been beaten by Camillus; it is in the jurisdiction of the Duke of Urbino. In the last few days, I had not been very well. The day I left Rome, as M. d'Ossat was walking with me, I raised my hand to salute another gentleman, and did it so carelessly that I thrust my first finger into the corner of my right eye, and made it bleed; it remained in a state of great inflammation for some time, and when the pain left that eye: *erat tunc dolor ad unguem sinistrem:* "it went to the other." I forgot to mention that at Ancona, in the church of St. Creaco, there is a flat tombstone, in memory of one *Antonia, Rocamoro patre, matre Valetta, Gatla, Aquitana, Paciocco Urbinati, Lusitano nupta*,[2] who was buried there some ten or twelve years since. We left this place at day-break, and, proceeding along a very agreeable road, crossed the river Metro, *Metaurus*, by a large wooden bridge, and dined at

Fano, fifteen miles, a small town on the sea-side, situated in a pleasant and fertile valley, but in itself ill-built and pent up. We got very good bread, fish, and wine here; but the inn was a very poor affair. Fano has this advantage over Senigaglia, Pesaro, and other places on this coast, that it has plenty of fresh water, there being a number of fountains, both public and private, whereas all the other towns have to fetch their fresh water from the mountains. We saw here an ancient arch, of considerable dimensions, on which there is an inscription in the name of Augustus, *qui muros dederat*. The place itself was formerly called *Fanum, Fanum Fortunæ*. Almost throughout Italy, they boult the flour with wheels, by means of which the baker does more in one hour than ours do in four. Almost at all the inns you find a set of poets, who make off-hand rhymes, applicable to their auditors.[3] Every body here has a guitar, down to the stocking-mender at the corner of the street. There are no good-looking women here; they are all excessively the reverse; indeed, an honest fellow in the town, whom I questioned as to this point, told me he believed the age of pretty women was passed. You pay on this *route* twenty sous a day a man, and thirty a horse, every thing included; together fifty sous. This town belongs to the Church. We did not go, though only a little further on, to Pesaro, a fine town, well worth a visit, to Remini, or to old Ravenna; at Pesaro, especially, there is to be seen a fine edifice, oddly placed, which the Duke of Urbino, I was told, was erecting; these are all on the road to Venice, but we did not go to them. We left the sea-coast at Faro, and, turning to the left, went on through a large plain, along which runs the Metaurus. On each side are to be seen, in the near distance, some charming hills, and the whole appearance of the country reminded me of the plain of Blaignac, at Castellon.[4] In this plain, on the other side of the river, was fought the battle of (Livius) Salinator and Claudius Nero against Asdrubal, in which the latter was killed. Just at the opening into the mountains, which rise at the end of this plain, is

Fossombruno, fifteen miles, belonging to the Duke of Urbino, a town built on the slope of a hill, with one or two fine streets at the bottom, straight and well-built. The inhabitants, however, are not near so rich as those of Fano. In the middle of the square here, is a large marble pedestal, bearing an inscription of the time of Trajan, in honour of some private citizen

[1] The cathedral; the name is a corruption of St. Cyriaco, the patron saint.

[2] Antoinette, a Rocamore on the father's side, a Valetta on the side of her mother, a Frenchwoman and Gascon; married to Paciocco of Urbino, a Portuguese by birth.

[3] *Improvisatori.*

[4] In Perigord.

of the town; and there is another standing against one of the houses, which has no inscription or mark denoting its period. This place was formerly called *Forum Sempronii*, but the inhabitants maintain that their ancient town stood further off in the plain, in a much finer situation; and they say that some of the ruins are still to be seen. There is a stone bridge here over the Metaurus, towards Rome, *per Viam Flaminiam*. As I arrived here early (for the miles are short, and our days' journeys do not exceed a quiet ride of seven or eight hours), I had plenty of time to converse with some honest fellows belonging to the place, who told me all they knew about the town and its environs. We went also to see a garden belonging to the Cardinal Urbino, where there are a number of vines grafted on other vines for the improvement of the stock. I had a long talk with a worthy bootmaker that lives here, named Vincentio Castellani. I left the place next morning, and, after riding three miles, turned off to the left, and, crossing by a bridge the Cardiana, a river which runs into the Metaurus, followed for another three miles a narrow and very disagreeable road through some wild and rugged hills, at the end of which road we came to a passage of full fifty paces long, cut through the thick of a high rock. This must have been an immense undertaking. It was begun by Augustus, who had an inscription placed here to that effect, which time has since effaced; an inscription at the other end, in honour of Vespasian, who completed the work, still remains. In the vicinity, are some stupendous works for raising and conveying water, for which purpose immense rocks have been cut through in all directions. All along this road, which leads to Rome, the *Via Flaminia*, are remains of the old pavement, which, however, for the most part, has sunk into the ground; and the road itself, which formerly was forty feet wide, is now not more than four. I had come out of my way to see this place; so, having satisfied my curiosity, I retraced my steps, and resumed my route, which led me along the base of a range of easy and fertile hills. Towards the end of our stage, the road became more ascending, and when we reached

Urbino, sixteen miles, an indifferent town, we found it stuck at the top of a tolerably high hill, the streets in all directions following the twistings and ins and outs of the ascent, so that you are *continually* going up and down hill, as you walk through the place. They were very busy with the market, for it was Saturday. We saw the palace, which is greatly famed for its beauty; it gave us, however, rather an idea of size than of any *thing* else, and indeed it is an enormous pile of buildings, extending nearly to the bottom of the hill. The view extends over a great distance, but is not any way remarkable. As the people here have not much to say in behalf of the beauty of the place, inside or out,—for the only garden is a strip of ground of some twenty-five paces,—they insist upon a wonderful story that there are as many rooms in the palace as there are days in the year; and, indeed, there are a vast number, as is the case also at Tivoli and other Italian palaces. Looking through one door, you may see a vista of twenty more openings, all running in the same direction, one after another, and looking round to the right or left, you may see as many more through another door. Some portions of the building are old; but the major portion of it was erected in 1476, by Frederic Maria de la Rovera, who well nigh filled a whole cabinet with the documents connected with his various diplomatic charges and warlike expeditions; with representations of which latter many of the walls also are covered. In one place there is an inscription setting forth that this is the finest mansion in the world. The house is of brick, and built throughout archwise, without any flat cieling, as is the case with most of the houses in Italy. The present prince is Duke Frederic's great-nephew. They are a race of good princes, and are all beloved by their subjects.[1] They have all had, from father to son, a taste for literature, and the palace possesses a fine library; but the key could not be found when I was there. Their tendencies are altogether Spanish. The arms of Spain are everywhere prominent in their heraldic displays, together with the order of England and of the Fleece: the arms of France do not appear at all. They have a portrait of the first duke of Urbino, a young man, who was killed by his subjects for his tyranny; but he did not belong to this family. The present duke married the sister of the Duke of Ferrara, who is ten years older than he; they lived together for some time on very bad terms, and at last separated, merely on account, as I was told, of her jealous temper. Thus, besides her being forty-five years old, it does not seem very likely they will have any children, in which case the duchy will go to the Church,—a prospect which the people are by no means pleased with. I saw here an exact resemblance from the life, of Pico Mirandola: a pale, handsome face, without a beard, and seemingly of about the age of seventeen or eighteen; a long nose, soft eyes, thin face, and light hair, which falls over his shoulders. He is dressed in a strange sort of costume. They have, in many places in Italy, a way of making the stairs straight and flat, so that you can ascend them on horseback, and this is the fashion of the stairs here. The place, they say, is very cold in winter, and accordingly the duke only comes here in the summer months. To provide against the cold, in the corners of two of the chambers, there are smaller rooms divided off, and enclosed on all sides, with only a win-

[1] We must except from this praise the two popes this family contributed, in the persons of Sixtus IV. and Julius II., his nephew, who were by no means popular.

dow which receives light from the larger apartment, and in one of these cabinets is the duke's bed. After dinner, I went five miles out of my road to see a place that the people, from time immemorial, have called the sepulchre of Asdrubal, situated on a high steep hill, named Monte Deci. There are four or five wretched little houses here, and a chapel; and, besides those, the tomb in question, a building constructed of large bricks, about twenty-five paces round, and twenty-five feet high. All around it, at every three paces, there are seats with rails to kneel on. The building is strengthened with arched buttresses. You have to get into the place by a ladder, for there is no entry from below; and when you are there, you see nothing but the roof and the bare walls. There is no inscription of any sort; the people of the place say there used to be a marble, with some characters on it, but that, within the last few years, it has been carried away. When or how this building obtained its name, I do not know, and I can hardly believe it was ever applied to the purpose which that name imports: and yet, after all, it is very certain that Asdrubal was defeated and killed not far from the place. Upon leaving this spot, we went on along a rugged road, which became a mass of mud, after it had rained about an hour; and by-and-by re-crossed the Metaurus on horseback, for the river here is a shallow stream, that will not float a boat; and then getting into a tolerably good road, towards the evening, we reached

Castel-Durante, fifteen miles, a small town, belonging to the Duke of Urbino, seated in a flat country, on the banks of the Metaurus. The people here were firing *feux-de-joie*, and exhibiting other testimonies of rejoicing on the occasion of a son being born to the Princess de Besigna, their duke's sister. The *vetturino* always takes off the saddles of the horses whenever he takes off the bridles, and lets them drink as much as they like, without any reference to the state they are in. The wines here are not at all good. Sunday morning, we went on along a fertile plain, flanked with gentle hills, and passed through a pretty little town, called St. Angelo, belonging to the Duke of Urbino, seated on the banks of the Metaurus, and approached at either entrance by handsome avenues of trees. We found here some midlent frogs, for it was the eve of the 1st of May. Thence we went on along the same plain, and passed through another small town in the same jurisdiction, called Marcatello, and then, by a road which already began to give one a touch of Appennine ascents, we got at dinner-time to

Borgo-a-Pasci, ten miles; a small village, with a miserable inn, at the edge of the mountains. After dinner, we went on foot along a wild, narrow, and stony road, and then up a high hill of two miles ascent; the road was rough and tiresome, but not dangerous or appalling, for the precipices which it overlooked were not so abrupt but that the eye had something to rest upon. We accompanied the Metaurus to its source, which is on this height, so that we had now watched this river from its end to its beginning, having seen it fall into the sea at Senigaglia, and witnessed its rise here. On descending the mountain on the other side, there opened before us a wide and handsome plain, along which runs the Tiber, which is here only eight miles or thereabouts from its source, and beyond this plain rose other mountains. The scene altogether reminded me of La Limaigne, in Auvergne, as you descend from Puy de Dome to Clermont. Upon the height where we now were, terminates the jurisdiction of the Duke of Urbino; and we then entered the territories of the Duke of Florence, the Pope's states lying on the left. We got by supper-time to

Borgo San Sepolchro, thirteen miles; a small town, belonging to the Duke of Florence, situated in the plain before-mentioned, and presenting no feature worth noticing. We left it next morning, 1st of May. At a mile from the town we crossed, over a stone bridge, the river Tiber, the water of which here, and for many miles on, is fair and clear; a proof that the dirty, reddish colour, *flavum Tiberim*, which it exhibits at Rome, is occasioned by the mixture of some other river before it reaches that city. We went along this plain for about four miles, and then ascended a hill, at the top of which we found a small town. Several girls, both here and at other places on the road, came up to us, and, taking hold of our horses' bridles, sang a sort of song, begging us to make them some present on that day of rejoicing. From this hill we descended into a low and rocky valley, where we had much difficulty in picking our way along a bad road, which followed the course of a mountain torrent; and then we had to mount a steep hill, three miles up, and as many in the descent, which brought us into another large plain, in traversing which we crossed the river Chiasso, over a stone bridge, and afterwards the river Arno, also over a stone bridge, a very large and fine one, on the other side of which we halted at

Ponte Boriano, eighteen miles; a small and miserable inn, as most of those on this route are. It would be very absurd to bring any thing like good horses here; for there is not a bit of hay to be got. After dinner, we proceeded through the plain, which is all cut up, as well as the road, with horrible holes and pools of water, so that in winter this part must be exceedingly dangerous; they are, however, mending the road a little. Soon after leaving Ponte Boriano, we passed, about two miles on our left, the town of Arrezo, the situation of which is higher than that of the country about it. Passing over the Ambra, on a handsome stone bridge, we reached, in the evening,

Lavenelle, ten miles. The inn is about a mile or so on this side the town, and is cele-

brated as being the best in Tuscany, and very likely it is so; for certainly it is the best we have met with in Italy. It is held in such high estimation that the nobility and gentry of the country often meet together here, as we do at Le More's at Paris, or Guillot's at Amiens. They serve up your dinner on pewter, which is a very rare article here. The house stands by itself, in a very agreeable situation, and has a spring of fresh water in the grounds belonging to it. We left this house in the morning, and went on, over the plain, by a very excellent straight road, passing on our way through four small towns, Mantenarea, S. Giovanni, Fligine, and Ancisa, and by dinner-time reached

Pian della Fonte, twelve miles; an indifferent inn, situated a little beyond Ancisa. This latter town, which occupies an agreeable site in the Val d' Arno, is spoken of by Petrarch, who, it is said, was born here,[1] or at least, in a house a mile off, of which only a few ruins remain; the place, however, is pointed out. They were sowing an after-crop of melons amongst those already growing, which they expected would be ready in August. This morning I had a heaviness in the head, and a dizziness before my eyes, such as used to trouble me in my old head-aches, which I had not felt for ten years past. The valley through which we were passing was once a marsh, and Livy[2] tells us that Hannibal was obliged to pass it on an elephant, and lost an eye here from the inclemency of the weather. The place is still very low and damp, and subject to inundations from the Arno. I would not take any dinner here, and was sorry for it afterwards, as eating would have induced a vomit, which is my speediest cure; otherwise I carry this heaviness of the head about with me for a day or two, as was the case on this occasion. The road was full of country people, carrying all sorts of provisions to Florence. We entered

Florence, twelve miles, by one of the four stone bridges which traverse the Arno here. The next morning, after hearing mass, we left this place, and, turning a little to the right, went to see Castello, of which I have spoken elsewhere; but as the duke's daughters, who were staying here, were at this moment going through the garden to hear mass, we were requested to stay until they had returned, which I would not do. We met on the road a number of processions, marshalled in this order: first came the banner; then the women, most of whom were good-looking, with white sleeves, and excellent straw hats, which they make better here than anywhere else, and all well dressed for country people; after these came the clergyman, and then the men. The day before we saw a procession of monks, who all wore these straw hats. We proceeded through a broad and lovely valley; and, to say the truth, I was well nigh constrained to admit that neither Orleans nor Paris have their environs adorned with so great a number of houses and villages, and to so great a distance, as is Florence: as to fine houses and palaces, there is no doubt about the matter for a moment. By dinner-time we found ourselves at

Prato, ten miles, a small town, belonging to the Duke of Florence, situated on the river Bisanzo, which we crossed over a stone bridge at the entrance of the town. There is no country where the roads and bridges are so numerous or so well kept up; every here and there, on your way, you see a stone pillar, with an inscription, setting forth what roads are to be kept in repair by such and such a state and district, and intimating that such state is held responsible to the community for maintaining such roads in the requisite order. In the town-hall here we observed the arms and name of the Legate du Prat,[3] who, they say, came from this place. Over the entrance to this town-hall, there is the statue, larger than life, of a man, crowned, holding a representation of the world in his hand, and with this inscription at his feet: *Rex Robertus*.[4] They say that this town formerly belonged to us; there are the *fleurs-de-lys* to be seen every where, and the arms of the town are *gueules, semé de fleurs-de-lys d'or*. The principal church is a fine one, enriched with an abundance of white and black marble. Leaving this place, we made another *detour* of full four miles, for the purpose of seeing Poggio, a house which is talked a great deal about, belonging to the duke, and situated on the river Umbrona. The form of the building is a model of Pratolino. 'Tis wonderful how, in so comparatively small a space, they have managed to contrive a hundred good-sized rooms. I saw here, among other things, a quantity of bed-curtains, of a very fine stuff, though of no intrinsic value, being but fine wool, worked with four-thread taffeta. We saw the duke's laboratory, and his turning-room, and other work-rooms; for he is a great mechanician. Thence, by a very straight road, running through an extremely fertile country, with a hedge on each side of the way, formed of vines trained upon trees, a very picturesque object in itself, we got by supper-time to

Pistoia, fourteen miles; a large town situated on the river Umbrona, with wide streets, paved in the same manner as Florence, Prato, Lucca, and other towns, with broad flat stones. I forgot to say that you can see Florence, Prato, and Pistoia, from the dining-rooms at Poggio,

[1] Petrarch's father and mother had some property at Ancisa; but he himself, according to Beccatelli, was born at Arezzo.

[2] Book xxii. c. 2.

[3] Anthony du Prat, Chancellor of France, and afterwards Archbishop of Sens, Cardinal, and Legate *à Latere* in France.

[4] It is by no means clear who this King Robert can be. Robert the Devout, King of France, son of Hugues Capet, was never in France, as far as we know. Perhaps it was his son Robert, third of the first royal branch of the Dukes of Burgundy.

as you sit at table; when we were there, the duke was at Pratolino. Pistoia is but thinly populated. There are a great number of fine churches and houses. I enquired here as to the price of the straw hats, and found they were fifteen sous a piece; it seemed to me that in France they would be worth as many francs. It was in the territory of Pistoia, and not far from the town, that Catiline was defeated and killed. At Poggio they have pictures in tapestry, of every description of hunting; and, among others, I saw one representing an ostrich-hunt, in which the game is pursued by men on horseback, who pierce it with javelins. The Latins called Pistoia, Pistorium;[1] it belongs to the Duke of Florence. They say that it was the ancient feuds of the houses of Cancellieri and Pansadissi that, some time back, depopulated the town to that extent, that it now contains but eight thousand souls altogether; whereas Lucca, which is only the same size, has more than twenty-five thousand inhabitants. Messer Tadeo Rospiglioni,[2] who had received a letter from Rome, recommending me to his favour, from Giovanni Franchini, asked me to dinner the day after my arrival, together with all the gentlemen in my company. The decorations of the palace were very splendid, but the dinner was served up after a somewhat strange fashion; there were very few servants in attendance; the wine was placed on the table after dinner, as it is in Germany. We went to see the churches; in the principal church they have a flourish of trumpets when the host is elevated. Among the choristers there were several priests, who played on sackbuts. This poor town fancies that it indemnifies itself for its lost liberty by this vain image of its ancient form: they have nine magistrates, with a gonfalonier, who is elected every two months, but these authorities, who have charge of the town, are maintained by the duke, as they used to be in former times by the inhabitants, and live at the palace, where they are, as it were, prisoners, seldom leaving it unless they go out altogether. The gonfalonier, in processions, takes precedence of the *podesta*, who is named by the duke, but the *podesta* has all the real power; the gonfalonier, however, assumes quite the air of a petty sovereign, and returns no person's salutation. 'Twas a melancholy sight to see them taking this miserable pretence for current coin, though the grand duke all the while makes them contribute a ten times larger subsidy than they used to be called upon for, in the old time. Most of the principal walks in the large Italian gardens, are covered with grass, which is kept regularly mown. The cherries were beginning to ripen at this time, and on the way from Pistoia to Lucca, the country people accosted us, and offered bunches of strawberries for sale. We left Pisteia on Thursday, Ascension-day, after dinner, and proceeded for some time along the same valley I have already spoken of, and then we came to an ascent, which, after some time, brought us to another broad and picturesque plain. Amid the corn-fields, there are ranges of trees, along which the vines are trained in rich profusion, giving the fields the appearance of a wide-spread garden. The mountains on this route are covered with trees, principally olive, chesnut, and mulberry, which latter are of great importance for feeding the silk-worms. In this plain you come to

Lucques,[3] twenty miles, a town one-third smaller than Bordeaux, and a free-town, except that its weakness has compelled it to place itself under the protection of the emperor and the house of Austria. It is well walled, but the fosse is shallow, with but little water in it, and the bottom is covered with broad flat grass. All round the walls, on the platform inside, are two or three rows of trees, which serve for shade in summer, while their cuttings are given out as fire-wood to the poorer inhabitants. From the outside, these ranges of trees have the appearance of a forest, which conceals the houses of the town. They have a garrison here, constantly kept up, of three hundred foreign soldiers. The town is thickly populated, and a great portion of its inhabitants are occupied in the silk manufacture; the streets, though narrow, are handsome, and in every direction you see fine large houses. They are constructing a canal through the town, which will be supplied from the river Cerchio; and they are also engaged in the erection of a palace, now a good way advanced, which is to cost thirty thousand crowns. Besides the population of the town, they state that they have 120,000 subjects, but they have no other town under their dominion, and only two or three small castles. All the people here, including the gentry and the military, are more or less engaged in traffic. The Buonvisi are reputed the richest among the citizens. Strangers are only allowed to enter at one gate, where a strong guard is always posted. The town is one of the most pleasantly situated that I ever saw; it is surrounded by a lovely plain of two leagues in extent, and this again is environed by a circle of picturesque hills, which are for the most part cultivated to the summits. The wines are but indifferent. The expense of living is about twenty sous a day; the inns, as elsewhere throughout the country, are poor places. I received many civilities from several individuals, with presents of wine and fruit, and offers of money. I stayed here Friday and Saturday, and left the place on Sunday after dinner, of which, however, I did not partake, as I was fasting. The hills next the town are covered with handsome houses. Our road, for the most part, lay along a valley, between thickly-wooded hills, with the river Cerchio

[1] And also Pistoria.

[2] The name is Rospigliosi. Pope Clement IX. was of this family

[3] Lucca.

on our right. We passed several villages, and two large towns, Reci and Borgo, and crossed the Cerchio over a bridge of unusual height, which throws itself over the wide stream by one single arch; we saw several of these bridges in other places. At two o'clock in the afternoon, we reached

Bein[1] della Villa, sixteen miles. The country here is quite mountainous. In front of the Bath, along the river, there is a small plain, of about three or four hundred paces in extent, and the Bath stands above this, on the side of a hill, very much in the situation of the spring at Banieres. The Bath stands on a level spot, and consists of between thirty and forty houses, extremely well adapted to the purpose. The rooms are pleasant and private, so that any visitors that so choose may be quite to themselves. Each set of apartments has a water-closet, and a public and private entrance. I looked at nearly all of them, before I agreed upon one, and chose the best there was to be had, particularly with reference to the prospect, which (at least, from the chamber that I selected) embraces the valley below, with the river La Lima, and the mountains around, which are all cultivated and planted to the very tops: the trees principally grown are chesnut and olive. Each gradation of every hill is surrounded, on the outer edge, with a circle of vines, within which you see another circle, or corn-field; and the slope above this is covered with trees, till you come to another girdle of vines. From my chamber, I could hear all night the gentle murmur of the river below. Adjoining the houses, there is a terrace for the visitors to promenade upon, whence they have a good view of the valley, and river, two hundred paces down which you see a pretty little village, which affords additional accommodation for invalids, when the Bath itself is full. Most of the houses are newly built, and there is an excellent road to it. In the winter time, a great portion of the residents at the Bath retire to this village, as being a more sheltered and warmer place, and all round the year, keep up shops there, which are principally apothecaries' shops. My landlord is called Captain Paulini, a real captain in the army. He let me a sitting-room, three bed-chambers, a kitchen, and offices for the servants, with eight beds, two of which had curtains; and agreed to supply us with salt, clean napkins every day, a clean cloth every third day, cooking implements, and candlesticks, for eleven crowns a fortnight, a few sous more than ten pistolets.[2] Dishes, plates, which are here of earthenware, glasses, knives, and so on, we had to buy. There is plenty of veal and kid-venison to be had here, but scarcely any other description of meat. In every house, they offer to market for you; and I believe you could manage to board very well at twenty sous a day each; and you can always find, in every lodging, a person that can cook every thing you require for table. The wine is by no means good; but those who are particular about the matter can easily procure it, either from Pescia or from Lucca. I was the first arrival at the Bath, except two Bolognese gentlemen, who had no great train, so that I had the whole place to choose in, and, as I was told, got my lodgings cheaper than I should, if the company had arrived, who, it appears, come in crowds; but the season does not commence till June, lasting till September: by October none of the invalid visitors are left; but there are pleasure parties, who come either earlier in the year,—there were several leaving it when I arrived, who had been staying a month,—or in October, though the number in the latter month is limited. One of the houses here, called the Palace, belonging to the Buonvisi family, is much handsomer than any of the rest, and is, indeed, a very magnificent mansion. There is a fine fountain in the hall, and a variety of other useful and ornamental features. I had an offer of this house, either the whole of it or a suite of four rooms, whichever I preferred; the four rooms they would have let me furnished, in excellent style, for twenty crowns a fortnight, currency of that country, but I would only give a crown a day, on account of its not being the season, a circumstance which makes a vast difference in the value of these places. My landlord is not obliged to keep to his bargain after May: if I stay beyond that month, we are to come to a fresh agreement. The waters here are both drunk and taken as a bath. The bath-room is a covered place, vaulted and somewhat dark, about half the size of my drawing-room at Montaigne. They have a machine here, called a *doccia*,[3] by which they direct showers of water against the particular part of the person that is affected, more especially the head, through small jets, which continually discharge themselves upon the part, and warm it, and the water then falls into a wooden trough, something like that used by washer-women, which carries it off. There is another bath-room, also vaulted and dark, appropriated to the female visitors; both of which are supplied from a spring, very pleasantly situated in a nook, where you have to descend several steps when you drink the water.

On Monday morning, the 8th of May, I took, with very great reluctance, a dose of cassia, which my host brought me, though not with the grace of my apothecary at Rome. I sat down to dinner two hours after, but could not get on with it at all; for, as soon as I had eaten a little, the physic made me sick, and I threw up all I had taken, and I was sick again afterwards. I had, besides, three or four stools, with very great pain in the stomach, in

[1] Bagno, *bath.*

[2] About forty-two shillings.

[3] Shower-bath.

consequence of the wind, caused by the physic and which tormented me for twenty-four hours, so I made up my mind I would swallow no more of that stuff. I had rather have a fit of the cholic than have my stomach thus disturbed, and my whole system deranged, with this confounded cassia. Before I took this stuff, I was very well; so much so that, on the Sunday, after supper, the only meal I had taken that day, I enjoyed very much an excursion we took to see the Bath of Corsena, a good half mile thence, on the other side of the hill, at about the same elevation as the Bagno della Villa. The former Bath is in much greater repute for bathing and the *doccia*, for our bath is not generally recommended, either by the physicians or by custom, for anything but drinking; and they say, too, that the Corsena Bath is much more anciently known. Indeed, they date it back to the time of the Romans; but certainly there is no trace of antiquity at either the one Bath or the other. At Corsena, there are three or four large vaulted bath-rooms, with an aperture in the centre of the roof for the admission of air; but they are all dark and disagreeable. There is another hot spring at about two or three hundred paces from this Bath, a little higher up the mountain, called Saint John;[1] here they have a small bath-room, also covered, but there is no house on the spot, but only a place with room enough for a camp-bedstead, where you can lie down for an hour or two in the day-time. The waters at Corsena are never drunk, but they diversify their external application in every imaginable way: one operation simply refreshes the system, another warms the blood; one way cures one malady, another another; and they relate a thousand miracles on the subject; the short of which is that there is no malady, on the face of the earth, which may not find its remedy here. They have a good inn, with about twenty other houses of a poor class. There is no comparison between this place and Della Villa; in point of convenience, or in the beauty of the prospect, although the river runs by Corsena as well as by Della Villa, and they have a valley spread out before them of a much larger extent than ours; yet Corsena is by far the dearest place. Many people frequent both Baths, drinking at the one, and then taking a course of bathing at the other. Corsena, however, is, upon the whole, most in vogue.

Thursday, 9th of May, 1581, early in the morning, before sunrise, I went to drink the waters at the spring. I took seven glasses, one after the other, altogether about three pounds and a half, for they reckon by weight here. The seven glasses might, perhaps, hold about as much as twelve of ours. The water is of a medium temperature, like that of Aigues-Caudes, or Barbotan, with less taste than any water I ever drank. I could perceive nothing about it but extreme insipidity, and a sweetish savour. That day it had no operation; and, though it was five hours before I took any dinner, I did not discharge a single drop of it all that time. Some of them said I had taken too little; for here it is a frequent thing to drink a flask containing sixteen or seventeen glasses, about eight pounds. My own notion is that, finding my stomach so empty, in consequence of the cassia, the water resolved itself into aliment. This same day, I had a visit from a Bolognese gentleman, a colonel commanding a body of twelve hundred foot, in the service of the State. This gentleman, who himself was residing at a place four miles off, stopped with me two hours, and offered me his best services. On leaving, he ordered my landlord and other people in the place, to show me the utmost attention in their power. It is part of the plan of government, here, to employ foreign officers for the higher grades; the troops are distributed throughout the towns and villages, in numbers proportioned to the size of the respective places; and there is a colonel appointed for each district, which districts vary very much in extent. These colonels receive regular pay; but the inferior officers, who are chosen from among the inhabitants of each place, are only paid in time of war, when they are called upon to take their respective commands. My colonel had sixteen crowns a month, and had nothing to do except keeping himself ready for service. They observe a stricter regimen here than they do at our baths, and pay particular attention to fasting before they drink. I was more comfortably lodged here than I had been at any other bath, not even excepting Banieres. The situation of the place, too, is far more picturesque than any of the others, except that of Banieres. The accommodations for bathing, and the lodging-houses at Baden, are, no doubt, far more elegant and commodious, than is the case here; but the prospects at Della Villa are infinitely prettier than those at Baden. As I before said, the water I drank on Tuesday had no sort of operation; for, though I had a stool immediately after taking it, I attributed this to the medicine of the preceding day, there being no sign of the water in it: so on Wednesday morning, when I again took the waters, I drank seven pound glasses, which was at least twice as much as I had taken the day before, and, I believe, much more than I had ever before drunk at once. This dose gave me a great inclination to perspire, which I resisted, having been often told that this was not what I needed. All that day I kept in my room, sometimes walking about, sometimes sitting still. The water was principally voided in the shape of several thin, loose stools, which came from me without the slightest effort. I am convinced that I did wrong to take the cassia, for the operation of the water afterwards, followed the course which

[1] San Giovanni.

the physic had, as it were, opened for and pointed out to it, whereas my object was to ease and benefit the bladder; and I am determined, the first bath I take, simply to prepare for it by dieting myself the day before. I take these waters to be of very mild operation, and therefore very safe and good for persons of a delicate turn. They are much praised for strengthening the liver, and for removing eruptions and blotches on the skin; which I note as a useful memorandum for an amiable lady, a friend of mine, in France. The water of St. John's Bath is much used in the preparation of pomade, it being very oily. There are large quantities of it conveyed in barrels, on the backs of asses and mules, for the use of people in Reggio, Lombardy, and elsewhere. Some of the patients drink it in bed; but, wherever it is taken, the rule is to keep your stomach and feet warm, and to remain quiet for some time after. The people in the neighbourhood have it brought to their houses, perhaps three or four miles off. To show that this water is not very aperient, I need only mention that it is the custom here to take previously a glass of the water of a bath near Pistoia, the taste of which is very sharp, and which is very hot at the spring; this is dispensed by the apothecaries here, for the express purpose of helping the Della Villa waters. The second day, I voided coloured water, and a quantity of gravel; but this I ascribed, in great measure, to the cassia, which produced the same effect the day I took it. I was told a curious thing: a native of the place, named Giuseppe, once a soldier, but now a galley-slave at Genoa, several of whose relations I saw here, being sometime since at sea, in time of war, was taken prisoner by the Turks. In order to be set free, he turned Turk (a thing which has been done by a good many of the people from these mountains, when similarly circumstanced), was circumcised, and got married. Having entered the enemy's service, and taking part in an expedition to pillage this coast, he landed; and getting too far up the country, was taken prisoner, with several other Turks, by the inhabitants, who had rushed to arms. It at once occurred to him to say that he was a Christian, and that he had come there for the purpose of getting out of the power of the enemy, and he was accordingly set at liberty a few days after; and, returning to his native place, proceeded to his mother's house, which stands just opposite to where I lodge. He entered without ceremony, and saw his mother, who sharply asked him who he was, and what he wanted; for he still had his sailor's dress on, a somewhat unusual garb in that part of the country. He had been absent and deemed lost, for ten or twelve years, so that he was not readily recognized; but when he made himself known, and advanced to embrace his mother, she uttered a terrible shriek, and fell breathless and senseless on the floor; nor was it till the next day that the physicians succeeded in restoring her to animation. She recovered, however, but only for a short time, for she died in a few weeks; and every person was of opinion that the shock had materially abridged her life. Our friend Giuseppe was joyfully received by his former companions, and, publicly abjuring the faith he had adopted, received the sacrament from the hands of the Bishop of Lucca, and several other imposing ceremonies were gone through; but it was all deception on his part. His heart was with the Turks; and, in order to return among them, he slipped away from Della Villa and got to Venice, whence he easily managed to find his way back to Barbary, and joined a fresh expedition, which was then on the point of starting. He fell into the hands of the Genoese, who, finding him to be a man of unusual strength, and of great experience as a sailor, kept him in their service, taking the precaution to have him constantly well fettered and bound. The seigneury have a large force of militia, consisting of the male inhabitants of the country places, whose names and abodes are all carefully registered, so that they may be called upon when required. The sole business of the colonels, in time of peace, is to exercise these militia-men, and to render them conversant with the various military manœuvres. The men receive no pay, but they are privileged to wear what arms and armour they please; they are exempt from arrest for debt, and in time of war they receive pay. The captains, ensigns, sergeants, and so on, are all selected from the natives of each place; it is only the colonel that must be a foreigner, and stipendiary. Colonel del Borgo, the gentleman who came to visit me, sent, the next day, a man with a present to me of sixteen lemons and sixteen artichokes, from the garden of his house, which lies four miles from the Bath. The mildness of the water here is further shown in the circumstance that it readily turns into aliment; it soon becomes coloured, and does not occasion that constant, uneasy desire to urine, which I have experienced elsewhere, but not here, and others have made the same remark to me. As I said before, I was exceedingly well lodged here, well nigh as well as at Rome, and yet there was neither chimney nor glass window in my room. This shows that the weather in Italy is much more equable than among us, for we should consider the merely having wooden shutters, without glass windows, as an insupportable disadvantage, yet this is the case here almost universally. Besides this, I slept very well. The bedsteads, indeed, are miserable little tressels, crossed breadthways with wooden laths: but putting a palliasse on this, and a mattrass upon the palliasse, you can manage exceedingly well, if you have got a curtain. They have three plans for hiding the frame of the bed; first, by valances, the same as the curtain, like what I had at Rome; secondly, by having the curtains made so long as to reach

to the ground, and completely cover in the whole bed, which is the best plan; thirdly, by a coverlid, which reaches to the ground, and is fastened at each corner with buttons. This coverlid is made of some light material, such as white fustian, and there is another coverlid beneath it for warmth. At all events I have got, from seeing these beds, an idea that will effect some saving of expense and trouble for my own house, and for the poor people about me, for these beds are cheap, and comfortable, and the vermin do not get into them. This same day I took a bath after dinner, contrary to the rules of the people here, who say that the one operation impedes the other, and who accordingly go upon the plan of taking the waters internally for so many days, and then externally for so many days, without mixing the operation. The general rule is to drink the waters eight days, and to bathe for thirty, drinking here, and bathing at the other place. The bath is very mild and pleasant; I was in it for half an hour, but scarcely perspired at all; it was about supper-time. As soon as I left the bath, I went to bed, and supped upon sugared lemon salad, without taking anything to drink; the whole of that day I had not drunk a pound of water, and I believe that by the next morning I had barely voided that quantity. I was rather alarmed at finding that the water did not pass more freely, yet my breath seemed tolerably good, and my spirits were light, as at the other baths. It was much the same with me elsewhere, but here they deem it almost a fatal presage, and if you do not void at least two-thirds of the water you have taken the very first day, they forthwith advise you to leave off drinking, or, at all events, to take medicine at the same time. My opinion about these waters is that they neither do much harm nor much good; except, indeed, that I doubt whether, if they produce any effect at all, they do not heat the parts more than they clear them; I strongly suspect that I require much warmer and more aperitive waters. Thursday morning, I drank five pounds, apprehensive that the dose might again fail me, and that I should not pass the water properly. They occasioned a stool, had but very slight operation in the other respect. This morning, as I was writing to M. d'Ossat,[1] my thoughts reverted to M. de la Boëtie, and the recollection threw me into such a fit of desponding melancholy, that it was some time before I recovered my serenity, and the depression of my mind made me feel quite ill. The bed of the spring whence the water is taken is red, and covered with rust, which, coupled with its insipidity, gave me an idea that there is a great deal of iron in it, and that it is binding. I did not dine this Thursday till five hours after I had taken my dose, yet all that day I did not void the fifth part of what I had drunk. There 's but poor reliance upon these physicians and their remedies! I said just now, that I was sorry I had purged myself so much, for that I conceived that the water, finding me empty, stopped to serve as aliment, instead of passing on. I have just seen a book that has been printed on the subject of these waters, by a Doctor Donati, who practises here, and who advises the patients to make but a light dinner, and to eat the more at supper; and the experience I have had, in drinking these waters, makes me think he is right, and that I, too, was right in regretting I had taken the waters on an empty stomach. The other physician, Doctor Franciotti, is of the contrary opinion, both on this and on several other points. Towards the close of the day, I felt a heaviness in the bladder, which I feared was occasioned by the water collecting there; yet, reckoning all I had voided in the twenty-four hours, I found it came very near what I had drunk, including the little I took with my meals. Friday morning, instead of drinking, I took a bath, and bathed my head also, contrary to the practice of the place. It is the custom here to assist the operation of the waters by some drug, sugar-candy, manna, or even stronger auxiliaries, and they also generally mix with the first glass you drink of their water, some *aqua del Testuccio*, which I tasted separately, and found it saltish. I have, however, some suspicion that the apothecaries, instead of sending for this water from Pistoia, fabricate it at home with some infusion or other in river water; for, besides the saltness, there is a taste about it that I did not at all understand, and had never before met with. This water is heated, and some people take as many as two or three glasses to begin with, but I have never noticed any particular effect that it produced. Others put salt into the first few glasses. They have a notion that to perspire, or go to sleep, after taking the water, is a most alarming symptom, but, I sometimes found the water had a great tendency to produce perspiration.

Let me try[2] my hand at the other language, more especially now that I am in that part of the country where, as it appears to me, they speak the purest Tuscan, particularly those of the inhabitants who have not corrupted their tongue with the admixture of the surrounding

[1] Afterwards Cardinal d'Ossat.

[2] The remainder of the Journey, as left by Montaigne, was written in Italian, and formed by no means the least difficult portion of the task which the original Editor undertook. The orthography was in the last degree defective, and the work was full of all sorts of almost unintelligible licenses in grammar, Gallicisms, and *patois*. No one but an Italian, and an Italian scholar, could decypher this portion of the Journey, and render it intelligible; and fortunately for M. de Querlon and for the world of letters, M. Bartoli, antiquarian to the King of Sardinia, and who had just been elected a Foreign Associate of the *Academie Royale des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres*, happened to be in Paris while the French portion of the work was printing, and took upon himself the editing of the Italian portion, a task which he executed with great ability. It is from his edition that the present translation has been made.

patois. Saturday, very early in the morning, I went to drink the waters at St. Barnaby, one of the springs which this mountain produces, and what an amazing quantity of water, hot and cold, it discharges! The mountain itself is of no great height, and may have a circuit of three miles. The only waters, that are ordinarily drank from it, are those of one principal spring, and of the other I mentioned, which has only been in vogue a few years. A leper, of the name of Barnaby, having tried all the other baths in vain, came here, and was cured, and hence its name, and what reputation it has. There are no houses here, but only a small covered room, and stone seats round the fountain, which, though formed of iron, and placed there very recently, is already much eaten with rust, which shows the power of the mineral in the water. The water is hotter than that at Della Villa, and, according to the general opinion, heavier and more violent in its operation; it smacks of sulphur, but only slightly. The bed of the spring is tinged with a colour like ashes, as ours is, but not so marked; the distance from Della Villa is about a mile, and it stands much lower down the hill than any other of the hot springs. The distance from the river is about two or three pikes' length. I drank five pounds with some difficulty and distaste, for I did not feel at all well. The day before, I had taken a walk of about three miles, after dinner, in the sun, and perhaps in consequence of this I the better felt the effects of the water. It began to digest about half an hour after I had taken it. On leaving the place and returning home, I made a *detour* of about two miles, and I don't know whether the unusual exercise did me any great good; all the other mornings I had returned immediately to my chamber, to avoid the cold morning air, for the houses are not thirty paces from the spring. On this occasion, the first water I voided was liquid, with a good deal of gravel; then came some that was colourless and immature, and I was sadly plagued with the wind. When I had passed about three pounds, the urine began to assume a reddish hue. Before dinner I had passed more than half what I had taken. In my walks about the mountain, I saw several hot springs, and the country people say that, in winter, you can perceive distant exhalations from other parts of the hill, which shows that there are a vast number of these springs about it. What I tasted of these other waters was hot, insipid, and without smell or smoke, as compared with ours. At Corsena, besides the principal bath, I saw a place lying lower down the hill, where the water is collected from different springs into little channels, where it is much easier got at. They told me that these reservoirs were supplied from eight or ten springs. Each of these has a name inscribed upon it, in reference to its supposed effect: one is *the Savoury*, another *the Sweet*, another *the Amorous*, a fourth *the Crowned*, a fifth *the Despairing One*, and so on. Some of these canals are hotter than others.

The mountains in the neighbourhood where, fifty years ago, nothing but chesnut and other forest trees grew, are now covered with rich corn-fields and vineyards. There are visible from this place several mountains, bare, uncultivated, and capped with snow, but these are a long way off. The people eat *pane di legno*,[1] by which name they popularly designate the chesnut, an article which with them is of the very first importance to life, and which they make into a cake, something like our gingerbread. I never saw so many snakes and toads as there are here. The children very often are even afraid, on account of the snakes, to go and pick the strawberries that grow in quantities on the mountain and among the bushes. Many of those who drink the waters take, in every glass, three or four grains of coriander seed, as a remedy against wind. Easter Monday, 14th May, I drank five pounds and more of the water of Barnaby, for my glass holds rather more than a pound. I immediately voided a quantity of gravel, and, within two hours, had passed more than two-thirds of the water I had taken. It kept the stomach free, and passed without any difficulty. The Italian pound contains only eleven ounces.

You live here very cheap. Veal, very good and tender, costs about three French sous a pound. There are plenty of trouts, but they are small. There are several excellent parasol-makers here, an article that every body carries. The whole country is very hilly, and the roads in general very uneven; but, in other respects, they are pleasant enough; and all those on the mountain itself have a paved way. After dinner to-day, I gave a dance to the country girls, and danced with them myself, in order not to appear airish. In some parts of Italy, such as Tuscany and the duchy of Urbino, the women courtesy in the French fashion, by bending the knees. At the spring nearest the village there is a low square marble pillar, which was placed there exactly a hundred and ten years ago, on the 1st May, whereupon is an inscription setting forth the various properties of these waters. I do not give the inscription, as it may be found in several books, wherein mention is made of the baths of Lucca. At all the bathing places there are sand-glasses for the use of the visitors; and I had, besides, two of them on my table, which the host had lent me. In the evening, I took only three slices of toast, buttered and sugared, without any thing to drink. On Monday, thinking that by this time the Barnaby water had sufficiently cleared the passage, I resumed the ordinary waters, of which I drank five pounds; but on this occasion it did not make me perspire, as it usually did. The first time I passed water, I voided with it some gravel, which had every appearance of being

[1] Wood-bread.

fragments of stone. This water seemed to me almost cold, in comparison with that of Barnaby, although the latter itself is but of a moderate heat, very far from the heat of the waters of Plombieres and Bagnieres. The two together had a very good effect, and I was excessively delighted that I had paid no attention to the directions of those physicians who say you are to leave off drinking the waters, if they do not succeed the very first day. On Tuesday, 16th May, in compliance with the custom here, a custom which hits my taste very well, I took a bath, instead of drinking, and remained in the water a full hour, placing myself close under the source, for elsewhere the water seemed to me cold. Afterwards, as I experienced a great deal of annoyance from wind, which I considered was owing to the waters, I left off drinking them. I felt so comfortable in the bath, that I could willingly have gone to sleep there. It did not make me perspire, but it opened the pores thoroughly; and when I got out, I had myself well rubbed, and went to bed, where I stayed some time.

Every month, in each parish, they have a review of the soldiery. My friend the colonel, from whom I had continued to receive infinite civilities, at this time reviewed those of the parish in which we now were. There were about two hundred pikemen and harquebussiers, who, being arranged in parties, manœuvred against one another, and, for rustics, seemed to understand their evolutions very tolerably: the colonel's principal business, however, is to keep them in good order, and to teach them military discipline. The people here are divided into two parties, French and Spanish, and this division often produces serious quarrels, which sometimes break out publicly. The men and women who are of our party wear bunches of flowers in their caps or hair, over the right ear; while the Spanish party wear similar bunches of flowers over the left ear. The country people here all dress like gentlefolks. There is not a woman among them that does not wear white shoes, fine thread stockings, and a coloured silk apron! They are very fond of dancing, and cut their capers and turn their pirouettes in excellent style. When they speak of *the prince* in this State, they mean the Council of one hundred and twenty. The colonels of the troops cannot marry without the permission of *the prince*, which is not obtained without a great deal of difficulty; for it is not considered good policy to allow these officers to make any very close connexions with the people of the country. Neither are they permitted to acquire any property within the territories of the State. No soldier may leave the country without leave of his superiors. There are many of them whom poverty compels to beg upon their mountains, until they have saved enough to buy their military equipment with.

Wednesday, I went to the bath, and remained in it for upwards of an hour; I perspired a little, and dipped my head. The stoves that they use in Germany are exceedingly convenient in winter for drying your clothes, and so on; here the person who has charge of the baths dries the towels and clothes by means of a chafing-dish, filled with coals, and placed on bricks over a small fire, which answers the purpose much better and more quickly than our way.

They call all the grown-up girls, until they are married, and all the lads, until they have beards, children.

On Thursday, I took another bath, very much at my ease, and perspired a little. I put my head quite under the spout. I felt that the bath weakened me a little, and caused a heaviness in the bladder; however, I voided gravel, and expectorated a good deal of phlegm, as when I was drinking the waters; and, in other respects, I found that taking these waters externally produced much the same effect as drinking them. I took another bath on Friday. Every day there are large quantities of the waters, both of this bath and of Corsena, sent off to different parts of Italy. It seemed to me that the bathing cleared my complexion. I was still annoyed with wind, though it was not painful; it was probably this that produced in the water I passed a great deal of foam, and small bubbles which did not burst for a considerable time. Sometimes, also, it contained black hairs, though very few, and now I recollect that, on former occasions, I have passed a great many more than I did here. Almost always my water was full of some oily matter. The people about here are not near such meat-eaters as we are. They have nothing but the commonest kind of meat, and hardly set any price upon it. A very fine hare was sold to me, just about this time, for six French sous. They do not sport at all, and nobody brings any game here, for nobody would buy it.

Saturday, as it was very bad weather, the wind, among other discomforts, blowing so bar that even in our chambers we were sensibly reminded of the want of glass windows, I neither bathed nor drank the waters. I observed one extraordinary effect of these waters in the case of my brother,[1] who, though he did not recollect ever having voided gravel, either naturally or from the other waters he had elsewhere drunk with me, passed a large quantity here. Sunday morning, I bathed again, but without dipping my head. After dinner I gave a ball, and distributed a number of public presents or prizes, as is the custom here, and I was glad to pay them this compliment in the spring time. Five or six days before, I had caused notice to be given of the intended fête in all the neighbouring villages; and, the evening before it took place, I sent special invitations, as well to the ball as to the supper that was to follow, to all

[1] M. de Matteconlon, who would thus seem to have rejoined Montaigne.

the gentlemen and ladies who were then staying at the two baths. I sent to Lucca for the prizes; the custom is to give several of these, in order not to appear to favour one particular woman more than the rest; and, to avoid all jealousy and suspicion, there are always eight or ten prizes for the women, and two or three for the men. I had no end of applications made to me by different women, one begging me not to forget herself, another not to pass over her niece, a third, not to omit her daughter, and so on. Some days before, M. Gio. da Vincenzio Saminiati, a particular friend of mine, sent me from Lucca, as I had requested him by letter to do, a leather belt and a black cloth cap, for presents to the men; and for the women, two taffeta aprons, one green and the other violet-colour (for you always have some articles better than others, that you may favour one or two amongst them); two other aprons of tamminy, four boxes of pins, four pair of shoes, of which I gave one pair to a pretty girl, out of the ball; a pair of slippers, to which I added a pair of shoes, making one present of the two articles; three gauze head-dresses with braids of hair, which made three prizes, and four small pearl-necklaces, making nineteen prizes for the women. The whole cost me something more than six crowns. Then I had five fifers, whom I found in provisions for the whole day, and paid them a crown amongst them; and I had a good bargain here, for in most cases you have to pay them more. The prizes are attached to an ornamented hoop, and placed where every body can see them.

We began dancing on the green, and at this time there was no one present but our own people, and I began to fear we should remain by ourselves; but soon after there arrived plenty of company, from the different places in the vicinity, and among them several ladies and gentlemen, whom I entertained in the best way I could, and they seemed very well pleased with their reception. As it was rather hot, we adjourned to the great hall in the Buonvisi palace, which was extremely well adapted for a ball-room. When the evening began to close in, about 22 o'clock,[1] I addressed the most distinguished ladies present, and said that being myself neither able nor willing to decide among the number of charming and beautiful girls that I saw around me, I entreated that they would take upon them the charge of distributing the prizes, according to their knowledge of the respective merits of the parties. We were a long time getting this point arranged, for the ladies to whom I addressed at first declined so delicate a commission, supposing that I made the offer out of mere politeness to them. At length they accepted the charge, on my agreeing to this compromise, that, if they thought fit to admit me to their deliberations, I would give my opinion in any case suggested to me. Accordingly, I made the best use I could of my eyes among the crowd of my fair visitors, selecting those who struck me as being the prettiest and the most graceful; for I pointed out to my coadjutors that the charm of a dance does not merely consist in the movement of the feet, but has a great deal to do with the face and figure and elegance of the fair ones who take part in it. The presents were distributed in the proportions, and among the persons we had agreed upon; the lady who undertook their distribution presented them to the dancers in my name, and I, on my part, transferred all the merit to her. All this part of the affair passed off exceedingly well, and without any interruption, except that one of the girls declined the present we offered her, and begged me to give it, for her sake, to another girl, whom she pointed out, but this I did not think fit to do, inasmuch as I did not at all admire the looks of the latter. The manner of distribution was this: as the name of each girl we had selected was called out, she left her place in the circle, and came and stood before the lady-distributress and myself, who were seated side by side. After giving her a kiss, I handed the prize intended for her to the lady, who then presented it to her, saying, with an amiable smile: "It is this gentleman whom you must thank for this handsome present;" whereupon I would say: "Not at all; whatever obligation you may feel is due to this lady, who, among so many other candidates, has judged you worthy of this slight token of approbation. I only regret that it is not more worthy of your such or such qualities," particularizing in each case the quality which most struck me about the recipient. There was much the same sort of form gone through in giving the men their prizes. The gentlemen and ladies of course had nothing to do with these little presents, but they all took part in the dancing. It is really a most charming, and, for a Frenchman, unusual spectacle, to see these country girls so handsome and so well dressed, quite like ladies, dancing with as much grace and elegance as the best amongst us, only in a different fashion. I invited every one there to take supper, which in Italy is a very slight affair, in comparison with our notion of the thing in France. I got off for a joint or two of veal, and a few pair of fowls. The only persons I had to supper at my own table, were the colonel of the district, M. Francisco Gambarini, a Bolognese, and a French gentleman. I, however, gave a seat at my table to Divizia, a poor peasant, who lives two miles from the Baths, and who, as well as her husband, lives by the labour of her hands. She is very ugly, is thirty-seven years old, has a goitre in her neck, and can neither read nor write. But there having resided in her father's house, an uncle of hers, who, from her tenderest years, used to read aloud in her presence Arfosto and some other poets, her mind became so alive to, so imbued with, the spirit of

[1] Seven o'clock, P.M.

poetry, that not only does she compose verses off-hand with the most surprising facility, but she moreover introduces into her compositions ancient fables, the names of gods, countries, sciences, and illustrious men, as readily as though she had gone through the regular course of studies. She composed a number of these verses before me. They are indeed nothing but verses and rhymes, but they are at the same time conceived in an easy and elegant style. There were more than a hundred women at my ball, though the time was not very favourable, it being just at the period when they are gathering in their grand harvest of all; and when the whole of the labouring population is engaged, every morning and evening, without regard to any fêtes or other amusements, in picking mulberry-leaves for their silk-worms; and, almost without exception, all the young women take part in this work, so that I was especially favoured.

Monday morning, I went to the Bath somewhat later than usual, for I was detained by the barber cutting my hair and shaving me. I bathed my head, and had a shower-bath, for a quarter of an hour, right under the great spring.

Among my visitors at the ball, was the deputy-judge, one of the officers whom the government appoints in each district, with cognizance of civil cases, where the amount in question does not exceed a small fixed sum; the appointment is for six months only, and the officer is then transferred to another district, and succeeded by the officer whom he displaces, if their conduct has been such as to merit their continuance in office. There is another officer, who has cognizance of criminal cases. I told this gentleman that it appeared to me the government would do well to institute a certain regulation here, which it would be very easy to introduce, and the outline of which I pointed out to him. It was simply this: that all the water-dealers, who come here in great numbers to purchase the waters, and carry them to all parts of Italy, should be furnished with an attestation of the quantity of water they have purchased, which would prevent their committing a fraud, a specimen of which had fallen under my own observation. One of these muleteers had come to my landlord, who is only a private individual, and begged of him to give him a written certificate that he had twenty-four loads of these waters, whereas, in point of fact, he had only four. My landlord, at first, refused to sanction this falsehood; but he at last gave the certificate, upon the muleteer's promising to return in four or six days and fetch the other twenty loads, which he never did. The judge paid great attention to my suggestion, and was very anxious to learn from me the name of the muleteer, or, in default of that, his appearance, and the horses he had, but I did not give him any information of the sort. I told him that I was going to try and establish here a custom observed in all the more noted baths of Europe, where every person of any rank leaves a copy of his armorial bearings in or on the house where he lodged, as a testimony of the obligation he has to the waters; for which intention of mine, the gentleman warmly thanked me, in the name of his government. They were beginning to cut hay at about this time, in several places.

Tuesday, I remained two hours in the bath, and kept my head under a shower bath for somewhat more than a quarter of an hour.

To-day, there arrived at the baths a Cremonese merchant, settled at Rome; he was afflicted with several extraordinary maladies, yet talked and walked about nevertheless, and even seemed gay and satisfied with life. His principal malady was in the head; which had become so weak that he told us his memory had got so bad that, after he had dined, he had no recollection of what he had had for dinner. If he went out on some business, he had always to come back eight or ten times, to ask what it was he was going about. He could hardly say his paternoster through. Even when he had managed to say it, he would begin again, and so on, perhaps half a dozen times, never in the slightest degree aware when he had finished that he was beginning again, or, when he was beginning again, that he had finished. He had laboured under deafness, blindness, and well nigh every possible malady; he was even plagued with such heat in the reins, that he was obliged to wear a leaden girdle there. For several years past, he had been under the discipline of physicians, whose directions he observed with religious exactitude. It was amusing enough to hear the different regimens that had been prescribed him in different parts of Italy, all differing from one another, especially as to these baths, and as to shower baths. There had been twenty consultations about him, in no one of which had the learned professors come to any thing like an understanding; in each case, the present physician had condemned his predecessor, and denounced him as a homicide. This gentleman was subject to one very strange effect from the wind that he was full of; it would burst from him at the ears with such violence as frequently to prevent his sleeping; and, whenever he yawned, it would burst out impetuously at the same place. He said that the best recipe for clearing the stomach was to put into your mouth four large grains of coriander-comfits, and having moistened them into one mass with your saliva, to use them as a clyster, the effect of which, he told us, was immediate and apparent. He was the first person I ever saw with one of those peacock-feather hats, that some people use instead of parasols, the carrying of which on horseback is certainly very inconvenient. This gentleman's hat was about seven inches high, and very large in diameter; the width of the crown was not less than a foot and a half. The frame of the

hat is of taffeta, wadded with silk, to keep out the heat.

As I have on former occasions been sorry that I had not written more at length my observations upon the baths I had visited, inasmuch as that I thereby lost materials for comparing them with the baths I subsequently used, I will this time go into greater detail upon the matter.

Wednesday, I went to the bath, where I experienced great heat in the body, and perspired to a very unusual extent, which made me feel somewhat weak. My mouth became dry, with a bitter taste in it; and on leaving the bath a faintness came over me, such as I had felt on former occasions from the heat of the water at Plombieres, at Bagnieres, at Pressac, &c. I did not, however, experience this effect at Barbotan, nor had I felt it here until to-day; whether it was that the water was hotter than usual, or that on this occasion, I bathed earlier than on former days, and before I had eased myself. I remained in the bath an hour and a half, and had the water poured on my head for about a quarter of an hour. It was going quite contrary to rule to have the shower-bath in the other bath, for the custom is to take them separately; and it was a further departure from rule to have the shower-bath here at all; for the general custom is to take this sort of bath at the other bath, where they take it at such and such particular springs; some at the first spring, some at the second, some at the third, according to the doctor's direction. So again, in drinking the waters, I used to drink the waters, and then bathe, and then drink again, without attending to any of the rules as to the particular course of days for drinking, and days for bathing, which are carefully observed here; paying no attention to the regular routine of drinking ten days, and bathing twenty-five; some weeks I bathed every day, others every other day; and, finally, I persisted in bathing but once a day, while the other visitors always bathed twice, and would never remain long under the shower-bath, while the general practice is to remain under it always an hour at least in the morning, and another hour in the evening. As to the fashion in use here, of having the top of the head shaved, and wearing there a piece of stuff or wool fastened with a band, my bald head made this unnecessary.

This morning, I received a visit from the deputy and other distinguished gentlemen who were lodging at the baths about here. The deputy told me of a singular accident that had happened to him some years ago, in consequence of a prick from a beetle, that he received in the fleshy part of the thumb, and which threw him into such a state of weakness, that he was well nigh at death's door. He was reduced to such an extremity that he was kept to his bed five months, without being able to stir; and remaining in this position for this long time so heated his reins, that at length the gravel was generated, from which, and from the cholic, he endured great suffering for more than a year. At about the end of that time, his father, who was Governor of Veletri, sent him a particular sort of green stone, which he procured from a monk, who had been in the Indies; and the virtue of which was such, that while he carried it about him he was never troubled with gravel. He had been in this state for two years. As to the local effect of the prick, the thumb, and nearly the whole hand, had since been all but useless; and the arm was so weakened that he was under the necessity of coming every year to the baths at Corsena to strengthen it, as well as the hand, by the use of the shower-bath.

The people here are wretchedly poor; so much so that I have seen them eat green mulberries, which they pick as they are gathering the leaves for their silk-worms.

As the bargain for letting the house I occupied, had been left uncertain in reference to the month of June, I thought it better to come to an understanding on the subject with my landlord; and he, seeing how I was solicited by all his neighbours to lodge with them, especially by the proprietor of the Buonvisi Palace, who offered to let it me for a gold crown a day, made up his mind to allow me to stay where I was as long as I liked, at the rate of twenty-five gold crowns a month, commencing from the 1st of June, up to which time my first bargain remained in force. Envy, hatred, and malice, more or less disguised, reign here, as well as elsewhere, among the inhabitants, though they are almost all related amongst one another: a woman one day repeated to me this proverb: "Whoever wishes his wife to become fruitful, let him send her to these baths, and keep away from them himself." What, among other things, more particularly pleased me in the house where I lived, was that I could pass from it to the bath and back again, over a smooth path, across a court-yard of about thirty paces long. I was vexed to see the mulberry trees stripped of their foliage; it produced the effect of winter in the middle of summer. The gravel that I was continually passing with my water seemed to me at this time more rough than usual, and gave me a great deal of pain.

Every day you see people going about to the different visitor's lodgings, with samples of wine in small flasks, but there is very little good wine to be had here. The white wine is light, but sharp and rough to the taste, and by no means salutary for the stomach. If you take the trouble to send to Lucca, or Pescia, for the *Vino Trebiano*, you get a tolerably mellow white wine, but not pleasant to the taste.

Thursday, Corpus-Christi Day, I took a bath, and, it being of a temperate heat, remained in it for more than an hour; I perspired very little; and when I came away, did not feel any debilitating effect from it. I had a shower-bath on my head for seven or eight

minutes; and when I got into bed again, fell into a profound sleep. This bathing and taking the shower-bath I found exceedingly pleasant, more so than anything else. I felt an itching occasionally, in my hands and all over my body indeed; and the people about, I understood, were very subject to the itch: among the children, the thrush was very prevalent. Here, as well as at the other baths I have visited, the people about think nothing at all of that which strangers come so far to procure; a great many of the country people, that I spoke to, had never even tasted the water, and had no sort of opinion of it. Yet it is surprising they do not try the effect, for they seem by no means a long-lived people. In the mucous matter which I was constantly passing with my water, there was occasionally gravel. When I took the shower-bath on the lower part of my stomach, I found it produce the effect of expelling wind; and at these times, the swelling which troubled me in those parts visibly diminished; so that I concluded this swelling to be occasioned by the wind.

Friday, I remained in the bath the usual time, and took a shower-bath on the head, for somewhat longer than my general custom. The extraordinary quantity of water that I was constantly passing, made me suspect that it proceeded from the bladder, where it had gathered, for by putting the gravel together, I could often have made a large ball; which proved that it rather proceeded thence than from the water, which would have passed it immediately that it had formed it.

Saturday, I remained in the bath for two hours, and took a shower-bath for more than a quarter of an hour.

Sunday, I took no bath. The same day, one of the gentlemen of the place gave us a ball. The want of clocks here, as well as almost all over Italy, seemed to me an extreme inconvenience. In the bath-house there is an image of the Virgin, with this inscription in verse: *Auspicio fac, Diva, tuo quicumque lavacrum ingreditur, sospes, ac bonus hinc abeat.*[1] One cannot too warmly praise the combination of beauty and utility which characterises the method they have here of cultivating the mountains, up to the very summits, by laying out the circumference of each hill in great circular platforms, round and round, ascending from one to the other by a sort of staircase, the top of each of which is strengthened, where necessary, by stones, or some other casing. Each platform forms a corn-field, on the outside of which is a border of vines, which thus encircle the whole mountain, in gradually ascending gyrations, up to the very top. Where one of these platforms is not sufficiently level by nature, and cannot be rendered so by art, it is covered with vines altogether.

[1] "Grant, holy Lady, that whosoever entereth this bath, may leave it in good health, both of mind and body."

At the ball given by the Bolognese gentleman, which I mentioned just now, a woman danced for some time, balancing on her head a pitcher full of water, and managed this feat with such skill and nicety that she did not spill one drop of the water, nor did the pitcher once seem to lose its equilibrium.

The physicians were astonished at seeing most of us Frenchmen drink the waters in the morning, and then bathe the same day.

Monday morning, I remained two hours in the bath; but I did not have a shower-bath, as I took it into my head to drink three pounds of water, which had a slight operation. I used to bathe my eyes every morning, by opening them when I was in the water, a process which did me neither good nor harm. I believe I got rid of my three pounds of water before I left the bath, what with perspiration and other evacuations. As for the last two or three days, I had found my stomach somewhat too bound, I took, as had been recommended me, three grains of coriander comfits, which greatly relieved me both of the wind, which I had been full of, and in other respects. But though I had thus thoroughly purged my reins, I still felt a sort of pricking there, which I attributed more to the wind than to anything else.

Tuesday, I did not drink the waters, but I remained two hours in the bath, and kept my head a quarter of an hour under the shower-bath.

Wednesday, I stayed in the bath an hour and a half, and had a shower-bath for about half an hour.

Up to the present time, sooth to say, the little intercourse I had had with these people, had not even given me an opportunity of bearing out the reputation for capacity and mind that, somehow or other, I had got credit for; I had given no specimen of any extraordinary talent, to excite their admiration, or warrant them in over-estimating the few advantages I possess. Yet, to-day, some physicians, having to meet on a more than usually important consultation, namely, respecting a young nobleman, M. Paul de Cesis (nephew of the cardinal of that name), who was at this time at the baths, came, at his request, to beg that I would be present at their consultation, and, having heard their various opinions, would give my opinion thereon; for that he had made up his mind to abide entirely by my decision. This made me laugh in my sleeve; but the same thing has happened to me more than once before, both here and at Rome.

I at times experienced a weakness and dimness in the eyes, when I read much, or looked fixedly at any luminous object; and what made me the more uneasy at this was that I had felt it, more or less, ever since I had the attack of sick head-ache near Florence. A heaviness in the forehead, unaccompanied by pain, would come over me, and then before my eyes there would arise a sort of hazy cloud, which, though

it did not prevent my seeing, confused the sight, in a peculiar way that I cannot describe. By degrees, these head-aches, when they came, lasted longer and longer, though, except in the way I have mentioned, they did not incommode me; and since I had taken to the shower-baths on my head, I had suffered an attack every year, and there was almost constantly a mist before my eyes, but still without pain or inflammation. Now up to the time when this disagreeable sort of thing came upon me at Florence, I had not had a head-ache for full ten years, so that it somewhat alarmed me; and, fearing lest the use of the shower-bath should weaken my head, I determined not to repeat it.

Thursday, I was in the bath only an hour.

Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, I did nothing, being somewhat alarmed at these head-aches, and not feeling, in other respects, inclined to bathe, or drink the waters, for I was constantly passing a quantity of gravel. My head, however, did not regain its proper state; every now and then it became troublesome, especially whenever I got thinking about anything.

Monday morning, I drank thirteen glasses, containing six pounds and a half, of the common spring; I passed about three pounds of this in a crude state before dinner, and the rest afterwards, by degrees. Though my head-ache was neither very violent nor unremitting, it turned my complexion to a shocking hue. Yet still it did not incommode or weaken me, as it had done on former occasions, except in the one respect of confusing my vision. To-day they began cutting rye in the plain.

Tuesday, at day-break, I went to Barnaby's spring, and drank six glasses, containing six pounds of water, which made me perspire a little. There was a drizzling rain this morning. The water I had taken soon produced its effect, and gave me a thorough scouring; I did not, however, pass much water, but in two hours I had resumed my natural colour.

You can board at some houses here for six gold crowns a month, or thereabout, for which you have a room to yourself, and every convenience you can desire, and they keep your valet into the bargain; if you have no servant of your own, the landlord provides you with every necessary attendance.

Before the day was over, I had passed all the water, and indeed more than I had drunk altogether, which, besides what I had drunk at the bath, was a half pound of wine and water I took at dinner. I ate hardly any supper.

Wednesday, a very wet day, I drank seven pounds of water in seven glasses, and passed it all before the end of the day, together with what else I had drunk.

Thursday, I took nine pounds, seven in the first instance, and when I began to pass it, I sent for two more, and this, too, I passed the whole of, in due course.

Friday and Saturday I repeated the dose. Sunday, I drank none at all.

Monday, I drank seven pounds of water, in seven glasses. I still passed gravel, but somewhat less than when I used to bathe; and I observed that this was also the case with several other persons, at the same time. To-day I felt a pain in the lower part of the stomach, the same as I generally feel in passing a stone, and towards the evening, accordingly, I did pass a small one.

Tuesday, I passed another, and I am convinced by experience that the water here is powerful enough to break stones, for I have felt them descending into the bladder quite large, and afterwards I passed them broken into small pieces. To-day I drank eight pounds of water, at eight times.

If Calvin had known that in these parts the preaching monks call themselves ministers, he would doubtless have given his preachers some other name.

Wednesday, I took eight pounds of water, in eight glasses. I nearly always passed half what I had taken, in three hours, in a crude state, and in its natural colour; and, shortly afterwards, a half pound more, tinged of a red colour: the rest passed off after dinner, and in the course of the night.

The season that was now come on, brought a great deal of company to the bath; and from the instances that I now had an opportunity of observing, and from the opinions of the physicians themselves, particularly of M. Donato, the author of a treatise on these waters, I found I had not been so very wrong in taking a shower-bath on my head in the bath; for it is a frequent practice for them to apply the shower-bath to their stomachs, by means of a long tube, one end of which is attached to the mouth of the spring, and the water is thus conveyed in a powerful stream to the exact part of the body where it is required. It is also the custom always to bathe the same day that you take this shower-bath; so that the only difference between them and me was, that I took the shower-bath when I was actually in the bath, and put my head directly under the spring, instead of having the water brought through a tube. The only question is, whether I was not wrong in not continuing this course. I have, ever since, all along had a strong notion that, had I done so, I might by degrees have got rid of all the humours that plague me. M. Donato approved of people's drinking and bathing in the same day; and his sanction makes me the more vexed that I had not the firmness to persevere in my first idea, of drinking the waters every time I bathed. The doctor was also loud in his praises of the Barnaby spring; but, notwithstanding all his learned reasonings, it is quite clear that these waters produced no effect upon several persons I saw there, who were not subject to passing gravel in their water, as I continued to do; which I mention because I

cannot make up my mind to believe that this gravel was produced by these waters.

Thursday morning, in order to get the first place, I went to the bath before daybreak, and drank, at intervals, for an hour, without bathing my head; and I imagine that this getting up so early, and the going to bed again afterwards, disagreed with me; my mouth got so hot and dry that, in the evening, before going to bed, I drank two large glasses of the same water cooled, which produced no other effect than that of refreshing me.

Friday, I did nothing. The Franciscan minister, as they call the provincial, a man of great merit, learned, and very pleasing in his manners, who was residing at the bath, with several other monks of different religious orders, sent me a present of some excellent wine, and a variety of sweetmeats.

Saturday, I neither bathed nor drank the waters, but went to dine at Menalfio, a large and handsome village, situated at the top of one of the mountains of which I have spoken. I took some fish with me, and got accommodation at the house of a soldier, who, after travelling about a great deal in France and other countries, married a woman in Flanders, with whom he received some money, and has since settled here: his name is Santo. There is a fine church here. Among the inhabitants there are a great number of retired soldiers, most of whom have also seen a good deal of the world. They are all divided off here into two parties, the one siding with France, the other with Spain, and I happening, without thinking of it, to put a flower behind my left ear, it gave vast offence to the French party. After dinner, I went up to the fort, which stands at the very summit of the hill, and is a tolerably strong place, with high walls rising from the steep sides of the rock. Even up to the very base of this fort, however, the ground is highly cultivated; indeed, all about this part of the country, it seems to be a rigid principle not to lose a single yard of ground that can by any possibility be made available; on the wildest and most rugged places, on rocks and precipices, even in the crevices of the mountain, you find vines and crops of corn and hay, while in the plain below they have not a bit of hay. I descended the mountain on the other side, and then returned home.

Sunday morning, I went to the bath with several other gentlemen, and remained there half an hour. I received from M. Louis Pinitesi a present of a large quantity of very fine fruit, amongst which were some figs, the first that had appeared this season at the bath, and also a dozen flasks of excellent wine. The same day the Franciscan minister also sent me a quantity of fruit, so that I was able, in my turn, to make presents to my neighbours.

After dinner, there was a ball, where several ladies were assembled, very well dressed, but by no means remarkable for beauty, though they were reckoned among the handsomest women of Lucca.

In the evening, M. Louis Ferrari of Cremona, who knew me very well, sent me some boxes of excellent quinces, some lemons of a rare sort, and some oranges of an extraordinary size.

In the night, a little before day-break, I had a cramp in the calf of the right leg, accompanied with severe pains, which came on every now and then. The cramp held me for a full half hour. 'Tis a long time since I had a similar attack, and that only lasted for half a minute or so.

Monday, I went to the bath, and kept my stomach under the spring for an hour; at one time I felt a little pricking in the leg where I had the cramp.

It was now the time of year when the weather begins to feel warm; the grasshoppers are not more troublesome here than in France; and the air seemed to me generally much fresher and purer than it is at home.

Among free nations, you do not see the same distinction of ranks and persons as among other people; here, where I am, persons of the humblest station bear themselves quite in a lordly style; even the beggars address you in an authoritative and dictatorial tone; for instance: "Give me something, will you?" or, "Give me something, d'ye hear?" At Rome, the phrase is, "Benefit me, for your own sake."

Tuesday, I remained an hour in the bath.

Wednesday, 21st June, early in the morning, I left this place, and, upon taking leave of the company whom I found assembled at the bath, I received from them the kindest assurances of friendship and good-will. I proceeded through a series of steep, but at the same time picturesque and well-cultivated, hills to

Pescia, twelve miles, a small town with a castle, situated on the river Pescia, in the territory of Florence, where there are some good houses. Here is the chief mart of the famous Trebiano wine, the growth of a vineyard situated in the centre of large plantations of olive trees. The inhabitants of this town are warm friends of France, in token of which, apparently, they have a dolphin for their town-arms.

After dinner, we went on through a fine open plain, thickly studded with gentlemen's seats and other houses. I had intended a visit to Monte Catino, to taste the hot salt water of the Tettuccio; the place lay on my right hand, about a mile out of the road, and nearly seven miles from Pescia, but I forgot all about it until I had nearly reached

Pistoia, eleven miles. I put up at an inn on the other side of the town, where I received a visit from the son of M. Ruspiglioni, who is making a journey through Italy with a vetturino, and herein he is wrong; for it is far better in every respect to take horses from one place to another, than to put yourself into the hands of a vetturino for the whole of a long

journey. From Pistoia to Florence, a distance of twenty miles, the horses cost only four julios. Leaving Pistoia next morning, I passed through the little town of Prato, and got by dinner-time to Castello, where we dismounted at an inn opposite the grand-duke's palace. After dinner, we went to give his garden a close examination, and I found herein another instance how the imagination transcends reality. I had seen this garden in the winter-time, when it was all bare and leafless, and at that time my fancy had pictured forth a glowing representation of what the place would be in a more favourable season; but I now found that my imagination had been far too sanguine.

From Prato to Castello, seventeen miles. After dinner, we went to

Florence, three miles. Friday, I witnessed the public processions, and the grand-duke in his state-coach. Among other grand sights exhibited on this occasion, there is a sort of small moveable stage, gilt on the outside, on which there are four little children, and a monk, or a nun dressed up as a monk, with a great false beard, who represents St. Francis d'Assisi, standing, holding his hands crossed upon his breast, as in the portrait of him, and with a crown over his head, fixed on his hood. There were other children on foot, armed, one of whom represented St. George. When these came to the square, there rushed out upon the champion a great dragon, made to look very terrible, and spouting flames from his jaws, and so large as evidently somewhat to stagger the men who carried him.

The young St. George attacked in his turn the dragon, and struck him, now with his sword and then with his lance, and at last vanquished the monster, and stabbed him deep in the throat.

While at this place, I received a great deal of kindness from one of the Gondi family, who resides at Lyons. He sent me some excellent wine.

The weather had now go so hot that the people of the place themselves were astonished at it.

In the morning, at day-break, I had an attack of cholic in my right side, and suffered a great deal of pain from it for about three hours. To-day I ate the first melon I had tasted this year. They had had pumpions and almonds here from the very first day of June.

On the 23d, there was a grand chariot race, in a large open square, of an oblong form, and surrounded on all sides by handsome houses. At each corner of this place they had erected a wooden obelisk, and a long cord extended from each of these to the other, to prevent people from crossing the ground; there were, besides, several men stationed along these ropes, to keep any person from getting over them. The balconies were full of ladies; the grand-duke, with the duchess and the court, occupying the lower balcony of the principal house. The other spectators were ranged along the sides of square, outside the ropes, and on a sor scaffolds, on one of which I got a place. Th were five chariots or cars to run. They tot their places by lot, in a row, by one of the obe lisks. It seemed to be considered that the outside place was the best, as giving the driver the most command of the ground. The horses started at the sound of a trumpet. The chariot that had the lead on arriving at the starting-post, in the third run round the course, was the winner. The grand-duke's car had the best of it up to the commencement of the third round, but then Strozzi's charioteer, who had kept very close to the grand-duke's, urged his horses to the utmost, and managed to get so nearly on a level with the latter as to make the victory a question between them. I observed, that the populace broke their previous silence when they saw Strozzi's charioteer making head, and began shouting and encouraging him with all their might and main, utterly regardless of their prince's being present. And afterwards, when the dispute, as to the victory, was referred to the decision of the judges of the course, those among them who were in favour of Strozzi having appealed to the judgment of the assembly, there was raised an almost unanimous shout in favour of Strozzi, who ultimately obtained the prize; though it seemed to me that the grand-duke's charioteer was really the winner. The value of the prize was a hundred crowns. I was more pleased with this spectacle than with any other I had witnessed in Italy, for my fancy was tickled with its resemblance to the races of the ancients.

This being St. John's eve, the roof of the cathedral was surrounded by two or three rows of lamps, and a number of rockets were let off. They say, however, that it is not the general custom in Italy, as in France, to have fire-works on St. John's day.

This festival came round, in its due course, on the Sunday, and being, of all the saints' days, the one observed by the people of Florence with the greatest solemnity and rejoicing, every body was from an early hour abroad to take part in it, dressed in their best. I had thus an opportunity of seeing all the women, old and young; and I must confess that the amount of beauty at Florence appeared to me very limited. Early in the morning, the grand-duke took his seat in the palace square, upon a platform, which occupied the whole front of the palace, the walls of which, as well as the platform, were hung with rich tapestry. He was seated under a canopy, with the pope's nuncio at his side on the left, and the Ferrarese ambassador on his right, but not so near him by a good deal as the nuncio. Here there passed before him a long procession of men in various guises, emblems of the different castles, towns, and states dependent upon the archduchy of Florence, and the name and style of each, as its representa-

tive passed, was announced to the assembled ultitude by a herald, who stood by in full tume. Representing Sienna, for instance, ere came forward a young man, habited in white and black velvet, bearing in one hand a large silver vase, and in the other, an effigy of the she-wolf of Sienna. These offerings he laid at the feet of the duke, accompanying them with a suitable address. When he had passed on, he was followed in single file, and as their names were successively called out, by a number of ill-dressed men, mounted on sorry backs or on mules, some carrying a silver cup, others a ragged banner. These fellows, of whom there were a great number, went on through the streets, without any sort of form or ceremony, and, indeed, without exhibiting the slightest gravity or even decency of demeanour, but rather seeming to treat the whole thing as a jest. They took their part in the affair as representatives of the various castles and other places in immediate dependence upon the state of Sienna. This ceremonial takes place every year.

By and by, advanced a car, bearing a great wooden pyramid, with steps all up it, on which stood little boys dressed in different fashions, to represent saints and angels. The pyramid was as high as a house; and at the top of it was a St. John, that is to say, a man dressed as St. John, bound to an iron bar. Next after this car came the public officers, those connected with the revenue occupying the first rank.

The procession was closed by another car, on which were several young men, with three prizes, which were afterwards run for, in different sorts of races. On each side of the car were the horses that were about to take part in the races, led by the jockeys, wearing the colours of their different masters, among whom were some of the greatest nobles of the country. The horses were small, but exquisitely formed.

The heat at this time was no greater than we feel it in France; but, to avoid the effects of it as much as possible, I resorted to the expedient of having my bed made up on the dining-table, every night, for the bedsteads and beds they have here are utterly intolerable to strangers; and I moreover managed in this way to escape the vermin, which swarm in every bed of every inn, in these parts. In fact, in almost every respect, this is a very uncomfortable place for travellers, who are not pretty well case-hardened.

There is very little fish to be got at Florence, and what you do get, in the way of trout, &c., comes from such a distance, that it has first to be salted. Giovanni Mariano, a Milanese, who was staying in the same inn where I was, had a present sent him from the grand duke of wine, bread, fruit, and some live fish; but these fish were very small, and were brought in jars of water.

All day long my mouth felt dried up, and I was tormented with a parching, insatiable thirst, such as I am sometimes annoyed with at home in the extreme heats of summer. I ate nothing but fruit, and sugared salad; yet, notwithstanding this temperate diet, I continued very unwell.

The amusements which we in France enter upon after supper, here precede that meal. In the very long days, supper is not taken till late at night, and people do not rise till seven or eight in the morning.

After dinner, everybody went to see the horse-racing. The Cardinal de Medici's horse won: the prize was worth about 200 crowns. This spectacle is not so agreeable as the chariot-race, for it takes place in the street, and all you see is the horses tearing past where you stand, at the top of their speed, and there is an end of the matter, as far as you are concerned.

On Sunday, I went to see the Palace Pitti. Among other things there, I noticed the statue in marble of a mule; the original is still alive, and earned its honours by its services as a draught-mule during the erection of this palace; at least, so say the Latin verses, which form an inscription on the statue. I saw here also, the antique chimæra, an animal with the body of a lion, and a head with horns and ears.

On the preceding Saturday, the grand duke's palace was thrown open to all comers, without exception, and was crowded with country people, who, by and by, nearly all collected in the great hall, where they fell to dancing. As I looked upon them, it seemed to my fancy an image of a people's lost liberty, an all but extinguished light throwing out a flickering gleam once a year, amid the shows of a saint's day.

Monday, I went to dine with Signor Silvio Piccolomini, a man of distinguished merit, and, among other accomplishments, pre-eminent for his skill in the use of the rapier. There was a large party of gentlemen present, and we conversed upon a variety of topics. Signor Piccolomini holds in very slight estimation the practice of even the most celebrated Italian fencing-masters, such as Il Veniziano, Il Bolognese, Il Patinostrato, and others; the only professor that he thinks anything of, is a pupil of his, that has established himself at Brescia, where he teaches the art to the gentry about there. He said, that the way in which all the masters he spoke of taught fencing, had neither method nor manner about it. He particularly condemns those long, sprawling passes, which, nine cases out of ten, place your weapon in the power of a skilful adversary; he maintained that men who are actually engaged in combat do nothing of the sort, as all experience showed; he said it was to him quite absurd to see a man making an immense lunge, which all but throws him off his balance, then draw back, and then make another lunge, longer, if possible, than the first, as if he had nothing to do but to go through a set of postures. M.

Piccolomini told us he was about to print a work on this subject. The conversation then turned upon warfare, in reference to which our host expressed his contempt for artillery, and proceeded to make some remarks upon this point, which pleased me very much. He quite concurs with what Machiavel has written upon the subject. In reference to fortifications, he said that the most skilful engineer living is a gentleman now at Florence, in the service of the Grand Duke Francis.

They have a custom here of cooling their wine, by putting snow in the glass. I myself put very little, for I was far from well; I had frequent pains in the kidneys, and was constantly passing quantities of gravel; and, moreover, had not yet succeeded in getting rid of the disagreeable fits of weakness and aching in my head; every now and then I had a swimming there, accompanied by a heaviness that involved forehead, eyes, nose, and every part of my face, in its effects. It occurred to me that these attacks were brought on by the sweet heady wines of the country. I remember that just after my arrival here, when I was tormented with a sick head-ache and a horrible thirst, I drank a quantity of Trebiano; but it was so sweet that it did not at all quench my thirst, and only made me feel heavy.

After all, I cannot refrain from confessing that Florence has most justly received the title of *La Bella*.

To-day, just in order to pass away the time, I went to call upon some of those ladies whose doors are open to all comers with money in their pockets. I saw some of the most celebrated of them, but they did not strike me as being any thing remarkable. They live by themselves, in a particular part of the town assigned them, and their wretched lodgings as little resemble those of the Roman and Venetian courtezans, as they themselves resemble the latter ladies in beauty, dress, and deportment. If any public woman prefers living in another part of the town, she must keep her vocation a secret, and have some other occupation, as a blind to cover her frailty.

I went to look at the silk-spinners, and observed that, by means of a certain machine, one woman can turn five hundred spindles at once.

Tuesday morning, I passed a small red stone.

Wednesday, I went to see the grand duke's country house. What struck me most here was an artificial rock, of a pyramidical form, composed of all sorts of natural minerals, piled together in some particular arrangement. From this rock spouted a powerful fountain of water, which, falling into a grotto that formed the interior of the rock, worked all sorts of machinery and automata there, such as mills, clocks, sentinels, animals, &c. &c.

Thursday, there was another horse-race, but I did not think it worth while to go and see it. After dinner I went to Pratolino, which I examined once more in detail. The keeper having requested I would give him my opinion of the beauties of the place, as compared with Tivoli, I did so, comparing the two places, not in general, but in detail, pointing out the advantages of each, and wherein the one was superior to, or fell short of, the other.

Friday, I bought at the Juntas'[1] eleven plays, and some other pieces. I saw here a printed copy of Boccaccio's will, with a discourse on the Decameron. This will shows to what astonishing poverty, to what extreme misery, this great man had become reduced. He leaves his sisters and cousins nothing but his bed and some bed-clothes; the few books he had are bequeathed to a certain monk, on condition of his allowing any person to see them, who applies for that purpose; he gives an exact inventory of every wretched little article of furniture, of every utensil he is possessed of; and at the end of the document, he gives directions about his funeral, and what masses are to be said for him. The will is printed verbatim from the original, which was written on a ragged bit of parchment.

The Roman and Venetian courtezans sit at their windows to attract visitors; here, these ladies stand at the doors of their houses, where they remain on the look-out, during a good part of the day. Here you may find them, with more or less company, chatting, or very often dancing in the middle of the street, with a circle of spectators round them.

Sunday, 2nd of July, I left Florence, after dinner, and passing the Arno, left that river on the right, though we still went in the direction of its course. We proceeded along a lovely and richly fertile plain, which produces among other things the finest melons that are grown in Tuscany. The best sort of melons are not ripe till about the middle of July. The place where the very choicest are produced is Legnaia, three miles from Florence. Our route continued through a splendid open country, with castles, gentlemen's seats, detached houses, and villages, on one side or the other, almost the whole way along. Among the rest, we passed through a pretty place called Empoli, a name which to my ear smacked of the old time; but I saw no vestiges of antiquity there, except, close by the high road, a ruined bridge, which had a look of something about it.

I was struck in these parts, with three things; first, with seeing all the people of the district working on Sundays at getting in the harvest; secondly, with seeing the peasantry, after their day's labour, sitting with lutes in their hands, and their fair ones beside them, reciting from memory whole stanzas of Ariosto; but this is also to be seen in every other part of Italy; and, thirdly, with finding that they left their corn out in the fields, ten or fifteen days or more, without any apprehension of its being stolen.

[1] The celebrated Florentine booksellers and printers.

Towards evening, we arrived at

Scala, twenty miles. There is only one inn here, but that is a very good one. I took no supper, and when I got to bed I hardly slept a wink, in consequence of a severe tooth-ache in my right jaw. I was often troubled with this malady, in combination with my head-aches; but it generally plagued me most when I was eating, for every thing I put into my mouth gave me pain.

Monday morning, 3rd of July, we proceeded along a road on the banks of the Arno, which by and by brought us into a wide plain, covered with golden corn. About mid-day we arrived at

Pisa, twenty miles, a town belonging to the Duke of Florence. It stands in a plain, on the banks of the Arno, which traverses its centre, and thence flows on to join the sea, six miles from the town. The river between Pisa and the sea is navigable by tolerably large vessels.

The colleges and schools had just commenced their long vacation, which lasts the three hottest months in each year.

We found here an excellent troop of comedians, called the Desiosi.

As the inn where I at first put up, did not please me, I hired a small furnished house, containing four bed-rooms and a sitting-room. The landlord undertook to cook for us. The rooms were large and handsome, and I only paid eight crowns a month for the whole. The landlord also supplied us into the bargain, with table-linen, such as napkins and table-cloths, out this did not much add to his expenses, for in Italy they only give you two changes of these a week. We put our servants on board wages, and we ourselves dined regularly at the inn, for four julios a day.

Our house was very agreeably situated, with a fine view of the Arno, and the large bason which it forms here, and which is covered with merchant vessels and boats laden with goods. Along the sides, are some handsome quays, like the Quai des Augustins, at Paris; and, overlooking these, are two rows of houses, among which was that I had hired.

Wednesday, 5th of July, I went to see the cathedral, on the site of which formerly stood a palace of the Emperor Adrian. Here are an infinite number of marble columns, nearly all different in form and workmanship. The doors are made of some metal. This church is adorned with a variety of spoils of Greece and Egypt, and is itself almost entirely constructed out of the ruins of the ancient edifice that preceded it. Every here and there, you see inscriptions, some upside down, others half broken off and defaced; and there are a few, in unknown characters, said to be the ancient Etruscan.

The Campanile here is an inclined one, like that at Bologna, deviating from the perpendicular not less than forty-two feet; it is surrounded by open pilasters and corridors.

One day, I went to see the church of St. John, an edifice full of fine sculptures and paintings. Among other beautiful things, is a marble pulpit, enriched with a number of figures, so exquisitely sculptured that Lorenzo, who, they say, killed Duke Alexander, took off the heads of some of them, as a present for the queen.[1] The form of the church closely resembles that of La Rotonda,[2] at Rome.

The natural son of the Duke Alexander I spoke of, resides here. He is an old man, as far as I could judge. He lives very comfortably upon a pension from the present duke, and does not trouble his head about anything beyond that. His amusements are hunting and fishing, for which the surrounding country affords him every possible facility.

There is no place in Italy which more abounds in holy relics, in rich works of art, in fine marbles, than does Pisa.

I had very great gratification in going over the public mausoleum here, in the Campo Santo: it is an oblong building, of a very large size, three hundred paces long, and a hundred wide; the corridor that surrounds it is forty feet wide, and is roofed with lead, and paved with marble. The walls are covered with old paintings, among which is a portrait of a Gondi of Florence, the founder of the family of that name.

The nobles of this town have for centuries been entombed under this corridor; you see here the names and arms of about four hundred families, of whom barely four now remain here, escaped from the ruthless sword of war, and the ruin of their ancient town, which, it is true, is still populous, but it is principally so with strangers. Of these noble families, among whom ranked marquisses, earls, and counts, some migrated to other parts of Christendom, where their descendants still flourish.

In the middle of this building, there is an open space, where they still bury their dead. I was told that in most cases the bodies deposited here, in the first eight hours swell so much that they seem to raise up the earth that covers them; eight hours after, the swelling goes down, and the bodies decay; and in another eight hours the flesh is entirely consumed, so that in twenty-four hours nothing remains but the bare skeleton. This is a phenomenon similar to that which takes place in the cemetery at Rome, where, as it is said, the earth thrusts back the body of any Roman that is deposited in it. This place is paved round with marble, as well as the corridor. Upon this marble there is a layer of earth, four or five feet deep, which earth, they say, was brought from Jerusalem, at the time of the expedition that the Pisans made there with a large army. By permission of the bishop, a

[1] Montaigne probably refers to Queen Catherine de Medicis.

[2] The Pantheon.

handful of this earth is occasionally carried away and put into other sepulchres, under the impression that it has the effect of consuming the bodies more speedily; an idea which would seem to gather strength from the fact, that in the cemetery here you find hardly any bones, as you do in other towns.

The neighbouring mountains produce very fine marble, and the town is celebrated for the excellence of its works in this material. At this moment, they are actively engaged in preparing for the King of Fez, in Barbary, a splendid set of ornaments for a theatre, of which they have made a design, and which, among other things, is to be adorned with fifty marble columns, of an immense height.

In a great many places in this town, you see the arms of France; and there is a column here which our King Charles VIII. presented to the cathedral. On the wall of one house, looking into the street, this prince is sculptured, the size of life, kneeling before the Virgin, who appears to be giving him advice. The inscription informs you that, as this monarch was supping one night in this house, there came into his head, all of a sudden, and quite fortuitously, a resolution to restore the Pisans to their former freedom; wherein, says the inscription, he surpassed the greatness of Alexander the Great himself. Among the titles of this prince, as set forth in this inscription, are *King of Jerusalem, of Sicily, &c.* The words which relate to this circumstance, of giving the Pisans their liberty, have been purposely defaced, so that they are scarcely legible. There are several other houses which are also decorated with the arms of France, to commemorate the nobility which the same king conferred upon their proprietors.

There are very few remains of antiquity here; the only things worth mentioning in this way are some ruins of a fine brick edifice, on the spot where the palace of Nero stood, whose name distinguishes these remains; and a church dedicated to St. Michael, which was formerly a temple of Mars.

On Thursday, St. Peter's Day, it was mentioned to me that formerly the Bishop of Pisa went in procession to the church of St. Peter, four miles from the town, and thence to the sea-side, where, casting a ring into the ocean, he solemnly espoused it; but at that time Pisa possessed a very powerful navy. At present the sea is married by deputy, by one of the masters of the college, who is not accompanied by anything at all in the shape of a procession. The clergy go no further than the church, where they distribute a number of indulgences. The pope's bull, which dates about 400 years back, says, upon the authority of a book which contains more than 1200 of them, that this church was built by St. Peter, and that while St. Clement was officiating in it, at a marble table, there fell upon the table three drops of blood from the holy father's nose. These drops of blood still remain, and are as fresh as though they had fallen yesterday. The Genoese, a good many years ago, came and broke off a piece of this table, in order to get possession of one of these drops of blood; whereupon the Pisans forthwith removed the rest of the table from the church, and took it into the town. But every year, on St. Peter's Day, it is carried to the church in procession, accompanied by almost the entire population, some on foot, some on horseback, others in boats.

Friday, 7th of July, I went, early in the morning, to see the *cassino*, or farm, belonging to Peter de Medici, two miles from the town. This nobleman possesses immense property in this neighbourhood, which he makes exceedingly productive, by the plan of, every five years, putting upon the estate a set of new labourers, who, in return for their services, receive half the fruit and vegetables, to the cultivation of which a considerable portion of ground is applied. The arable parts of the estate are fertile in the highest degree, and an immense quantity of all sorts of sheep and cattle are raised on the pastures. I dismounted from my horse in order the better to examine the details of the farm-house, and found an immense number of persons engaged in making cream, butter, cheese, &c., the apparatus for all which was on the most extensive scale.

Thence, crossing the plain, I rode on to the shore of the Tuscan Sea, where, on the right hand, I saw before me Ereci, and on the left, a good deal nearer me, Leghorn, a town with a castle, quite on the edge of the sea. From this point, you have a view of the Isle of Gorgona, and beyond it of that of Caprea, with Corsica in the extreme distance. I turned to the left, and rode along the sea shore, till we came to the mouth of the Arno, the entrance of which is very difficult for vessels of any size, in consequence of the mud and earth which are brought down into the Arno by the different streams which run into it, and which form in heaps at its mouth. I bought some fish here, which I sent to the actresses of the Pisa theatre. Along the banks of this river, you see a great many thickets of the tamarisk tree. I bought next day, a small runlet, made of the wood of this tree, and had it hooped with silver, for which part of the bargain, I gave a goldsmith three crowns. I bought also an Indian cane, as a walking-staff, for which I paid six julios; and a small vase and cup made of Indian nut,[2] said, like the tamarisk, to be good against the spleen and the gravel, and for these I gave eight julios.

The person of whom I bought these things, a man of great note as a mathematical instrument maker, told me that trees have all within them as many rings and circles as they number

[1] His successor.

[2] Probably the cocoa-nut.

years. He showed me examples of this in every kind of wood in his shop, for he is a turner by trade. Those trees in a forest which look northwards, have these rings closer and thicker than the trees which stand in other directions; and this person told me that this was so invariably the case, that by looking at a piece of timber, he could tell how old the tree was, whence it came, and in what direction it had stood.

About this time, I was extremely annoyed with several attacks of a kind of heavy, dull, head-ache, accompanied with a constipation so severe, that I had not a single stool, except by the aid of medicine, a bad and treacherous assistant. As to the stone, it was much as usual.

The air of this place was for a long time considered very unhealthy; but since Duke Cosmo drained the marshes, which used to surround it almost on all sides, the air has become very good. Formerly, indeed, the place was so bad in this respect, that when the government wanted to get rid of a man, they banished him to Pisa, where his business was settled in a very short time, and he gave the state no further trouble than to bury him.

The Tuscan princes have at various periods taken a great deal of pains to introduce partridges in this neighbourhood; but, somehow or other, they have never succeeded, and no such thing as a partridge is to be found here.

I had received several visits from Jerome Borro, a doctor of physic; so on the 14th I went to see him in turn, when he made me a present of his book, *on the Flux and Reflux of the Sea*, written in the vernacular. He showed me another book he has written, in Latin, upon the various maladies of the body.

The same day, twenty-one Turkish slaves made their escape from the arsenal, near my house; and getting possession of a frigate full rigged, which Signor Alessandro del Piombino had left unguarded while he went fishing, set sail and got clear off.

The Arno, and the canal which it forms as it traverses the town, some of the churches, and a few old ruins, and some private edifices, are well worth seeing; but, in other respects, Pisa presents few points of attraction. It is, in some sense, a deserted place, and in its solitude, the form of its buildings, its size, and the width of its streets, it bears a close resemblance to Pistoia. One of its greatest defects is the bad quality of the water, which has a horribly marshy taste.

The inhabitants are very poor, but not the less haughty and intractable, and rude towards strangers, and more especially so towards the French, ever since the death of one of their bishops, Pierre Paul de Bourbon, who claimed to be of our royal blood, and whose family still exists here. This bishop was so attached to our nation, and was of so generous a nature, that all the French who came here were entertained in his palace. This excellent prelate left behind him, throughout his diocese, the highest character for virtue and kindness. He only died within the last five or six years.

On the 17th of July, I took part in a raffle, at a crown a head, for some clothes and other things, the property of an actor, named Fargnocola. There were twenty-six of us in the raffle, and we threw first to decide who should play first, who second, and so on. As there were several prizes to be won, it was agreed that the two who threw highest and lowest, should be the winners. For my part, I played second, and got nothing.

On the 18th, there was a grand squabble at the church of St. Peter's, between the priests of the cathedral and the monks. The evening before, a gentleman of Pisa had been buried in the church, and in the morning the priests came with all their paraphernalia for celebrating mass. The monks denied their right to do this; the priests contended that it had been their undoubted privilege and practice from time immemorial; the monks, on the other hand, maintained that it was their privilege, and nobody else's, to say mass in their own church. A priest then approached the high altar, and attempted to take possession of the table there; a monk went up to him, and tried to make him let go, whereupon one of the vicars hit the monk a slap on the face. This was a signal for hostilities, which then began in good style on both sides; from slaps on the face they got to fisticuffs; and from fisticuffs to fighting with sticks, candlesticks, tapers, and anything else they could lay hands upon. The result of the battle was that neither party said mass, and that everybody was terribly scandalized. As soon as I heard of it, I went to the place, and heard the rights of the affair.

On the 22nd, at day-break, three Turkish corsairs landed on the coast, not far from us, and carried off as prisoners fifteen or twenty poor devils of fishermen and shepherds.

On the 25th, I went to call on Cornacchico, the celebrated Pisan physician and professor. This gentleman lives after a fashion of his own, altogether opposed to the rules of his art. He goes to sleep after dinner, drinks a hundred times a day, &c. He showed me some verses of his composition, in the Pisan dialect, which were pleasant enough. He has no great opinion of the Baths in the vicinity of Pisa, but thinks highly of Bacnacqua, about sixteen miles off. These Baths, according to him, are of marvellous efficacy in liver complaints (and he told me of some very extraordinary cures), and also very good for the stone and the cholic; but, before using them, he is of opinion that one should use the *Della Villa* waters. He is convinced, he said, that, with the exception of bleeding, physic has no remedy equal to baths, if you only know how to employ them properly. He also told me, that at the Baths of

Bagnacqua the lodgings are very good, and that you are very comfortable there.

On the 26th, I passed, in the morning, some water thicker and blacker than I ever passed it before, and with it a small stone; but, notwithstanding this, the pain that had been tormenting me for about twenty hours before, below the navel, did not lessen; as, however, it did not affect either the reins or the sides, it was endurable. Some time after I passed another small stone, and the pain went away.

Thursday, 27th, early in the morning, we left Pisa, where I had found occasion to be abundantly gratified with the kindnesses I received from MM. Vintavinti, Lorenzo, Conti, Sanminiato (this last gentleman, who lodges in the house of the Cavaliere Camillo Gaetana, offered me his brother to accompany me into France), Borro, and others, merchants and tradespeople, with whom I had made acquaintance. I feel sure that, had I wanted money, I should have been furnished with it, though the people here have a character for being haughty and rude; but, somehow or other, civility begets civility.

On our way, we passed a great many houses, and saw quantities of nuts and mushrooms growing on both sides of the road. After a tiresome ride over the plain, we got to what are called the Baths of Pisa, situated at the foot of a slight ascent. There are several baths here, on one of which is a Latin inscription, on marble, which I could not very well make out, further than that it celebrates, in rhyme, the virtues of these baths, and is dated, as far as I could decipher, A.D. 1300.

The largest and best of these baths is a square building, with one of its sides open. It is exceedingly well arranged, and has a handsome marble staircase. It is thirty paces long, on every side. The spring is in one of the corners; I drank a little, just to see what sort it was, and found it without smell or taste, except perhaps, that it left a slight sharpness on the tongue; the heat is moderate, so that you have no difficulty in drinking off the water at once.

I looked into the water, and saw the same sort of white stuff floating about, that annoyed me at the baths of Baden, and which I then took to be some filth or other that got into it from the outside; but I now imagine that it is the result of some mineral decomposition, and I am the more inclined to this opinion from the circumstance, that this matter is in greater quantity close to the spring, where otherwise the water would be purer and clearer. The lodgings here are very indifferent, and the place has a most desert appearance; the baths, indeed, are very little frequented, and the few who do use them generally come in the morning from Pisa, which is only four miles off, and return home the same day.

The great bath has no roof, and is the only one that has any appearance of antiquity about it; it is, perhaps, for this reason that the people here call it the Bath of Nero. It is said that this emperor had the water conveyed to his palace at Pisa, by an acqueduct.

There is another bath, with a slight covering over it, which is used by the poor people; the water in it is very pure. It is said to be very good for all diseases of the liver. You drink the same quantity of water here that is prescribed at the other baths I have visited, and after drinking it, you walk about to assist the operation. After looking over these baths, we proceeded up the hill, and at its summit came upon one of the finest prospects in the world, embracing hill and valley, continent and island, sea and cities; the two principal towns which lay before us being Leghorn and Pisa. Descending the hill, we once more found ourselves in the plain, over which we proceeded until we came to

Lucca, ten miles. This morning I passed another stone, a great deal larger than those that preceded it, and that had every appearance of having been detached from a still more considerable body. God knows how this may be: his will be done! In the inn where we lodged, we were charged the same as at Pisa, namely four julios a-day for each of the gentlemen, and three julios for each of the servants.

On the 28th, I was induced by the kind and pressing solicitations of M. Louis Pinatesi, to accept of a suite of apartments in his house, consisting of five bed-rooms, sitting-room, and a kitchen. The rooms were low, but very neat and clean, and well furnished in the Italian style, which in many respects is inferior to our fashion. It must be admitted that the fine arched roofs and cielings, which form so prominent a feature in Italian architecture, the lofty porticoes, and the high, wide doors, add very much to the effect of the houses here. The gentry of Lucca take their meals, during the summer months, in the porticoes, in the sight of every body.

In fact, I have always been, not merely well, but agreeably lodged, in every place that I have stopped at in Italy, except at Florence (where I did not quit my inn, though I found it very uncomfortable, especially when it was hotter than usual), and Venice, where we put up with very unsatisfactory accommodations, merely because we were going to make so short a stay, that it did not seem worth while to change. My own chamber here at Lucca, was quite private, and nothing was wanting to make it perfectly convenient and agreeable. I experienced no annoyance or interruption. Even the politest attentions are sometimes troublesome and tedious, but here I was very seldom interrupted by the people of the place. I slept and studied just when and as I liked; and when I took it into my head to go out for a walk, I always found plenty of men and women to chat with; and then the shops, the churches, and the change of scene, altoge-

ther furnished me with materials for satisfying my curiosity.

Amidst these various recreations, my mind was as tranquil as my infirmities and the approach of old age[1] would permit; there was very little out of myself to disturb it. All that I felt was the want of a suitable companion, with whom to interchange feelings and opinions, which the constant novelties gave rise to. As it was, I had no one but myself to whom I could communicate the sentiments of delight which each stage of my journey produced.

The Lucchese are excellent players at football, and almost every day there are matches played at this game. It is not the custom here, and you very seldom see it done, for men to ride on horseback in the streets, and it is quite as unusual for them to ride in coaches; the ladies ride on mules, attended by a running-footman. Strangers have a great deal of trouble in getting lodgings or houses, for there are so few visitors who come to stay at all, that no arrangements are made for them, and the town itself is pretty full of its own population. They asked me at one place seventy crowns a-month, for a very ordinary set of apartments, consisting only of four furnished bed-rooms, a sitting-room, and kitchen. There is very little society kept up at Lucca; for almost every soul in the place, man, woman, and child, is for ever at work, manufacturing or selling the stuffs, which are the staple trade of the town. It is therefore a somewhat dull and disagreeable place for strangers.

On the 10th of August, we took a ride into the country in company with several gentlemen of Lucca, who lent me horses for the occasion. There are a number of very pretty country-houses in the environs, about three or four miles from the town, with handsome porticoes and long balconies, which have an extremely good effect. I noticed one large balcony in particular, full arched on the inside, and covered on the outside with a magnificent vine.

My headache sometimes left me for five or six days, or more, but I never got quite clear of it.

I had taken it into my head, some time back, to study Tuscan, and to get thoroughly acquainted with its principles, and I devoted a good deal of time and trouble to this pursuit, but I made very indifferent progress.

The heat this summer was much greater here than is usually the case.

On the 12th I rode a little way out of Lucca, to see the country-house of M. Benedetto Buonvisi, which did not strike me as particularly handsome. Among other things, I observed several artificial thickets, which are very much in fashion about here, and are formed in this way, and for this purpose: upon an elevated piece of ground they plant a diameter of about fifty paces, with all sorts of evergreens, intersected with very narrow covered paths, and surrounded with a small ditch. In the middle of this thicket, there is an open space, where the huntsman, at a certain time of the year, towards November, places himself, provided with a silver whistle, and some tame thrushes, trained for the purpose, and by means of these and bird-lime, disposed about in the different little lanes or runs, they sometimes catch two hundred thrushes in a single morning. This is only done in a particular district, near the town.

Sunday, 13th, I left Lucca; I had previously ordered one of the servants to offer M. Louis Pinatesi, fifteen crowns for the apartments he had given up to me in his house (which was at the rate of a crown a-day), and he was very well satisfied.

That day, we went to see several country-houses belonging to different Lucchese, all of which had their various beauties. There is plenty of water, but it has to be brought by artificial canals. It is, indeed, quite surprising to find so few springs in so hilly a country.

The source whence they derive their supplies of water is the streams which run in different directions; from these they cut small canals, which bring the water to the place where it is required, and it is then raised, in various ornamental shapes, through vases, figures, and so on. We got in the evening to a country-house belonging to M. Pinatesi, where we were entertained by M. Horace, his son, who accompanied us. He gave us an excellent supper, which was laid out in a large balcony, where we had all the enjoyment of the fresh air. After this, he provided us with beds, each of us having a separate room, and we had plenty of fine clean linen, of the same excellent quality with that which had been furnished us in the house of his father at Lucca.

Monday, early in the morning, we left this place, and on our way made a call, but without dismounting, at the country-house of the bishop, who happened to be at home. We were received with much politeness by his people, and were asked to stop and dine, but we preferred going on at once to the

Baths Della Villa, fifteen miles, where I met with a cordial reception from all the gentlemen and ladies there, who, indeed, were so kind in their manner, that it seemed quite as though I had returned home, amidst relations and friends who had been long expecting me. I took up my quarters in my old lodgings, upon the same conditions as before, and on the same terms, namely, twenty crowns a-month.

Tuesday, 15th August, I went early in the morning to bathe, and remained in the water somewhat less than an hour; it seemed to me rather cold, and did not make me perspire at all. At the time of my return here, I was well, and in excellent spirits. Upon

[1] Montaigne, though he talks here about the approach of old age, was only in his forty-eighth year.

leaving the bath, I passed some very thick water; in the evening, after I had taken a rather long walk up the hill, I found that my water was tinged with blood; and when I got to bed, I felt a great deal of pain in the bladder.

On the 16th I repeated the bath, and in order to be by myself, I bathed in the women's bath, which I had never before visited. It appeared to me too hot, either because it really was so, or because my pores being opened by the previous bath, I felt the heat more; however I remained in the water more than an hour. I perspired a little; the water that afterwards came from me was natural, and unaccompanied with gravel. After dinner, however, the water I passed was thick and red, and towards evening was again tinged with blood.

On the 17th, I went into the same bath, which then appeared more temperate. I did not perspire much; there was a little gravel in the water I voided; and my complexion had assumed a sort of jaundice hue.

On the 18th, I remained two hours in the same bath. There was a very disagreeable feeling of weight about the bladder; as to my stomach, it was as open as was necessary. From the first day of my return here, I was annoyed with flatulence, and this I have no hesitation in attributing to these waters; for, when I was here before, I found precisely the same effect from the same cause.

On the 19th, I bathed somewhat later in the day, in order to give time for a lady of Lucca to bathe before me, for it is a very reasonable rule here, that the ladies shall have the use of their bath for their own full time. I stayed in the water two hours.

My head, for several days, had been very well; but to-day I felt a heaviness in that quarter. My water was still very thick, and contained a good deal of gravel. I felt also a great deal of commotion in the reins, which I take to be one of the principal effects of these baths. They not only dilate and open the passages, but they project the matter, dissipate it, and eventually make it disappear. The gravel that I passed seemed to be pieces of broken stone, recently separated.

In the night I felt, in the left side, the commencement of an attack of cholic, which had every promise of being a very severe and painful one, and it plagued me for some time, but without getting worse, and at last went off, without descending to the lower part of the stomach, and in a way that induced me to suppose it was only wind.

On the 20th, I remained two hours in the bath. Throughout the day, I had a great deal of pain in the lower part of the belly, from flatulence. My water was still thick and red, and contained some gravel. My head ached, and my stomach was more out of order than usual.

They do not observe saints' days, nor even Sundays, so religiously here, as is the case amongst us; the women do most of their work after dinner.

On the 21st, after taking my bath, I felt a great deal of pain in my reins; my water was abundant and thick, and brought some gravel with it. I conceived that these pains were occasioned by wind, which I was now excessively troubled with. The state of my water lately made me anticipate the descent of some large stone, and I was right enough in this. During the morning, I wrote the preceding portion of my journal, and then went to dinner; and I had no sooner finished this meal, than I had a horrible attack of cholic; to which, in order to keep me quite on the alert, was added a frightful tooth-ache in the left jaw, a malady to which I had never been subject. Not being able to endure so much misery up, I went to bed in about a couple of hours, and here my tooth-ache soon left me. The cholic, however, continued in full force, and as I found from the flatulence that, sometimes on one side, sometimes on the other, constantly annoyed me, that it was rather wind than the stone that disturbed me, I was obliged to ask for a clyster, which accordingly they gave me in the evening, made up by the apothecary with due proportions of oil, camomile, and aniseed-water. My landlord, Captain Paulino, administered it himself, with a great deal of skill and address, concluding with the recommendation that I should retain the remedy within me as long as I could, a recommendation which I had no sort of difficulty in following, and I did retain it for three hours, when I thought it better to void the greater part of it. When I was out of bed, I swallowed, with a great deal of difficulty, a little marchpane and four spoonfuls of wine; I then returned to bed, and slept for a short time. In the course of the day, the remedy I had taken produced such effects, that the next morning I found myself infinitely better, the flatulence having, to a great extent, disappeared. I felt very fatigued, but had no pain. At dinner, I ate a little, but without appetite; and although I was thirsty, the wine I drank had no flavour. After dinner, the tooth-ache returned in my left jaw, and made me suffer a great deal till I went to bed. As I was convinced that the flatulence was occasioned by the bathing, I did not take a bath, and slept very well all night.

On awaking the following morning, I felt myself weary and low-spirited, my mouth dry, with a bad taste, and my breath very feverish. I did not, however, feel any actual illness, but my water continued very thick and bad.

At last, on the 24th, in the morning, I felt a stone, which, after making some way, stopped in the passage until dinner-time, when I passed it with a great deal of pain, and the loss of a good deal of blood, both before and after its exit. It was of the size and length of a pine-

nut, on one side as broad as a bean, and exactly resembling in form the member through which it had passed. I felt infinite delight when I had got rid of it, though the passage was very painful; for I had never before voided so large a stone. I knew very well that something unusual was at hand; I shall see, thought I, what the result is.

It would be weak and cowardly in me, to the last degree, if, living in the constant danger of dying from this cause, and death, besides, approaching me, in the due course of nature, nearer and nearer every moment, I were not to brace myself up, and unceasingly prepare myself to meet the common fate, when it befals me. Reason enjoins us to receive with joy and gratitude the good it may please God to send us; and as to the ills which come upon mortals from every quarter, and at every moment, the sole remedy against them, the simple rule for meeting them, whatever they may be, is to resolve either to endure them like a man, or at once, like a man, promptly and bravely to put an effectual end to them.

On the 25th of August, my water resumed its natural colour, and I found myself as well as before. I suffered, indeed, both day and night, from head-ache, but the attacks were soon over, and by no means so painful as they were before.

On the 26th, I went into the bath in the morning, and remained there two hours.

On the 27th, after dinner, I was so tortured with the tooth-ache, that I sent for the doctor, who, having carefully examined the seat of the disorder, was of opinion—an opinion corroborated by the circumstance that the pain had already subsided,—that the disorder was not occasioned by any local cause, but was owing to the wind, and to the stomach being otherwise out of order; and I was disposed to concur with him in this view of the matter, from having, at different times, had pains all over me, arising, as I imagine, from the same source.

Monday, 28th of August, I went early in the morning to Barnaby's spring, and drank seven pounds and four ounces of the water, reckoning twelve ounces to the pound. They operated before dinner, and I voided about half the quantity I had taken. I had no difficulty in perceiving that this water gave me a feeling of weight and confusion in the head.

Tuesday, 29th, I drank at the common spring nine glasses, each containing eleven ounces, and I had immediately afterwards a severe head-ache. It is true, that my head was by no means in a good state, and I had not, indeed, been myself, in this respect, ever since the first bath I took; but of late, I had not been so much troubled with it as I used to be, a month or so ago, and there had not been the same weakness in my eyes. Whenever I had a head-ache, it brought on a tooth-ache, always in the left jaw, which would become thoroughly affected, to the very back teeth, and even to the ear, and part of the nose. The pain, indeed, did not last long, but it was very severe, and came on frequently.

I am convinced that the vapour of this water, whether you bathe in, or only drink it (though more so in the former case), is very bad for the head, and even still more injurious for the stomach; and this is the reason why the visitors here are obliged to take physic, to remedy this disadvantage.

From one morning to another, I generally passed, within a pound or so, all the water I had taken, including what I drank at my meals, which, however, was no great deal, not a pound a day. To-day, after dinner, towards sun-set, I went into the water, where I remained three quarters of an hour, and on the following morning I perspired a little.

August 30th, I drank two glasses, holding nine ounces each, and of these eighteen ounces I had passed half before dinner.

Thursday, I drank nothing, but mounted a horse, and went to see Controna, a populous village among the mountains. I went over several of the fine fertile plains that lie between the hills here, and observed several excellent pasture-grounds, nearly at the top of some of the loftiest elevations. The village I speak of, has several small farms attached to it, and has some neat stone houses, roofed with stone. I took a tolerably wide circuit before I returned home.

I was not at all satisfied with the manner in which the water I had drunk latterly had come away from me, and I made up my mind, therefore, to give up the drinking of it altogether.

Friday, 1st of September, 1581, I bathed for an hour in the morning; before I had left the bath, I perspired a little, and, when I passed my water afterwards, I found it accompanied with a great quantity of red gravel. When I drank the waters, I passed hardly any. My water was much as usual, that is to say, in very bad condition. I began to get tired and annoyed with these baths; so much so, that had I received at this juncture the news from France, which for four months I had been fruitlessly expecting, I should have left the place forthwith, and have spent the autumn at some other bath, I cared not much which, wherever there seemed a chance of benefit; and there were several of these; for on the way to Rome there lay, at a short distance from the high road, the Baths of Bagnacqua, of Sienna, and of Viterbo; and, on the road to Venice, those of Bologna and Padua.

While I was at Pisa, I had had my arms emblazoned, in fine rich colours and gold, on canvass; and I now had the canvass framed, and carefully affixed against the wall of the chamber which I occupied, at Captain Paulino's, on condition that it was to be considered as a fixture there, as given to the house, not to the master of the house, and that these my arms were not to be removed from the place

where I had them fixed, under any circumstances that might happen, and this condition the captain promised me, and gave me his oath, he would strictly abide by.

Sunday, the 3rd, I went to the bath, and remained there rather more than an hour. I felt a good deal of flatulency, but it was not accompanied with pain.

In the night, and on the morning of Monday, the 4th, I was cruelly tormented with the tooth-ache; and I began to suspect that these repeated attacks must arise from some decayed tooth. I chewed mastic all the morning, without getting any relief. Towards dinner-time, and for three or four hours after, the pain left me; but about twenty o'clock,[1] it returned with such violence, and in both jaws, that I could not stand. The disorder was so violent, indeed, that it made me feel quite sick. Sometimes I was all in a perspiration, at other times I was shivering. And now again that the pain had become general, I doubted whether it could arise from a decayed tooth; for though the pain was greatest on the left side, it was sometimes very violent in the temples, and in the chin, and extended even to the throat and both shoulders, so that I passed the most horrible night that ever I went through; I was mad with anguish and rage.

In the course of the night, I sent for an apothecary, who gave me some brandy to hold in the part of the mouth where I suffered most, and this gave me great relief. The instant that I got the cordial into my mouth, all the pain ceased, but, as soon as the brandy became absorbed, the malady returned. I had thus the glass in continual requisition; but I could not keep any of the liquor in my mouth; for the moment that, by its influence, the pain left me, the fatigue I had endured made me drop off to sleep, and then the brandy would get down my throat, and half choke me, before I could spit it out again. The pain, however, left me of itself towards daybreak.

Tuesday morning, all the gentlemen who were at the Baths came to see me in bed. After they were gone, I had a small mastic plaster applied to the left temple, and I was not much troubled with the pain all that day. When night came, they put hot lint on the cheek, and on the left side of the head. I slept free from pain, but 'twas somewhat a disturbed sleep.

Wednesday, I had still some remains of the malady, both in the teeth and in the left eye; my sleep, as on the day before, was free from pain, but disturbed. I passed gravel with my water, but not in so great a quantity as when I was here in the first instance; the gravel had sometimes the appearance of small red millet.

Thursday morning, 7th of September, I went into the grand bath, and remained there an hour.

The same morning, I received, by way of Rome, a letter from M. Tausin, dated Bordeaux, 2nd of August, wherein he informed me that, on the preceding day, I had been unanimously elected mayor of Bordeaux, and my correspondent called upon me to accept this office, for the love of my country.

Sunday, 10th of September, I bathed for an hour, in the morning, in the women's bath, and, as it was somewhat warm, I perspired a little.

After dinner, I rode out by myself, to have a look at some other places in the neighbourhood, more especially a small country-seat called Gragnaiola, situated at the very top of one of the highest mountains of the district. As I rode along the high lands, I saw some of the most fertile and most agreeable hill scenery that ever came under my observation.

I got into conversation with some of the people of the place, and, among other things, asked one very old man whether they ever made use of the baths in their vicinity; and he replied that it was very much the same case with them, as with the people who live too near Our Lady of Loretto; the latter very seldom go a pilgrimage to the shrine, and the people here as rarely visit the baths, leaving them to operate almost entirely for the benefit of strangers. He added that, of late years, he had perceived with regret that these baths did more hurt than good to the persons who used them, which he attributed to the circumstance that, whereas formerly there was not one single apothecary in the whole district, and that it was an exceedingly rare thing to see a physician pay them a visit, the whole place now swarmed with these people, who, to promote their own ends, have spread abroad this notion: that the baths are of no avail, unless you physic yourself, not only before and after you bathe, but even while you are bathing; and that to drink the waters is useless, unless you mix some medicine or other with them. The result was, he observed, that more people died at these baths than were cured there; and he was fully convinced that, before long, the baths altogether would get into complete disgrace, and be altogether abandoned.

Monday, 11th of September, I passed in the morning a great deal of gravel, almost all of which was of the form of round, firm, millet, red on the outside, and grey within.

September the 12th, 1581, we left the Baths Della Villa, early in the morning, and got by dinner-time to

Lucca, fourteen miles. The vintage was just commencing. The festival of the Holy Cross is one of the principal holidays observed here; on this occasion, all persons belonging to the town, who are keeping away on account of debt, are permitted to come and spend eight days with their friends, that they may be able to take part in the devotions which mark the festival.

Throughout Italy, I have not been able to

[1] Six in the evening.

get hold of one single barber that could either shave me, or cut or arrange my hair properly.

On Wednesday evening, we went to hear vespers in the cathedral, where almost the entire population was assembled. The *Volto Santo*[1] was exhibited, an image held in great veneration by the Lucchese, from its great antiquity, and its having performed a vast number of miracles. The cathedral was built expressly as a worthy receptacle for this sacred relic; the small chapel, in which it is generally kept, stands in the very centre of the cathedral, where, certainly, it has a very awkward appearance, and evidently violates all the rules of architecture. When vespers were over, the whole assembly, churchmen and laymen, proceeded to another church, which formerly was the cathedral.

Thursday, I heard mass in the choir of the cathedral, where were assembled all the officers of state. They are very fond of music here; you hardly ever meet with either man or woman that does not know something of one instrument or another; and every body sings, though fine voices are rare. The mass that I heard was no great things; the only point aimed at, apparently, was who should shout loudest. They had constructed, for this occasion, an immense high altar of wood and pasteboard, which was covered with images, large candlesticks, and silver cups and plates, ranged as on a sideboard, that is to say, a large bason in the middle, and four dishes round it. The altar was covered in this way from bottom to top, and produced a very grand effect.

Every time the bishop says mass, as he did on this occasion, at the instant that he commences *Gloria in excelsis*, they set fire to a large bundle of tow, placed in some iron grating that is suspended for this purpose in the middle of the church.

The weather here was already getting cold and damp.

Friday, 15th of September, I passed at least twice as much water as I had taken in the last twenty-four hours, so that if there had remained in me any of the bath water, I imagine every drop of it must have left me now.

Saturday morning, I passed, without any pain, a small rough stone; I had felt it during the night in the lower part of the stomach.

Sunday, 18th of September, took place the change of the gonfaloniers of the town,[2] and I went to witness the ceremony at the palace. They make hardly any distinction here between Sundays and other days; they work on Sundays, and keep many of the shops open, just the same as in week days.

Wednesday, 20th of September, after dinner, I left Lucca, having previously had packed up a number of things in two chests, which I sent off direct for France.

[1] The *Sacred Face*, a very ancient cedar cross.

[2] Or, more correctly, the election of the gonfalonier of the republic, who was changed every two months.

We proceeded along a tolerable road, through a sterile district of country, which reminded me very much of the Landes of Gascony. On our way we crossed a large stream that works the duke's iron-mills, over a bridge built by that nobleman, with a handsome house on this side of it. On your right hand, close to this place, there are three fish-ponds, full of eels; the bottom of these ponds is paved with bricks, and the water is so shallow that you can see the fish quite plain. We crossed the Arno at Fusecchio, and got in the evening to

Scala, twenty miles, which we left at daybreak, and rode on through a very pretty undulating country, closely resembling the general character of the scenery of France.

We passed through Castel Fiorentino, a small walled town, and then through Certaldo, which is close to it, a fine town with a castle, standing upon a hill. This is the native place of Boccaccio. We reached by dinner-time

Poggibonzi, eighteen miles, a small place, whence, after a short halt, we rode on to

Sienna, twelve miles. You feel the cold at this time of the year much more sensibly in Italy than you do in France.

The great square of Sienna is the finest in Italy. Mass is said here every day in public, at an altar so placed, that all the people who live in the square, or are at work there, can hear the service, without leaving their houses, or laying aside what they are about. At the moment of elevation, a trumpet sounds, to give notice to the public.

Sunday, 23rd of September, after dinner, we left Sienna, and by an easy, though somewhat unequal road, for the country is hilly, got to

San-Chirico, a small town and castle, twenty miles from Sienna. We lodged at an inn outside the walls. The horse that carried our baggage had fallen, on the road, into a stream that we forded, and all my clothes, and, what was worse, my books, got wet, so that we had to stay till they were thoroughly dried. Among the places that we passed on our left were Montepulciano, Montecello, and Castiglioncello.

Early on Monday morning, I rode over to a bath, two miles off, called Vignone, after a small castle that stands near it. The bath is situated on a gentle elevation, at the foot of which runs the river Urcia. There are about a dozen small, mean, inconvenient houses here, and the whole place has a beggarly appearance. The principal bath is a large pond, about sixty paces long, and twenty-five wide, surrounded by a wall. The water, which rises through several springs, has no flavour of sulphur about it, and there is very little vapour from it. It deposits a reddish sediment, and seemed to me to have more of iron in it than of any thing else. They do not drink it. Around this large bath, which is kept very neat and clean, there are several smaller ones, covered in, and which are more generally used.

The waters that the people about here drink are those of San Cassieno, which is near San-Chirico, somewhat more to the left.

The earthenware they make in this neighbourhood closely resembles porcelain, and is so white and clean, and so very cheap, that it seemed to me it would be infinitely preferable to the pewter we use in France, and which, especially in inns, is often very dirty and disagreeable.

I thought my head-aches were entirely gone; but, for the last two or three days, I have had slight attacks every now and then. They came, as before, in the shape of a heaviness and confusion in the forehead and back part of my head, and a dazzling and mist before my eyes.

Tuesday, we left San Chirico, and went on to dine at

La Paglia, thirteen miles, whence we proceeded to

San Lorenzo, where we slept. The inns at both places were wretched holes. The vintage hereabouts was just beginning.

Wednesday morning, there was a dispute between our people and the Vetturini of Sienna, who, finding that we were longer than usual on the journey, got angry at the additional expense they were at for the horses, and refused to pay for their keep this evening. The dispute, indeed, ran so high, that I was obliged to go and speak to the mayor on the subject, who, having heard the rights of the matter, decided it in my favour, and put the Vetturini in prison. I explained to him that the delay they complained of was solely owing to the sumpter-horse's falling, an accident with which we had nothing to do, and by which I had the greatest part of my clothes spoilt.

Near the high road, on the right hand side, about six miles from Monte-Fiascone, there is a Bath, which we stopped at for an hour or two. It is in the plain, three or four miles from the hills, and is formed by a considerable spring of nearly boiling water, of a very sulphureous flavour, and which deposits a white sediment. The supply from this spring is so plentiful as to form a small lake, whence the water is conveyed, through a pipe, to a house close by, where the baths are. There are two of these baths, and the house is divided off into a number of inconvenient little apartments, for the use of visitors; but, as I understood, very few people come here. Those who do, generally drink ten pounds of water a day, for seven days. The water has to be cooled before you can drink it, as is the case at the Preissac Baths; there are also places for bathing in. The season here is in the spring. The person who leases this bath pays a rent of fifty crowns a year for it to some church, to which it belongs; but, besides the profit he makes of the visitors, he makes a good deal of money by selling a particular sort of mud, which he gets out of the lake, and which the good souls about here imagine to be good for the itch in men, when mixed with oil, and for the scab in sheep and dogs, when mixed with water. This mud, as dug out of the lake, is sold for twelve julios the measure, and, when made up into dry balls, for seven *quatrini*. There were a number of Cardinal Farnese's dogs here, going through a course of this mud and water. Proceeding on, we found ourselves, after a three mile ride, at

Viterbo, sixteen miles. The day was so far advanced, that we were fain to make but one meal of dinner and supper. I found I had got a sad cold, and I could hardly speak, I was so hoarse.

Instead of going to bed at San Lorenzo, I had laid down on a table, with my clothes on, for fear of the vermin, a thing which I had not had occasion to do before, except at Florence; and I accounted for my cold in that way. I ate here a sort of acorn, or mast, very plentiful in Italy, called *gensole*; it is by no means a bad thing. There are such quantities of starlings about here, that you can buy one for two liards.

Thursday, 26th of September, I went to see some other Baths in the plain here, a good way from the mountains. Not long ago, these Baths were rather considerable; but the two principal ones have been abandoned, and all that remains is one small spring, which forms a pond, where you bathe. The water is warm, tasteless, and without smell. I should imagine there is a good deal of iron about it. Further on, there is a building, which the people here call the Pope's Palace, from its having been, as they say, built or repaired by Pope Nicholas V. Close to this palace, there are three hot springs, one of which is sometimes made use of. The water is of temperate heat, and has no disagreeable smell about it. I fancied that it had a good deal of nitre about it. My intention, in coming here, was to drink the water for three days. The plan of proceeding is much the same as at other baths; you drink a certain quantity, then you walk about, and it is considered a beneficial thing to perspire a good deal.

These waters are held in such high repute, as to be carried about all over Italy. The author of *a General Treatise on the Italian Baths*, himself a physician,[1] assigns the first rank to these Baths for drinking. They have more particularly attained a great name as a remedy for maladies of my sort. The usual season for drinking them is May. My expectations from them were, however, very considerably damped, from an invective against them, that a former visitor left written on the wall of the bath-room, in which he abuses the physicians for sending him here, and says the water made him worse than he was before; and my doubts of a beneficial result were augmented by the manner of the owner of the Baths, who

[1] Dr. Donati.

said the season was too far advanced, and did not appear at all desirous that I should make any experiment.

There is but one house here, but this is large and commodious; and as it is only a *mile* and a half from Viterbo, I proceeded thither on foot. It contains three or four baths, the effects of which are various; there is also a shower-bath. The spring produces a very white foam or scum, which does not dissipate, but forms into a crust on the surface of the water. If you put a bit of linen on this substance, it adheres to it, as though it were frozen. This foam is thought an excellent dentifrice, and is sold, and even exported, for that purpose. It tastes like earth and sand. It is said to be the primary matter of marble, and if so, might very easily be supposed to petrify in the bladder. They assured me, however, that this water deposits no sediment in the flasks in which it is bottled off, but remains quite clear and pure. I fancy you may drink as much of it as you like, without its hurting you.

On my way back, I made a *detour*, for the purpose of seeing the place where the inhabitants of Viterbo (among whom there is not a single gentleman, every soul in the town being engaged either in manufacturing or selling) collect the flax and hemp of which they manufacture their goods. The women take no part in the work. I found a great number of these labourers, near a large pond of water, which, they told me, is hot and boiling all the year round. From this pond, which, they say, has no bottom, is supplied the smaller ponds, in which they steep the hemp and flax.

On my return from this little trip, I passed a small hard red stone, about the size of a large grain of wheat; I had felt the descent of this stone the night before, but it had stopped in the passage. To facilitate the exit of this sort of stone, you would do well to stop the course of your water for a minute or two, for the increased force with which it comes forth afterwards, greatly aids the progress of the stone. I got this hint from M. Langon, at Arsaci.

Saturday, St. Michael's Day, after dinner, I went to see the *Madonna di Quercio*, half a league out of the town. The road to this shrine is wide, straight, and well kept, with a row of fine trees on each side, extending the whole distance. It was made under the direction of Pope Farnese. The church, which is a very handsome structure, is full of religious monuments and votive pictures. In a conspicuous part of the interior, there is a Latin inscription, setting forth that, about a hundred years ago, a man who was attacked by robbers took refuge, half dead with fear, under the shade of an oak, whereon was suspended this image of the Virgin; and that having invoked her aid, he became miraculously invisible to the robbers, and was thus delivered from manifest danger. This miracle created a peculiar feeling of devotion in favour of this Virgin; and, ere long, the present handsome church was built round the oak. The trunk of the tree still remains in the centre of the sacred edifice; the upper part of it, stripped of its branches, is fixed against the wall, and on it you see the image of the Virgin.

Saturday, 30th of September, I left Viterbo early in the morning, and took the road to Bagnaia, a country seat belonging to Cardinal Gambara, one of the most richly ornamented places I ever saw. It is so well provided with fountains, that in this respect it not only equals, but surpasses, both Pratolino and Tivoli. In the first place, there is a fountain of spring water, which is not the case at Tivoli; the water of this fountain is abundant, which is not the case at Pratolino; and this water has been made available for an infinity of ornamental designs, under the direction of Signor Tomasi, of Sienna, the constructor of the waterworks at Tivoli, who, in addition to the admirable effects which his genius originated elsewhere, has here introduced some novelties, which infinitely surpass all his former efforts. When the decorations here are completed, it will be the finest place of the sort in the world. One of the *more remarkable features*, is a pyramid, which spouts forth water in different directions; at each base of this pyramid, is a small lake, full of pure and limpid water. In the centre of each lake is a stone boat, wherein stand two figures, in the costume of cross-bowmen, who, through their cross-bows, shoot continuous streams of water against the pyramid. The grounds are traversed by a number of well-planned walks, with carved stone seats at short distances. The palace is small, but well arranged. The cardinal was not at home; but, as he is French at heart, his people received us with the utmost kindness.

Thence we proceeded to Caprarola, a palace belonging to the Cardinal Farnese, and which is highly spoken of throughout Italy. And well it may be so; for I have seen no structure at all comparable to it, in the whole of this fine country. It is surrounded by a wide deep fosse, cut out of the soft gravel stone, on which the place is built; and the roof of the palace on each side forms a fine terrace, by which arrangement a very unseemly feature in ordinary domestic architecture is avoided. The form of the building inclines to the pentagonal, but it presents to the eye the appearance of a perfect square. Its internal form is exactly circular; and a large vaulted corridor, whose walls are covered with pictures, encircles the whole building, winding round and round it, from the base to the summit, and connecting the different floors. The rooms are all square. Among the other splendid apartments which adorn this structure, there is one, the vaulted ceiling of which represents a celestial globe, with all the figures accurately depicted; while upon the walls of the apartment is represented the terrestrial world, with all its various con-

tinents and regions, forming a complete cosmography. These paintings, which are all in the richest colours, entirely cover the walls and ceiling. In other rooms are depicted, in pictures of various sizes, the life and actions of Paul III., and the other distinguished members of the House of Farnese. Besides these, there are portraits so admirable, that those who have seen the originals at once recognise them all at the first glance, of our Constable,[1] the Queen-Mother,[2] her children, Charles IX., Henry III., the Duke of Alençon, the Queen of Navarre,[3] and King Francis II., the eldest of them all, as well as Henry II., Piero Strozzi, and others. In the same room with these, are two busts, one at each end; one, which stands in the place of honour, of Henry II., with an inscription upon it, in which he is designated the preserver of the house of Farnese; and the other, which stands at the other end of the room, that of King Philip II. of Spain, the inscription on which sets forth, that it was placed there in memorial of the numerous benefits which the Farnese family had received from him. In the grounds, also, there are several things well worth seeing, and, among others, a grotto, whence the water showering out into a small lake, gives to the eye a close imitation of the fall of real rain. This grotto stands in a wild and desert spot, and the water whence it is supplied has to be brought from Viterbo, which is fully eight miles off.

Leaving this magnificent place, we rode on, over a wide plain, where, every now and then, upon barren and grassless spots, we found springs of cold water, clear and pure to the sight, but so impregnated with sulphur, as to cast the odour of it for some distance around. We slept at

Monte-Rossi, twenty-three miles; and next day, Sunday, 1st of October, reached

Rome, twenty-two miles. The weather was excessively cold, and we were annoyed with a freezing north wind. On the Monday, and for several days after, my stomach was so much out of order, that I determined to take my meals for a short time by myself, so that I might eat less. However, in other respects I was tolerably well, except, indeed, that my head had not yet quite resumed its proper state.

On arriving at Rome, I found a letter from the jurats of Bordeaux, reminding me in very courteous terms of my election as mayor of that town, and earnestly requesting me to proceed thither without delay.

Sunday, 8th of October, 1581, I went to Monte Cavallo, to see an Italian who, having been for a long time a slave in Turkey, had there acquired amazing skill in equestrian exercises. For instance, while riding at full speed, he would jump up, and, standing erect on his saddle, hurl a javelin at some object with great force, and then resume his seat. Next, in the midst of a furious gallop, resting one hand on his saddle-bow, he would alight from his horse, touching the ground with his right foot, the left remaining in its stirrup; and this he performed several times, alternately with the feat of turning right round in his saddle, with as much facility as though his horse had been standing still. He shewed us the way in which the Turks use the bow on horseback, both in attack and in retreat. By and by, with drawing both feet from the stirrups, and planting them firmly against his steed's left haunch, while his head and shoulder reclined on the animal's neck, he would in this position ride round and round the circus at full speed. Resuming his seat, he received from the attendant a large ball, which, notwithstanding the pace at which his horse was galloping, he threw up into the air, and caught again, over and over again, with the utmost facility and certainty. The last feat he shewed us, on horseback, was standing upright on his saddle, and running at a glove with a lance, which he directed with such accuracy and force as to hit his mark just in the centre, and to carry it off. Then dismounting, he concluded by exhibiting several extraordinary feats of strength, such, among others, as bending a bar of iron round his neck.

On the 10th of October, after dinner, the French ambassador[4] sent a lacquey to tell me that, if I liked, he would come and fetch me in his coach, to see the palace of Cardinal Orsino, who died this summer at Naples, leaving all his vast property to a niece of his, and she being quite a child, the executors had thought best to sell the furniture. Among the articles here that more especially attracted my attention, was a taffeta counterpane, covered with swans' feathers. At Sienna they have quantities of swans' skins on sale, with the feathers entire, and prepared in some particular way for use; and they only ask a crown and a half a-piece for these. They are about the size of a sheep's skin, and one of them is sufficient to make a counterpane of. There was also an ostrich egg, carved and painted very exquisitely; and a square jewel-box, in which there were three or four articles of jewellery, but the interior of the box was so ingeniously arranged with crystal plates that, when opened, it seemed much wider and deeper than it really was, and it appeared quite full of precious stones, so extraordinary was the effect produced by the reflection of the crystal.

Thursday, 12th of October, the Cardinal de Sens took me in his coach to see the church of St. John and St. Paul, of which he is titular and superior, as he is also of the order of monks, who make a business of distilling the perfumes I spoke of, some time back. This church stands on Mount Celius, a situation apparently selected for its affording such facilities

[1] Anne de Montmorency.
[2] Catherine de Medici.
[3] Margaret, first wife of Henry IV.
[4] M. D'Elbene.

for the construction of the numerous subterranean buildings which are attached to the edifice. This is said to be the site of the Forum of Hostilius. The gardens and vineyards belonging to this society are very beautiful, and command an extensive prospect, which embraces the whole of ancient Rome. The church, from the steep and rugged nature of the spot on which it stands, is almost inaccessible on every side. The same day, I sent off a well-filled box to Milan. The vetturini generally take twenty days to get there. The box weighed 150 pounds, and they charged me two *bajocchi* a pound for the carriage, about two French sous. There were several articles of value in it, more especially a magnificent chaplet of Agnus Dei, the handsomest there was to be had in Rome. It had been made expressly for the empress's ambassador, and had been blessed by the pope.

Sunday, 15th of October, I quitted Rome shortly after sunrise, leaving my brother behind me, to whom I gave forty-three gold crowns, which he reckoned would be enough to pay all his expenses for the five months he was to remain there, to perfect himself in the practice of arms.[1] He had previously hired a pretty suite of rooms, for twenty Julios a month. Messrs. d'Estissac, de Monbaron, de Chase, Morens, and one or two other gentlemen, accompanied me the first stage, and several more of my friends would also have accompanied me so far, and had hired horses for the purpose, but I started earlier than I had at first proposed, in order to save these gentlemen, at least, the trouble which their kindness to me would have occasioned them. Among these were Messrs. du Bellay, d'Ambres, d'Allègre, &c. I got by bed-time to

Ronciglione, thirty miles. I had hired the horses to take me as far as Lucca, and I was to pay twenty Julios each for them, the owner contracting to provide their keep all the way.

On the Monday morning, the weather was astonishingly cold; indeed, as it seemed to me at the time, more so than I had ever felt it before, yet the vintage was not near over in that part of the country. I dined at Viterbo, where I got out my furs and winter clothing. Thence I went on through

San Lorenzo, twenty-nine miles, to San Chirico, thirty-two miles, where I slept. All these roads had been mended a month or two before, by order of the Duke of Tuscany, who has therein done a great public service, for which may God reward him; the roads, which previously were of the very worst description, are now as level and commodious as the streets of a town. It was quite astonishing to see the number of people who were flocking to Rome. As a matter of course, the hire of horses on the way to the Eternal City was preposterous, while those who were coming away from it could get conveyance for next to nothing. Near Sienna there is a double bridge, that is to say, a bridge which, passing over one river, serves as the channel for another river. You see the same sort of thing in several other places. In the evening we reached

Sienna, twenty miles. During the night, I had a severe attack of cholic, which tormented me for two hours; it seemed to me that a stone was descending. Early on the Thursday morning, I sent for William Felix, a Jewish physician, who entered at great length upon his views of what regimen I ought to pursue for my malady. I left Sienna immediately afterwards, and, on my way, was plagued with the cholic for three or four hours; at the end of which time I felt that a stone had fallen. I got to supper at

Ponte Alce, twenty-eight miles, where I passed a stone, somewhat larger than a grain of millet, and some gravel, without any pain or difficulty. I left this place, Friday morning, and on the way dismounted at

Altopascio, sixteen miles, where I stopped for an hour, to feed the horses. Here, without any great pain, I passed a quantity of gravel, and a longish stone, part of it hard and part soft, and somewhat larger than a grain of wheat. We saw a number of peasants on the road, some of whom were picking the vine leaves, to store away as fodder for their cattle in the winter, while others were collecting fern, to mix with their cheese. We arrived in the evening at

Lucca, eight miles, and within an hour, several gentlemen and others, whom I had made acquaintance with when I was here before, came to see me.

Saturday, 21st of October, early in the morning, I voided another stone, which stopped for a short while in the passage, but then came out without pain or difficulty. It was nearly round, hard, rough, white inside and red out, and much larger than a grain of wheat; I still passed a great deal of gravel. It is manifest, from this, that nature often relieves herself, for all that had thus passed from me, did so as by a perfectly natural operation. God be praised, that I got rid of these stones with so little pain and inconvenience!

As soon as I had eaten a bunch of grapes (for when travelling I take little or nothing in the morning), I left Lucca, without waiting for several gentlemen who had volunteered over night to accompany me. The road was exceedingly good. On my right was a succession of low hills, covered with olive plantations, and on my left the marshes, with the sea in the distance.

No great way from Lucca I saw a machine, which the government has most negligently allowed to go to ruin, very much to the injury of the surrounding country. This machine, which was made for the purpose of draining the

[1] It was probably in the course of this five months that the Sieur de Matteeoulen took part in the duel of which mention has been made.

marshes, and rendering them cultivable, was constructed in the following manner: a deep and extensive ditch was dug, to receive the drainings from the marshes, and at the head of this were placed three wheels, turned by a stream which descended from a neighbouring height. These wheels, by means of spouts, like those of a mill-hopper, drew up the water from the ditch into a raised canal, walled in with brick, which carried it down to the sea. By means of this construction, the marshes were gradually draining, but the works are now at a stand-still.

I passed through Pietra-Santa, a town belonging to the Duke of Florence, where there seem to be more houses than inhabitants. The reason of this, as I was told, is that the air is so bad that hardly any one can exist there, and the few who do manage to live are a poor sickly set. The next place we reached was

Massa di Carrara, twenty-two miles, a small town belonging to the Prince di Massa, a member of the Cibo family. The place consists of a fine castle, standing on the summit of a hill, half way down which are the castle-walls, and below these, encompassing the hill, the town itself, which is again surrounded with a wall. The place is well situated, and has a number of good houses, tastefully painted on the outside. I was obliged to put up with new wine here, for there is no such thing as old wine to be got. They have a way of clearing their wine with the shavings of some particular wood and the white of eggs, so as to give it the colour of age, but it also communicates a flavour which is by no means natural or pleasant.

Sunday, 22nd of October, I proceeded on my way, along an excellent level, straight road, the Tuscan sea lying on my right, at about a gun-shot off. We saw some inconsiderable ruins on our way, half way between the road and the sea, which, according to the notion of the people here, are the remains of a large town of antiquity, called Luna.

Afterwards, we passed through Sarrezana, a town belonging to the Seigneury of Genoa. Over the gate are the arms of the republic, a mounted St. George. There is a garrison of Swiss mercenaries here. This town formerly belonged to the Duke of Florence; and, were it not that the Prince of Massa separates the two places, there is no doubt that Pietra-Santa and Sarrezana, the frontier towns of Florence and Genoa, would be continually at blows.

As we were leaving Sarrezana, where, by the way, we had to pay four julios a horse for one post,—they were firing off salvos of artillery in honour of Don Giovanni di Medicis, natural brother of the Duke of Florence, who was passing through the town, on his return from Genoa, where he had been, on the part of his brother, to pay his respects to the empress,[1] who had received similar visits from many other Italian grandees. The prince, whose magnificence on this occasion excited the most admiration, was the Duke of Ferrara, who escorted the empress to Padua, with four hundred carriages. He had requested permission from the seigneury of Venice to pass through their territories with six hundred horsemen, but, although they gave him leave to pass, they said he must not have so many horsemen with him; and he, on his part, not being willing to have fewer attendants, put all his people into coaches, so that the number of horses, only, was less. I met Don Giovanni on my way. He is a young man, very well made, and was accompanied by twenty men, handsomely dressed themselves, but mounted on hired horses; which, however, in Italy is considered no discredit, even to princes.

The road to Genoa lies on the left, shortly after you leave Sarrezana; and, in going to Milan, it makes very little difference whether you pass through Genoa, or take the direct Milan road; the distance, in fact, is as near as possible the same; I had a great fancy to see Genoa and the empress, but I gave up the idea for the following reasons: there are two roads to Genoa on this route; one, at three days' journey from Sarrezana, is forty miles in length, and a very bad and very hilly road, along rocks and precipices, and with only a few lonely, poverty-stricken, and unfrequented inns; the other route is from Lerice, three miles from Sarrezana, where you embark, and in twelve hours reach Genoa. Now the weakness of my stomach is such that I can never remain on the water for any length of time, and I was afraid that, even when I got to Genoa, I should have a difficulty in procuring lodgings, owing to the concourse of strangers who were then visiting the place; moreover, I had heard that the road from Genoa to Milan was infested with robbers, and my main object, after all, being to get back to France as soon as possible, I made up my mind not to go to Genoa, but to make the best of my way to Milan by the direct road, which runs to the right, towards the mountains. We proceeded along the valley of the Magra, the river so named lying on our left. Thus, passing now through part of the territories of Genoa, then through an isolated district belonging to Florence, and anon through the states of the Malaspina family, but every where finding an excellent road, with the exception of a few miles here and there, we got by bed-time to

Ponte-Mola, thirty miles. This is a long town, very full of ancient buildings and ruins, which are in no way remarkable. The people here say the town was formerly called Appua; it formerly belonged to the Fieschi family, but it is now a dependency of the state of Milan. The first course at dinner was cheese, such as they make round Milan and Placenza, which was followed by stoned olives, seasoned, in the

[1] Mary, daughter of the Emperor Charles V., and widow of Maximilian II.

Genoese fashion, with oil and vinegar, like a salad. The town stands close at the foot of the mountains. After dinner, they take round a bason of water, which they place on a stool for you to wash your hands in, and every guest washes in the same water.

I left this place, Monday morning, the 23rd, and, on quitting my inn, at once commenced the ascent of the Apennines, which, however, notwithstanding the height of these mountains, is neither a difficult nor dangerous undertaking. We were all day ascending and descending mountains of various altitude, but almost without exception, wild and barren; and at nightfall reached

Fornoua, in the territory of Count San Secondo, thirty miles, and highly delighted I was to find myself clear of the rascally mountaineers, who make pitiless havoc with the pockets of all the unhappy travellers who get into their hands, by their charges for eating and horse-hire. At dinner here, they gave me some excellent *ragouts à la moutarde*, dressed in different ways; one of them was made with quinces. There is a terrible scarcity of horses for hire all about this part of the country; and as to the people, every soul you meet seems to think it almost a point of duty to cheat and deceive the strangers who journey among them. Elsewhere, you pay two julios a post for each horse; here, they exacted from me three, four, and even five a post, so that the hire alone of my horse cost me more than a crown a day; and, besides this, they sometimes charged me two posts when there was only one.

When at Fornoua, I was only two posts from Parma, and from Parma to Placenza the distance is only the same as that from Fornoua to the latter place, so that my going to Parma would merely have taken me two posts out of my way; but I determined not even to make this slight *detour*, for I was anxious to get home without delay. Fornoua is a very small place, consisting of but six or seven houses, standing in a valley along the banks of the Taro, for such, I believe, is the name of the river that waters this valley. Tuesday morning, we proceeded along the same valley for a considerable way, and got by dinner-time to

Borgo-San-Doni,[1] twelve miles, a small town, which the Duke of Parma is surrounding with fine flanked walls. Here I found on the table, mustard, mixed with honey and orange pulp, cut into small bits, like quince marmalade.

Thence, leaving Cremona on the right, at about the same distance as Placenza, we proceeded along a fine road, through a country which, on either side, as far as the eye can reach, exhibits not one single hill, not the slightest inequality of surface; from horizon to horizon all is a level and fertile plain. We changed horses at every post; and I went the two last stages full gallop, to try how my strength stood in this respect, and I was not at all fatigued with the exertion; the water I passed all this time was quite natural and healthy.

Near Placenza, there are two high columns, one on each side of the road, about forty paces from one another. On the bases of these columns are Latin inscriptions, forbidding all persons to raise any sort of building, or to plant any sort of tree, in the space between them. I did not understand whether this prohibition was intended merely to preserve the width of the road, or to leave the prospect open from these columns to the town, which is about half a mile off. We got early in the evening to

Placenza, twenty miles, a very large place. As I had plenty of time before supper, I walked about the town for nearly three hours. The streets are unpaved and muddy, and the houses small. In the square, the chief ornament of the town, is the hall of justice, with the prisons; the citizens assemble in this square for their promenades. The shops in the streets are very poor.

I went over the castle, which is in the possession of King Philip,[2] who has a garrison here of three hundred Spanish soldiers, very ill paid, as they told me. They sound the *diane* here, night and morning, for an hour, with the instruments which we call *hautbois*, and the people here *fifes*. There are a great many people living in the castle, and it is furnished with some fine pieces of artillery. The Duke of Parma,[3] who was in the town at this time, never enters the castle; he resides in the citadel, a fortress in another part of the town. In short, I saw nothing here worth any particular observation, except the new church of St. Augustin, which King Philip is building, in place of the old church that he made use of in the construction of the castle, applying also part of the revenues of the establishment for the same purpose. The church, which promises to be a fine building, is not yet finished; but the conventual-house, where the brotherhood, to the number of seventy, reside, and the double cloisters, are entirely completed, and appeared to me the handsomest and most commodious structure for the use of a religious society that I ever beheld. The galleries, the dormitories, and every part of it, is admirably adapted for its particular purpose. They place the salt here in lumps on the table, without any salt-cellar, and the cheese in like manner is served up without a dish.

The Duke of Parma had come here to await the arrival of the eldest son of the arch-duke of Austria, the young prince whom I saw at Insprug, and it was said he was going to Rome to be crowned King of the Romans. Here also they mix water with their wine at table, and

[1] Borgo San-Donnino.
[2] Philip II., who retained it till 1595.
[3] Ottavio Farnese.

use a latten spoon for the purpose. The cheese here is the same that is universal throughout the Placentine. Placenza is exactly half-way between Rome and Lyons. In order to go direct to Milan, I should have proceeded straight to

Marignan, thirty miles, whence Milan is distant only ten miles; but I determined to extend my journey another ten miles in order to see Pavia. Accordingly, on Wednesday, 25th of October, I started very early in the morning, and rode on along an excellent road. On my way, I voided a small soft stone, and a good deal of gravel. We passed through a small town, belonging to Count Santafiore, and some time after, crossed the Po, on a flying-bridge, consisting of two barges fixed together, with a small cabin on the deck, which is propelled across the stream by the means of a long rope. Near this place, the Tesino mingles its waters with those of the Po. Early in the afternoon we reached

Pavia, thirty miles; and I immediately proceeded to examine the principal objects of interest in the town; such as the bridge over the Tesino, the cathedral church, and the churches of the Carmelites, of St. Thomas, and of St. Augustin. In the last named edifice, is the splendid monument of the sainted bishop, made of white marble, and adorned with several fine statues of the same material. In one of the squares in this town there is a brick column, with a statue surmounting it, apparently a copy of the equestrian statue of Antoninus Pius,[1] in front of the Capitol at Rome. If this be the case, the copy is smaller than the original, and in no way to be compared with it; and a further doubt arises from the circumstance that the statue at Pavia has stirrups and a saddle with saddle-bows before and behind, while the statue at Rome has neither stirrups nor saddle. This induces me to concur in the opinion of the learned, who regard stirrups and saddles, at all events such stirrups and saddles as these, as a modern invention. Perhaps, after all, this may really be a copy from the statue at Rome, the stirrups and saddle only being supplied by the modern sculptor, whose self-sufficiency and ignorance induced him to suppose that the want of them was a defect in his original. I also saw the edifice, which, under the Cardinal Borromeo's direction, had been begun for the use of the students.

Pavia is a large town, tolerably handsome, thickly populated, and abounding in artisans of every description. There are few fine houses, and even that which was assigned to the empress, during her stay here a little while back, is but an indifferent affair. Wherever the arms of France remain against houses or elsewhere, the lilies have been effaced. In short, I saw nothing that particularly struck me here. Horses in this part of the country can be hired for two julios a post. The best inn that I came across between this and Rome, was the post-house at Placenza, which, indeed, as far as I can remember, is the best I had seen in Italy, since I left Verona. However this may be, certain it is, that the very worst inn that I had to endure throughout my whole journey, was the Falcon at Pavia. Both here and at Milan, you pay separately for fire-wood. The beds have no mattrass.

I left Pavia, Thursday, 26th October, and went out of my way, about half a mile on the right, to see the plain on which the army of King Francis I. was defeated by Charles V.,[2] as well as to pay a brief visit to the Chartreuse, which, with good reason, is regarded as a splendid edifice. The façade is all of marble, elaborately sculptured. One of the altars in the church has an ivory front, on which are carved, in relief, representations of the Old and New Testament. Another object of interest is the tomb, in marble, of Giovanni Galeazzo Visconti, founder of this establishment. I next viewed the choir, the decorations of the high altar, and the cloisters, which are extraordinarily lofty, and very beautiful. The conventual house is a vast building; indeed, when you consider its extent, its variety, the infinite number of attendants, workmen, and artisans, of horses and carriages that it contains, it seems more like the court of an exalted prince, than a monastery. New works and decorations are being constantly added at an immense expense, the amount of which is taken from the revenues of the establishment itself. The Chartreuse stands in the centre of some beautiful meadow land. Thence we proceeded to

Milan, twenty miles, the most populous town in Italy, of large extent, and carrying on a very considerable trade. It is something like Paris, and in many respects looks more like a French than like an Italian town. You do not see here the fine palaces that give so great an effect to Rome, Naples, Genoa, and Florence; but it makes up for this defect by its extent; and the concourse of foreigners, which is quite as considerable as at Venice. Friday, 27th October, I went to see the out-works of the castle, and examined them thoroughly. This fortress is one of the largest and best fortified that I ever saw. The garrison consists of at least seven hundred Spaniards, who are well supplied with artillery. They are adding fresh works to every part of it. I stopped at Milan the whole of this day, in consequence of the rain, which fell heavily and without intermission. Up to this time, the weather, the roads, every thing had favoured us. Saturday morning, 28th October, I left Milan, and travelled along so excellent a road, that though the rain continued to pour, and the roads were all covered with water, there was no mud; one reason for this, however, was that the country is sandy. I got by dinner-time to

Buffalora, eighteen miles, where we crossed

[1] Marcus Aurelius. By some authorities, the statue at Pavia is supposed to represent Lucius Verus. The face is larger than that of the Roman figure.

[2] February 24th, 1525.

the Naviglio, over a bridge. The channel of this stream is narrow, but deep enough to transport barks of a considerable size to Milan. A little further on, we crossed the Tesino, in a boat, and by bed-time reached

Novarre, eighteen miles, a small and by no means agreeable town, standing in the midst of a plain. The place is completely environed by vineyards and groves of fruit and other trees, for the land here is exceedingly fertile. We left this place in the morning, and stopped to bait our horses at

Verceil, ten miles, a town in Piedmont, belonging to the Duke of Savoy;[1] this place also stands in a plain, along the banks of the Lesia, which river we crossed in a boat. The duke has built a fortress here, a strong and handsome one, as far as I could judge from the outworks; its construction, which was executed suddenly and promptly, has given great offence to his neighbours the Spaniards. After leaving this place, we passed through two other towns, St. Germain and St. Jacques, and continuing along the same fertile plain, which, in the article of trees, appears to abound chiefly in walnut-trees (olive-trees they have none in this part of the country, and the only oil used is that from walnuts), we got by bed-time to

Livorno, twenty miles, a small village, with tolerable houses. We left this place early on Monday morning, and dining at

Chivas, ten miles, proceeded on, and, after crossing several rivers and small streams, sometimes in a boat, sometimes fording them, we arrived at

Turin, ten miles, which we might easily have reached by the ordinary dinner-time, but we were somewhat later. This is a small town, standing on very marshy ground, and neither well built, nor very pleasant, I should imagine, as a residence, though it is traversed by a stream, which carries off the dirt and filth. I here hired horses for six days, to carry us on to Lyons, at five crowns and a half each horse, the owner undertaking to keep them all the time. French is commonly spoken here, and every body appears to hold our people in great esteem and affection. The vernacular, even, has very little of Italian about it, except the pronunciation; in itself it seems made up, for the most part, of French words. We left Turin, Tuesday, 31st October, and by dinner-time reached

St. Ambroise, two posts. Thence, along a narrow valley, hemmed in by considerable hills, we went on to sleep at

Suza, two posts, a considerable town, with a castle. Here I was attacked, in the night, with a terrible pain in the right knee, which did not leave me for several days, but, on the contrary, got worse and worse. The inns here are better than in the other parts of Italy that I have visited; the bread is not good, but the wine is excellent, and there is plenty of every thing. Throughout Savoy, the landlords are exceedingly civil and well-behaved. On All-Saints' day, after hearing mass, I went on to

Novalese, one post, where I hired eight men, to carry me to the top of Mont Cenis, and down the other side, in the sort of litter that they use here for this purpose.

[*Montaigne continues his Journal, from this point, in French.*]

Here French is the tongue spoken; so here I will quit the foreign language I have so far employed, and which comes as easy to me as it goes incorrectly from me; for, having been almost entirely in the company of my own countrymen ever since I left France, my opportunities for making any progress in Italian have been but very inadequate. I crossed Mont Cenis, partly on horseback, and partly in a litter carried by four men, who, when they were fatigued, were relieved by four other men, all of whom I engaged at Novalese, as I have just mentioned. The ascent occupies two hours, and, being rugged and stony, is very difficult for horses, who are not accustomed to such travelling, but is easy enough for pedestrians; and there is no danger to be apprehended, except falling on your knees now and then, for the road winding up the middle of the mountain, there are no precipices at the side to tumble over. On reaching the summit, you see before you a plain, extending about two leagues from the foot of the mountain, diversified with a few houses, some pieces of water, and the post-house; there are no trees, and at this season there was no grass, for the whole space was thickly covered with snow. The descent is about a league, and I was carried down it in my litter. At the bottom, I dismissed my eight porters, giving them two crowns for their trouble. The regular price for being merely carried down, however, is only a tester; and sometimes there are amusing scenes enough, when people get frightened. I then mounted my horse, which had been led for me, and we then rode on to dinner at

Lanebourg,[2] two posts, a village at the foot of the mountain with which commences Savoy. We slept at a small village two leagues further on. All about this part of the country, they have got plenty of trout, and excellent wines, old and new. Next day, we rode on, along a hilly and rugged road, to

St. Michel, five leagues, a village, in which is the post-house. After dining here, we proceeded on our route; but it was very late, and we were all wet through before we reached

La Chambre, five leagues, a small village, which gives his title to the Marquis de la Chambre. Next day, Friday, 3d November, we went on to dine at

[1] Charles-Emmanuel I.

[2] Lannlabourg.

Aiguebelle, four leagues, a walled town, whence we proceeded to our sleeping-place,

Mont Mellian, four leagues, a town and fortress, the latter of which occupies the summit of an isolated rock, rising in the centre of a small plain, surrounded by high mountains. The town itself stands at the foot of this rock, upon the banks of the river Isne, which then runs on to Grenoble, seven leagues hence. I began now to appreciate the excellence of the Italian oil; for that which I got in this part of the country disagreed amazingly with my stomach, whereas in Italy I never had the slightest after-taste of the oil. We dined at

Chamberi, two leagues, the capital of Savoy, a small but handsome town, with an excellent trade. It is surrounded by mountains, but its immediate site is a tolerably large plain. Passing on, we crossed Mont du Chat, a high, rugged, and rocky mountain, the passage of which, however, is neither difficult nor dangerous. At its foot there is an extensive lake,[1] on the banks of which stands a town called Bordeau, where they make swords, which are held in considerable estimation. We slept at

Hyene,[2] four leagues, a small town. Sunday morning, we crossed the Rosne, which lay on our right. The rocks here abut very closely on the road, and in one particular place almost block up the passage altogether. On a rock, commanding this defile, the Duke of Savoy has constructed a small fort, very nearly resembling that built by the Venetians at Chiusa, in the Tyrol, of which I spoke in the proper place. Proceeding along this narrow pass, we went on without stopping to

St. Rambert, seven leagues, a small town, standing in the valley, where it becomes somewhat wider. Most of the towns in Savoy have a stream running through them, and the space between this stream and the houses, on each side, is nearly all covered in with pent-houses, so that you can walk about in all weathers, but there is this inconvenience, that the shops are the darker for it. In the course of the evening, M. Francesco Cenami, a Lyons banker, who had come here to avoid the plague, sent his respects, and a servant to me with some wine, coupled with some very handsome compliments. I left the place on the Monday morning, and having now entirely got clear of the mountains, entered upon our French low country. Passing the river Ain in a boat, near the bridge of Chesai, I rode on without stopping to

Morestel, six leagues, a small but much frequented town, belonging to the Duke of Savoy, and the last of his dependencies in this direction. Tuesday, after dinner, I took post-horses, and went on to sleep at

Lyons, two posts, three leagues. I was very much pleased with this town. Friday, I bought of Joseph de la Sone, three stout horses for two hundred crowns. I had previously purchased of Malesieu a riding nag, for fifty crowns, and another horse for thirty-three. Saturday, St. Martin's day, I had in the morning a terrible stomach-ache, which kept me in bed till after mid-day. I took no dinner, and ate very little at supper. Sunday, 12th November, the Sieur Alberto Grachinotti, a Florentine, who had already shown me a great deal of attention, invited me to dinner, and offered to lend me any money I might want; yet he never saw me before I came here. Wednesday, 15th November, 1581, I left Lyons after dinner, and by a hilly road reached

Bordeliere, five leagues, a village consisting of two houses, in one of which we slept. Thursday morning, we resumed our journey, favoured by an excellent road, and, near the small town of Fur,[3] crossed the river Loire in a boat, and went on without stopping to

L'Hospital, eight leagues, a small walled town. Leaving this place next morning, we proceeded along a hilly road, with the pleasant accompaniment of the snow falling heavily, and a bitter cold wind driving full in our faces, and at last made our way to

Tiers, six leagues, a small, well-built, and populous town, seated on the river Allier, and enjoying a considerable trade. Its principal manufacture is paper, but it is also noted for its knives and playing cards. It stands at an equal centrical distance from Lyons, St. Flour, Moulins, and Puy. The nearer I approached home, the longer did the way seem; each successive mile appeared more tedious than its predecessor. This town belongs to M. de Montpansier. I went to Palmier's, to see the process of paper-making, which seemed to require as many workmen, and as much labour, as any other manufacture. The common cards are sold at one *sol* the pack, and the finer sort at two *caroluses*.[4] Saturday, we rode on through the rich plain of La Limaigne, and passing in a boat, first the Doare and then the Allier, we came to

Pont du Chateau, four leagues, where we slept. The plague has committed sad havoc here, and I was told some fearful instances of its ravages. The house of the Seigneur the the Viscount de Canillac was burned as they were endeavouring to purify it with enormous fires in every room. This seigneur sent one of his people to me in the evening, with offers of service, and to request that I would write to M. de Foix in favour of his son, whom he was about to send to Rome. Sunday, 19th November, I went on to dinner at

Clermont, two leagues, where I stopped all day, to give my young horses a rest. Monday, the 20th, I started early in the morning, and

[1] The Lake of Bourget.

[2] Yenne.

[3] Feurs.

[4] The Carolus was a coin marked with a K. (Karolus VIII.) and was worth about 2½*d*.

on my road, at the top of the Pui de Doume, passed a largish stone, long and flat, which had stuck in the passage all the morning. I felt it the day before. It was neither hard nor soft. I stopped at Pougibaut for the purpose of paying my respects to Madame de la Fayette, with whom I stayed half an hour. Her house is not so handsome, as it is celebrated; its situation is by no means good; the garden is small and square, and the walks are raised four or five feet above the beds; the sides of the walks are paved with stone. The garden is filled chiefly with fruit-trees. The snow was falling so thick, and the wind was blowing so cold, that I could not judge very well what sort of country I was travelling through. I went on to sleep at

Pont-a-mur, seven leagues, a small village; where I heard that Monsieur and Madame de Lude were staying at a place two leagues off. The next night I slept at

Pont-Sarrant, another small village, six leagues. All the inns on this line of road, till you get to Limoges, are miserable places; the only article they have at all passable is wine. Their customers, however, for the most part, are nothing but muleteers and messengers to and from Lyons. My head had got out of sorts again; and truly, if storms and winds and rain be bad for it, it had enough to disorder it on this confounded route, where the winter is said to be harder than in any other part of France. Wednesday, 22d November, a most detestable morning, I resumed my journey, and passed, in the course of the day, through Fuletin,[1] a small well-built town, environed by hills, and which seems half depopulated by the plague, that recently visited it. I slept at

Chastein, five leagues, a miserable village, where I could get no old wine, and had to put up with some new stuff, that was not even purified. Thursday, 23d, the state of my head being in no degree improved by the bad wine and the bad weather, I went on to sleep at

Saublac, five leagues, a small village belonging to M. de Lausun. Next day, I slept at

Limoges, six leagues, where I stayed all Saturday. I bought a mule here for ninety sun-crowns of the man whose horses I had ridden from Lyons, and who had accompanied us on this same mule. He charged me five crowns more for the keep of the animal from Lyons, therein cheating me out of four livres, for the cost of the horses for that distance only came to three crowns and two-thirds. Sunday, 26th November, I left Limoges, after dinner, and went on to sleep at

Cars, five leagues; there was no one but Madame de Cars at home. Monday, I slept at

Tivie, six leagues. Tuesday, I slept at

Perigus,[2] five leagues. Wednesday, at

Mauriac, five leagues; and Thursday, St. Andrew's day, the 30th of November, I once more reached my own bed at

Montaigne, seven leagues, which I had left 22d June, 1580, on my way to La Fere. Thus my journey occupied seventeen months and eight days.

[1] Feuilletin.

[2] Perigueux.

END OF THE DIARY.

LETTERS

OF

MICHAEL DE MONTAIGNE.

[The following letter, as well as several of those that follow, may be found in a volume published by Montaigne himself, about nine years before the first edition of the Essays. It is a small octavo, now very scarce, "imprimé avec privilege, à Paris, chez Frederic Morel (l'ancien), Rue St. Jean-de-Beauvais, au Franc Meurier, 1571," (other title-pages have "1572.") It consists of 131 pages, and is entitled "La Mesnagerie de Xenophon; les regles de Mariage, de Plutarque; Lettre de Consolation de Plutarque a sa Femme; le tout traduit de Grec en Francois par feu M. Estienne de la Boëtie, conseiller du roy en sa court de parlement à Bordeaux; ensemble quelques vers Latins et Francois de son invention: *item*, un discours sur la mort du dit Seigneur de la Boëtie, par M. de Montaigne." The *Vers François*, however, did not appear till 1572, when they were published by Morel, in an octave booklet of 19 pages. The unsold copies of the translations above enumerated were sent forth in 1600, "chez Claude Morel, rue St. Jacques, à la Fontaine," with the addition of *La Mesnagerie* (Economics) *d'Aristotle*, also translated by La Boëtie, and the *Vers François*.]

I.

Michael de Montaigne to his Father.

- - - As to his last words, if a good account of them is to be expected from any hand, it is undoubtedly from mine; not only because, all the time of his sickness, he was fond of conversing with nobody so much as with me, but also because, such was the singular and brotherly love we bore to one another, that I had a most certain knowledge of his designs, opinions, and will, all his life-time, as much no doubt as it was possible for any one man to know of another. And because I knew them to be sublime, virtuous, full of resolution, and, all things considered, most wonderful, I foresaw that, if his distemper would give him strength to express himself, nothing would come from his lips but what was great, and very worthy of imitation; therefore I gave the utmost attention to it. It is true, monseigneur, that as my memory is very short, and moreover bewildered by the trouble of my mind for so heavy and important a loss, it is impossible but I should have forgotten many things which I could wish were known; but as for those which I recollect, I will send you them with the strictest regard to truth that is possible. For in order to represent him thus cruelly stopped in his worthy progress; to shew you that invincible courage in a body broken down and demolished by the furious efforts of pain and death, would, I confess, require a much better style than mine; because, though when he talked of grave and important subjects, he spoke of them in such a manner that it was difficult to write them down so well, yet it seemed at this time as if there was an emulation betwixt his thoughts and his words, which should do him the last service. For sure I am that I never observed him to have so many and such fine imaginations, and those uttered with so much eloquence as his were, all the time of his illness. For the rest, monseigneur, if you find that I have chosen to bring into my narrative his most trivial and common topics, you must know that I did so on purpose; for these having been delivered by him at that time, and in the height of so great an affliction, are a singular evidence of a mind quite at ease, tranquil, and assured.

On Monday, the 9th of August, 1563, on my return from the *Palais*, I sent to invite him to dine with me. He returned me for answer, with thanks, that he was a little out of order, and that I should do him a pleasure if I would spend an hour with him before he set out for Medoc. Soon after I had dined, I went on to him. He was laid down on the bed with his clothes on, and I found his countenance already altered. He told me that he had a looseness on him, attended with the gripes, ever since the day before when he played with M. d'Escars, and wore only a doublet under a silk garment; and that often, when he caught a cold, it was attended with such fits. I thought it proper that he should undertake the journey he had intended, but advised him to go no further that evening than to Germignian, which is but two leagues out of town.[1] I did this, the rather because the place where he lay was close to some houses that were infected with the plague,

[1] Two leagues from Bordeaux, between le Taillant and St. Aubin, on the road to Castelnau.

of which he was somewhat afraid, since he returned from Perigord and the Agenois, where it raged in all parts; besides, I had formerly myself found benefit, in such a distemper as his was, from riding on horseback. Accordingly he set out, accompanied by Mademoiselle de la Boëtie, his wife, and his uncle, M. de Bouillhonnas.

Early the next morning, came one of his domestics to me, from Mademoiselle de la Boëtie, to acquaint me that he had been seized that night with a violent dysentery. She sent for a doctor and an apothecary, and desired me to come to him, which, after dinner, I did.

He was overjoyed to see me; and when I was taking leave of him in order to return home, with a promise to visit him again next day, he desired me, with more affection and importunity than ever he had begged any thing in his life, to be with him as much as possible. This touched me a little. Yet I was going away, when Mademoiselle de la Boëtie, who had already a foreboding of I know not what calamity, entreated me, with tears in her eyes, that I would not stir from him that night. Accordingly, she prevailed on me to stay, at which he was very much cheered. Next day, I returned home, and on Thursday I went to see him again. His distemper was worse, and his flux of blood, with the gripings, which weakened him very much, increased every hour.

On the Friday, I left him again; and on Saturday I found him very low. He then told me that his distemper was of the contagious kind, and, moreover, that it was disagreeable and melancholic; that he very well knew my temperament, and desired me to visit him but now and then, yet as often as I could. After this, I did not leave him. Till the Sunday, he had said nothing to me of what he thought of his being, and we discoursed only about the particular circumstances of his malady, and what the ancient physicians said of it; we had very little talk about public affairs, which I found, from the very first day, he had an aversion to. But on the Sunday he fainted away: and, when he came to himself, he said that all things appeared to him in a confusion, and that he had seen nothing but a thick cloud and an obscure mist, in which every thing was confounded and disordered; but that, nevertheless, all this fit had given him no displeasure. "Death," said I then to him, "has nothing worse than this, my brother."—"Nay, nothing so bad," replied he.

From this time, having had no manner of sleep since the first attack of his distemper, and growing still worse, notwithstanding all remedies, so that certain draughts were now taken by him which are never ordered but in cases of the last extremity, he began to despair altogether of his recovery, and communicated his thoughts to me. That same day, because he was in good order, I said to him, "that considering the extraordinary affection which I bore him, it would ill become me if I did not take care that, as all his actions in health had been prudent and well weighed, he should continue to act with the same prudence in his sickness; and if it were God's will that he should be worse, I should be very sorry that, for want of advice, he should leave any of his domestic affairs unsettled, not only by reason of the damage which his relations might suffer from it, but for the sake of his reputation;" which he took very kindly at my hands; and, after having solved some difficulties which kept him in suspense on the subject, he desired me to call his uncle and his wife, by themselves, that he might give them to understand what he had resolved on as to his will. I told him that would alarm them. "No, no," said he, "I will comfort them, and give them much better hopes of my recovery than I entertain myself." And then he asked me whether the fainting fits which he had had, did not a little surprise us? "That's of no moment, my brother," said I, "these are fits which are common to such distempers." "True, brother," replied he, "it is of no importance; even though what you are most afraid of should be the consequence." "To you," said I, "it would be a happy turn; but the damage would be to me, who should thereby lose the company of so great, so wise, and sure a friend, whose equal, I am certain, I should never find." "It is very possible, my brother," he rejoined, "that you never may; and I assure you that what makes me somewhat solicitous for my recovery, and not to hasten to that passage to which I am gone already half way, is the consideration of the loss you will sustain, as well as that poor man and poor woman there (alluding to his uncle and his wife), whom I love entirely, and who, I am sure, will have much difficulty to bear the loss of me, which indeed will be a very great one, both to them and you. I am also concerned for the regret it will be received with by many people who have, during my life, had a love and value for me, and whose conversation, truly, if I could help it, I own I should be glad not to lose as yet. And if I go off the stage of this world, I entreat you, brother, as you know them, to give them a testimony of the friendship I retained for them, to the last breath of my life. And moreover, brother, I was not born perhaps to so little purpose, but I might have had it in my power to serve the public. Be this as it will, I am ready to depart when it shall please God, being very sure that I shall enjoy the ease you have foretold to me. And as to you, my friend, I know you to be so wise, how much soever it affects you, that you will nevertheless conform patiently and willingly to whatever it shall please his divine Majesty to order concerning me. And I beseech you to take care that the mourning for my departure may not drive that good man and good woman beyond the bounds of reason." He then asked me how they behaved already; I told him very

well, considering the importance of the case. "I suppose so," said he, "now that they have still some hopes; but should I once deprive them of any hopes, you will be much perplexed to keep them in temper." In pursuance of this regard for them, as long as he lived, he always concealed from them the certain persuasion he had of his death, and earnestly begged me to behave in the same manner. When he saw them near him, he affected to look brisk and gay, and fed them with flattering hopes.

I then left him to go and call them. They composed their countenances the best they could for a while; and after we were seated round his bed, we four being by ourselves, he spoke as follows, with a settled countenance, as it were gay:

"My uncle and my wife, I assure you upon my faith, that no fresh attack of my distemper, or misapprehension that I have of my recovery, has put it into my head to call you, in order to apprize you of my intention; for, God be praised, I am very well and full of hopes; but having long been convinced, both by experience and study, of the little security that is to be placed in the stability and constancy of human affairs, and even in that life whereof we are so fond, which is nevertheless but smoke and a mere nothing; and considering also, that because I am sick I am so much the nearer advanced to the danger of death, I am resolved to put my domestic affairs in order before I die, after having first taken your advice."

And then, addressing his discourse to his uncle: "My good uncle," said he, "were I at this hour to give you an account of the great obligations I have to you, I should not know where to end. It is enough for me that hitherto, wheresoever I have been, and with whomsoever I have talked, I have always said, that whatever a wise, good, and most bountiful father could do for his son, all this have you done for me; both for the care that was necessary to give me good learning, and when you were pleased to push me on into public employments; so that the whole course of my life has been full of great and praiseworthy offices of your friendship towards me: in short, whatever I have I hold from you, and acknowledge that I am obliged for to you, who have been to me a father indeed; so that, as the son of the family, I have no power to dispose of anything, unless you are pleased to give me leave." He then was silent, and stayed till sighs and sobs gave his uncle leisure to answer him, "That whatever he thought fit would be always acceptable to him." Then, having purposed to make him his heir, he desired him to accept of what was his.

Then turning his discourse to his wife: "My likeness," said he (for so he often called her, on account of some ancient affinity betwixt them), "as I have been joined to you by the tie of marriage, which is one of the most respectable and inviolable obligations that God has laid upon us here below for keeping up human society, I have loved, cherished, and esteemed you as far as I was able, and am fully assured that you have returned me a reciprocal affection, which I cannot sufficiently acknowledge. I desire you to take that share of my goods which I give you, and to content yourself therewith, though I know indeed that it is very little, compared with your deserts."

Then addressing himself to me: "My brother," said he, "whom I love so dearly, and whom I chose out of such a multitude, in order to revive that virtuous and sincere friendship with you, the exercise of which has, by the vices of the age, been so long unknown to us, that there are only some old traces left of it in the memory of antiquity, I beseech you, as a token of my affection for you, to accept of my library and books; a present very small, but given with a good heart, and which is fitting for you, considering you a lover of learning. It will be *μνημόσυνον tui sodalis.*"[1]

Then addressing himself to all three of us in general, he blessed God that in a case of such extremity he was accompanied by all those that were the dearest to him in the world; and said, he thought it a very goodly sight to see four persons assembled together so well agreed, and united in friendship, not doubting, he said, that we all loved one another unanimously, each one for the sake of the others. And, after having recommended us to one another, he proceeded thus: "Having now settled my temporal affairs, I must also think of my spiritual. I am a Christian; I am a Catholic; such I have lived, and such I am determined to die. Send for a priest to come to me, for I am not willing to be deficient in this last duty of a Christian."

Here he ended his discourse, which he had carried on with such a steady countenance, such a strength of language and voice, that whereas when I entered his chamber I found him weak, slow in the utterance of his words, his pulse very low, as with a lingering fever, tending to death, his countenance pale and wan, he seemed now, as by a miracle, to have resumed fresh vigour, with a more ruddy complexion and a stronger pulse, so that I made him feel mine, in order to compare them together. At that instant my heart was so sunk that I could scarce answer him a word; but, two or three hours after, in order to keep up his noble courage, and also because I wished, from the tender concern I had all my life long for his honour and glory, that there should be more witnesses of so many strong proofs of his magnanimity, by having a larger company in his chamber, I said to him, that I blushed for shame to think that my courage failed me in the hearing of what he, who was so great a sufferer, had the courage to say, that hitherto I had thought that God scarce ever gave us so

[1] "A remembrance of your friend."

great an advantage over human accidents, and could hardly believe what I had read of it in some histories; but that having now seen such a proof of it, I praised God that I had found it in a person by whom I was so much beloved, and who was to me so dear, and that this would serve me as an example to act the same part in my turn.

He interrupted me by desiring I would do so, and demonstrate, by the effect, that the conversations we had had, in the time of our health, were not only words of mouth, but deeply engraved on our hearts and souls, and ready to be put in execution upon the first occasion that offered, adding, that this was the true practical aim of our studies and of philosophy. Then taking me by the hand, "My brother, my friend," said he, "I assure thee I have done many things, I think, in my life, with as much pain and difficulty as I do this. And when all is said, it is a long while ago since I was prepared for it, and that I had got all my lesson by heart. But is it not enough to have lived to my age? I was just entering into my thirty-third year. By God's grace, all my days hitherto have been healthy and happy; but, through the inconstancy of human affairs, they could hardly continue so longer; it was now time to launch into serious affairs, and to expect to meet with a thousand unpleasant things, as particularly the inconveniences of old age, of which I am by this means quit. And besides, it is probable that I have lived to this hour with more innocence, and less ill-nature, than I should have done if God had permitted me to live till my head had been filled with the care of getting wealth, and pushing my affairs. As for my part, I am certain that I am going to God and the seat of the blessed." And, because my countenance betrayed some uneasiness at these words of his: "What! brother," said he, "would you possess me with fear? If I had any terror upon me, whose business should it be to remove it, but yours?"

The notary, who was sent for to receive his last will and testament, coming in the evening, I made him prepare the writings, and then went to ask La Boëtie whether he would not sign it: "Not sign it?" said he; "I will do it with my own hand; but I wish, brother, that they had given me more time, for I find myself extremely weary, and so weak, that I am in a manner spent." I was going to change the discourse; but he recovered himself on a sudden, and said to me, that he had not very long to live, and he desired of me to know whether the notary wrote a swift hand, for he should scarce make any pause in dictating. I called the notary to him, and he dictated to him his will on the spot, so fast that he had much ado to keep pace with him; and having made an end, he desired me to read it to him, and said to me: "See, what it is to take care of that fine thing our riches. *Sunt hæc quæ hominibus vocantur bona*," "these are the things that men call good." After the will was signed, his chamber being full of people, he asked me if talking would do him any harm; I said no, provided he spoke softly.

Then he called Mademoiselle de Saint Quentin, his niece, to him, and spoke to her thus: "My dear niece, I think that ever since I have known thee, I have seen the rays of a very excellent nature shine in thee; but these last offices, which thou dost perform with so much affection and diligence in my present necessity, give me very great hopes of thee; and I am truly obliged to thee, and thank thee most affectionately. Now, in order to discharge my conscience, I advise thee, in the first place, to be ever devoted towards God; for this is, no doubt, the principal part of your duty, and that without which no other action of ours can be either good or seemly; and when such devotion is sincere, it necessarily draws after it all other virtuous actions. Next to God, thou must love thy father and mother, thy mother, my sister, whom I esteem one of the best and most sensible women in the world, and I intreat thee to regulate thy life by her example. Do not suffer thyself to be drawn aside by pleasures; avoid as a pestilence those silly familiarities with which thou seest women sometimes indulge men; for though there may be no harm in them at first, yet by little and little they corrupt the mind, and lead it to idle thoughtlessness, and thence to the abominable sink of vice. Believe me, the surest protection of a young woman's chastity is staidness. I intreat thee, and I expect, that thou wilt remember me, by frequently recalling to mind the friendship I have shown you; not to complain and grieve yourself for the loss of me, and, as far as is in my power, I forbid this to all my friends, since it would look as if they envied the happiness of which, by the favour of death, I shall soon see myself in possession. And assure yourself, my dear, that if God were now to indulge me with the choice, of returning to live, or of finishing the journey I have now begun, I should be at a loss which to choose. My dear niece, farewell!"

He then called Mademoiselle d'Arsat, his step-daughter, and said to her: "My daughter, you have no great need of advice from me, as you have a mother whom I have found so prudent, so very conformable to my temper and inclinations, that she never once offended me; you will be very well instructed by such a tutoress. And do not think it strange if I, who am not related to you by blood, have a care and anxiety for you; for since you are the daughter of a person so near to me, it is impossible but I must be touched with whatever concerns you; and therefore I have ever taken as much care of the affairs of M. d'Arsat, your father, as of my own, and peradventure it will not impede your advancement that you were my step-daughter. You have enough

both of wealth and beauty; you are a gentlewoman of a good family; you have nothing more to do than to grace these gifts by cultivating your mind, which I desire you would not fail of doing. I do not forbid you vice, which is so detestable in women; for I am not willing so much as to think you can even entertain it in your mind,—nay, I believe that you abhor the very name of it. My dear daughter, farewell."

Though the whole chamber was full of weeping and wailing, it did not interrupt the thread of his discourses, which were pretty long. But after he had made an end, he ordered every one to quit his room except his garrison, as he called his female attendants. And then calling to my brother de Beauregard, he said to him: "M. de Beauregard, I thank you very heartily for the trouble you take for me. I have something very much at heart, which I long to tell you, and will therefore, with your leave, discover it to you." And being encouraged by my brother, he proceeded thus: "I swear to you, that of all who have set about the reformation of the church, I never thought there was any one man that entered upon it with better zeal, and a more entire, sincere, and single-minded affection, than you; and I verily believe you were excited to it only by the vices of our prelates, who undoubtedly stand in need of great amendment, and by certain imperfections, that have in a course of time crept into our church. I do not wish at this moment to dissuade you from it; for I would not desire anybody to do anything whatsoever against his conscience; but I would fain caution you, that in regard to the good reputation which your family has acquired by their perpetual agreement, a family than which not one in the world is dearer to me (good God! where is such another family as this, which never did an action unbecoming an honest man!), in regard to the will of your father, that good father to whom you are so much obliged, and of your uncle; you should avoid such extremities; be not so sharp and so violent to your brothers; be reconciled with them. Make no separate combination or party, but unite yourselves together. You see what ruin these dissensions have brought upon this kingdom, and I can assure you that they will be attended with still greater mischiefs; and, as you are wise and good, beware of bringing these inconveniences into your family, for fear they should deprive it of the honour and happiness which it has enjoyed to this hour. Take what I say to you in good part, M. de Beauregard, and for a sure testimony of the friendship I bear you; for with this view I hitherto reserved my mention of it to you; and perhaps the condition in which you now see me speaking it, will give my words the more weight and authority with you." My brother thanked him vrey much.

On the Monday morning, he was so bad that he quitted all hopes of life, insomuch that when he saw me, he in a very piteous tone said: "Brother, have you no pity for the many torments that I suffer? Don't you now see that all the relief you give me, serves only to prolong my pain?" Soon after this, he fainted; so that we began to give him over for dead: at length, by the power of vinegar and wine, he was revived. But he did not live long after; and hearing us lament around him, he said: "My God, who is it torments me thus? Why was I robbed of that profound and pleasant rest I had? pray leave me to myself." And then hearing me, he said: "And you too, brother, are not willing that I should be cured. Oh, what ease do you deprive me of!" At last, being a little more come to himself, he asked for a little wine; and, liking it well, said to me, it was the best liquor in the world. "No, surely," said I, to get him in another train, "water is the best." "Yes, without doubt," replied he, *ὕδωρ ἄριζον*."[1] His extremities, even his face, were now become as cold as ice, attended with a death-sweat, which ran down all his body, and he had scarce any sign of a pulse left.

This morning he confessed to his priest, who had not, however, brought all the necessaries with him, and therefore could not celebrate mass. But on Tuesday morning M. de la Boëtie sent for him to assist him, as he said, in the performance of the last duty of a Christian: he then heard mass and received the sacrament; and as the priest was taking leave of him, he said: "My spiritual father, I humbly beseech you, and those who are under your charge, to pray to God for me, that if it be ordered in the most sacred rolls of the decrees of God that I should now end my days, that he would take pity on my soul, and forgive me my sins, which are without number, as it is not possible for so vile and base a creature as I to have performed the commands of so high and mighty a Master; or if it seemeth good to him that I should tarry longer in this world, beg of him to put a speedy period to the agonies which I suffer; and that he would be so gracious to me as to guide my steps hereafter in the path of his holy will, and to make me better than I have been."

Here he stopped a little to take breath, and seeing that the priest was going away, he recalled him, and said to him: "I wish to declare this also in your presence; I protest that, as I have been baptised, and have lived, so I am willing to die, in the faith and religion which Moses first planted in Egypt, which the patriarchs received afterwards in Judea, and which, in the progress of time, has been handed down to us in France." It seemed as if he would fain have spoken a little more, if he had been able; but he concluded with desiring his uncle

[1] "Water is the best thing." Pindar thus opens his first Olympic ode.

and me to pray to God for him: "For these are," he said, "the best offices that Christians can perform for one another." In speaking, he happened to uncover his shoulder, and desired his uncle to cover it again, though he had a valet nearer to him, and then, looking at me, he said, *Ingenui est, cui multum debeas, ei plurimum velle debere*;[1] "It is the quality of a noble mind to desire to be under still greater obligation to him whom we are much indebted to already."

In the afternoon, M. de Belot came to visit him, and, taking him by the hand, he said: "My dear friend, I was but now about to pay my debt, but I have found a good creditor, who has remitted it me." A little after, starting suddenly out of a doze, he said: "Well, well, come when it will, I wait for it with firmness and pleasure;" words which he repeated two or three times in his illness. Afterwards, as they were forcing open his mouth to take a draught, he said, turning himself to M. de Belot, *An vivere tanti est?* "Is life worth all this ado?"

In the evening, death began indeed to strike him with his arrows; and as I was at supper, he sent for me, being nothing now but skin and bone, or, as he called himself, *Non homo, sed species hominis;* and said to me with the utmost difficulty: "My brother and friend, God grant that I may see the imaginations I have just been entertained with, realised." After he had stopped a while, and laboured hard, with the deepest sighs, for utterance, for then the tongue was beginning plainly to deny him its office: "What were they, brother?" "Great," said he, "very great." "It never happened before," I said, "that I had not the honour of being made acquainted with all your ideas; will you not let me still enjoy that confidence?" "Yes, surely, brother," said he; "but it is not in my power to discover them; they are wonderful, infinite, and unspeakable." There he stopped, for he could proceed no farther; though a little before he fain would have talked to his wife, and had said to her, with the most cheerful countenance he could put on, that he had a story to tell her. And he seemed to strive to speak, but his strength failing, he called for a little wine to raise it, but it signified nothing; for he fainted away on a sudden, and for a good while lost his sight.

Being now just on the confines of death, and hearing the lamentations of his wife, he called her, and spoke thus to her: "My image, you torment yourself before the time; will you not have pity on me? Take courage. Truly, I am more in pain for what I see you suffer, than for what I feel myself; and with reason, because as for the evils which we feel of our own, it is not, properly speaking, we who feel them, but certain senses which God has planted in us; but what we feel for others, we feel by judgment and the faculty of reasoning. But I am going." This he said because his spirits failed him. Now, being afraid that he had frightened his wife, he recovered himself, and said: "I am going to sleep: good night, my wife, leave me." This was the last farewell he took of her.

After she was gone, "Brother," said he to me, "keep close by me, if you please;" and then, either feeling the darts of death come thicker and sharper, or else the force of some hot medicine which they had made him swallow, he spoke with a stronger and more audible voice, and turned himself about in bed with violence; so that all the company began to have some hopes, because hitherto his weakness alone had made us despair of him. Then, amongst other things, he begged me again and again, with the greatest affection, to make way for him, so that I was afraid his senses were gone. Even when I had gently remonstrated to him that he was overpowered by his distemper, and that these were not the words of a man in his right senses, he did not seem to be convinced, but repeated it still more strongly: "Brother, brother, what, won't you give me room?" insomuch that he forced me to convince him by reason, and to say to him, that since he breathed and talked, he had by consequence a place. "Yes, yes," said he, "I have; but it is not the one I want; and besides, say what you will, I have no longer a being." "God will give you a better very soon," said I. "Would to God, brother," said he, "I was there now; I have longed to be gone these three days past." In this distressed state, he often called to me, in order to know whether I was near him. At length he inclined a little to rest, which confirmed us still more in our good hopes; so that I went out of his chamber to congratulate thereupon with Mademoiselle de la Boëtie; but about an hour after, naming me once or twice, and then fetching a deep sigh, he gave up the ghost, about three o'clock on Wednesday morning, the 18th of August, 1563, having lived thirty-two years, nine months, and seventeen days.

II.[2]

To Monseigneur,
Monseigneur DE MONTAIGNE.

Monseigneur,—In obedience to your commands last year at your house of Montaigne, I have with my own hands put that great

1 Cicero, *Epist. Fam.* ii. 6.

2 This letter occurs by way of dedication to Raymond Sebond's Natural Theology, "translated into French by Messire Michel, Seigneur de Montaigne, knight of the king's order, and gentleman in ordinary of his chamber. Paris, Gabriel Brion, 1569." Montaigne's father, however, died before the work was printed. There are other editions, Paris, chez Michel Sonnius, 1584; Rouen, chez Romain de Beauvais, 1603; Tournon, 1605; Rouen, chez Jean de la Mare, 1641, &c. See *Essays*, book ii. c. 12.

Spanish divine and philosopher, Raymond Sebond, into a French dress, and have, as much as lay in my power, stripped him of that rough mien and unpolished aspect, which he first appeared in to you; so that, in my opinion, he is now comely and genteel enough to appear in the best of company. It is possible that some over-curious readers may perceive that he has got a little of the Gascon turn and feature; but they may be the more ashamed of their own negligence, in suffering a person quite a novice and a learner, to get the start of them in this work. Now, Monsieur, it is but reason it should be published to the world, and have the credit of your name, because what amendment and reformation it has, is all owing to you. Yet I plainly perceive, that if you should please to settle accounts with him, you will be very much his debtor; since, in exchange for his excellent and most religious discourses, of his sublime, and, as it were, divine conceptions, it will appear that you have only brought him words and language, a merchandize so mean and common, that he who has the greatest stock of it is peradventure the worse for it.

Monseigneur, I pray God to grant you a very long and very happy life. Paris, this 18th of June, 1568.

Your most humble and most obedient son,

MICHEL DE MONTAIGNE.

III.[1]

To MONSIEUR DE LANSAC,[2]

Knight of the King's Order, Member of his Privy Council, Superintendant of his Finances, and Captain of a Hundred Gentlemen of his Household.

Sir,—I send you Xenophon's Economics, translated into French by the late Monsieur de la Boëtie; a present which I thought very proper for you, not only from its coming, in the first place, as you know, from the hand of a gentleman of distinction, a very great man both in war and peace, but from having taken its second form from that person whom I know you loved and esteemed as long as he lived. This treatise will be a constant inducement to the continuance of your favourable opinion and good-will to his name and memory. And I will be bold to say, that you need not fear the making any addition to your regard for him: since, as you took a liking to him only from the public testimonies he gave of his character, it is incumbent on me to assure you, that he had so many degrees of ability beyond common fame, that you are very far from knowing him thoroughly. He did me the honour, which I rank with the greatest blessings of my fortune, to form so strict and close a connexion of friendship with me, that unless my sight at any time failed me, there was not a bias, motive, or spring in his soul, which I could not discern and judge of. Without offence to the truth, he was, take him altogether, so well nigh a miracle, that, lest my word should not be taken for any thing, if I once transgress the bounds of probability, I am forced, in speaking of him, to constrain and contract myself short of the extent of what I know of him. And for this time, sir, I shall barely content myself with entreating you, for the honour and veneration which you owe to the truth, to believe and testify that our Guyenne never saw his fellow amongst the gentlemen of the robe. In hopes, therefore, that you will render him that which is most justly due to him, and with a view to keep him fresh in your memory, I present you this book, which at the same time will satisfy you, on my part, that, had not my insufficiency laid me under an express prohibition to do it, I would have been as ready to present you with something of my own, as an acknowledgement of the obligations which I am under to you, and of that favour and friendship which you have for a long time shown to our family. But, sir, for want of better coin, I offer you in payment the sincerest tender of my humble service.

Sir, I beg God to protect you, and am

Your obedient servant,

MICHEL DE MONTAIGNE.

IV.[3]

To MONSIEUR DE MESMES,[4]

Seigneur de Roissy et de Malassize, one of the King's Privy Council.

Sir,—It is one of the most remarkable follies that men are guilty of, to exert the force of their understandings to give a shock and an overthrow to opinions that are commonly received, and yield us satisfaction and content; for whereas every thing under heaven employs the means and instruments with which nature

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[1] Printed before *La Mesnagerie de Xenophon*, &c., already mentioned.

[2] Louis de St. Gelais, Seigneur de Lansac.

[3] Printed before Plutarch's *Rules of Marriage*, in the volume before mentioned.

[4] Henry de Mesmes, Seigneur de Roissy et de Malassize, privy councillor, chancellor of the kingdom of Navarre, &c., was born at Paris, in 1532, of a Bernese family, and distinguished himself under Henry II., Charles IX., and Henry III. as a statesman. He was charged this same year (August, 1570) with negociating peace with the Protestants; and as Armand de Biron, his colleague in this matter, was lame, *boiteux*, this peace was called *la paix boiteuse et malassise*, and such the massacre of St. Bartholomew proved it to be in fearful reality. De Mesmes was ever a great patron of literature and of literary men, and was himself an accomplished person. There are some memoirs of his published, and it is said of him that when he left college, he could recite Homer, without looking at the book, from beginning to end. He took a part in Lambin's work on Cicero, which is dedicated to him.

has furnished it, for the ornament and convenience of its being, these men, that they may seem to be of a more gay and sprightly disposition, not capable of admitting and entertaining any thing but what has been a thousand times touched and poised in the nicest balance of reason, shake their minds out of a calm and easy situation, for the sake of possessing them, after a long enquiry, with doubt, uneasiness, and excitement. It is not without reason that childhood and simplicity have been so much commended by truth itself. For my part, I had rather be more at my ease, with less ability; more contentment, with less understanding. Therefore it is, sir, though some of the wits laugh at our concern for what may pass in the world after we are departed from it,—the soul, they say, when lodged elsewhere, having no longer any care for things below,—yet I think it is a great comfort to the frailty and short space of this life, to think that it is capable of being strengthened and prolonged by fame and reputation; and I most heartily give in to so pleasant and favourable an opinion, which is innate in us, without a curious enquiry into the how or the wherefore. From this it is that, as I loved no mortal so well as M. de la Boëtie, the greatest man of this age, in my opinion, I should think it a gross failure of my duty, if I wittingly suffered a character so rich and so worthy of commendation as his, to vanish and slip out of remembrance, and if I did not, upon that score, attempt to revive and raise him again to life. I believe that he is sensible of it in some measure, and that these efforts of mine affect and please him; in truth, he still lodges in my breast so entire and so vividly, that I cannot think him so deep under ground, nor so totally removed from our correspondence. Now, sir, because every fresh discovery which I make of his person and character is as a multiplication of this second life of his, and because his name is ennobled and honoured from the place that receives it, it is incumbent on me, not only to diffuse it to the utmost of my power, but also to recommend it to the care of persons of honour and virtue, in the number whereof you have so high a station that, in order to afford you an opportunity of receiving this new guest, and giving him a good welcome, I determined to present you with this small work, not for any service that you can reap from it, being very sure that you have no need of an interpreter, to converse with Plutarch and his companions; but it is possible that Madame de Roissy, when she sees the order of her household, and your good harmony represented to the life, will be well pleased to find that the excellence of her natural disposition has not only attained to, but even surmounted, what the wisest philosophers have been able to conceive of the duty and laws of marriage. And, at any rate, I shall ever esteem it an honour to be able to do any thing that may give you or yours a pleasure; such is my obligation to serve you.

Sir, I pray God to give you a long and happy life. — Montaigne, this 30th of April, 1570.

Your humble servant,

MICHEL DE MONTAIGNE.

V.[1]

To Monsieur DE L'HOSPITAL, *Chancellor of France.*

Monseigneur,—I have an opinion that such as you, to whom fortune and the reason of things have committed the administration of public affairs, are not more curious in any enquiry than how you may attain to the knowledge of the men in your offices; for there is scarce any community so barren, but it has men enough in it for the commodious discharge of all its functions, provided its departments and jurisdiction can be justly laid out; and when that point is once gained, there would be nothing wanting to the perfect composition of a state. Now, the more desirable this is, the more difficult it is, forasmuch as neither your eyes can see so far, as to select and choose in so great and so various a multitude, nor can they penetrate to the bottom of men's hearts, to discover their intentions and their consciences, the chief points to be considered. So that there was never yet any polity, ever so well established, in which we have not often observed mistakes in this department, or that choice; and in those, where ignorance and malice, dissimulation, bribery, intrigues, and violence carry the point, if any election is made meritoriously, it is undoubtedly to be ascribed to fortune, which, by the inconstancy of its various turns, happened this one time to fall into the train of reason.

This consideration, sir, has often been my comfort, when I saw M. Stephen de la Boëtie, one of the most proper and necessary men for the chief offices in France, live all his days unemployed and neglected by his own fire-side, to the great damage of the commonwealth; for, as to his own part, I must tell you, sir, that he so abounded in those possessions and treasures which defy fortune, that never was any man more satisfied or more contented. I know, indeed, that he was advanced

[1] Printed in the same collection, before the *Poemata* of La Boetie, page 100. De l'Hospital was at this time at his estate of De Vignay, whither he had banished himself, in order not to be a witness of the horrible cruelties conspiring by the Court of Charles IX. against the Protestants, and which all his courageous opposition could not prevent. In resigning the seals to Pierre Brulart, secretary to Catherine de Medicis, he says: "the affairs of this time are too corrupt for me to take a part in them." It was very natural in itself to dedicate these *Vers Latins* to De l'Hospital, one of the best Latin poets of his time; but the particular circumstances under which the great chancellor was then placed, renders the dedication peculiarly honourable to Montaigne.

to certain local dignities which are thought highly of; and I know, moreover, that never was any man better qualified for them; and that at thirty-two years of age, when he died, he had acquired more true reputation therein than any of his predecessors. But, surely, it is unreasonable to let a man who would make a good officer, remain a common soldier, and to employ those in the lower offices who would act well in the first. The truth is, that his abilities were not employed to the best advantage, nor sufficiently exerted; so that over and above his office, he had a surplus of great talents, that lay idle and unprofitable, which might have been of service to the public affairs, and an honour to himself.

Now, sir, since he was so averse to push himself forward, it being, unfortunately, the lot of virtue and ambition to lodge but seldom in one breast; and as he lived in times so stupid, or so full of envy, that he could not possibly have any assistance from another's testimony of him, I long prodigiously that at least his memory, which alone must henceforth lay claim to the offices of our friendship, may receive the reward of his merit, and that it may have a place in the commendations of persons of honour and virtue. For this reason, sir, I was desirous of bringing him to light, and presenting him to you by these few Latin verses that he has left behind him.[1] Quite contrary to the mason, who exhibits the gayest part of his edifice towards the street, and to the mercer, who makes a shew and parade of the richest sample of his goods, the thing most to be prized in my friend, the very juice and marrow of his merit, went away with him, and we have nothing left of *him* but the bark and the leaves. The man who could display the well regulated movements of his soul, his piety, his virtue, his justice, the vivacity of his temper, the weight and solidity of his judgment, the sublimity of his conceptions, so far exalted above those of the vulgar, his learning, the grace that accompanied all his actions, the tender love he had for his wretched country, and his mortal and sworn hatred to every vice, but especially to that base traffic which is screened under the honourable name of justice, would certainly kindle a singular affection for him in the breasts of all good men, mixed with a wonderful regret for his loss. But, sir, this is so far out of my power, that he never had a thought of leaving any evidence to posterity of the fruit of his studies, and nothing remains thereof but what he wrote now and then to pass away the time.

Be this as it will, I entreat you, sir, to receive him with a kindly countenance; and as we often judge of the greater by the less, and as the very pastimes of great men give an honourable idea to the clear-sighted of the source from which they spring, I hope you will, by this work of his, rise to the knowledge of himself, and by consequence love and embrace his name and memory. In so doing, sir, you will but render an equivalent to the settled opinion which he had of your virtue; and also accomplish what he exceedingly longed for whilst he lived; for there was not a man in the world, in whose acquaintance and friendship he would have thought himself more happy than in yours. But if any one takes it ill that I make so bold with other people's matters, I must tell him, that never was any thing more exactly written or delivered in the schools of the philosophers, concerning the prerogatives and duties of sacred friendship, than what was the practice between this person and me. Besides, sir, this trivial present, like killing two birds with one stone, will serve, if you please, to shew you the honour and veneration in which I hold your abilities, and singular great qualities; for as to such as are external and fortuitous, it is not my way to bring them into the account.

Sir, I pray God to grant you a very happy and long life.—Montaigne, this 30th of April, 1570.

Your obedient, humble servant,

MICHEL DE MONTAIGNE.

[1] These verses are respectively addressed to Montaigne himself; to Belot, their mutual friend; to Jos. de la Chassagne, Montaigne's father-in-law; to Margaret de Carle, La Boëtie's wife; to the celebrated Jul. Cæsar Scaliger, &c.

VI.

Advertisement to the Reader.[2]

Reader,—Thou art indebted to me for all thou enjoyest of the late M. Stephen de la Boëtie; for I can assure thee, that as to him, there is nothing of his that he ever regarded as worth shewing thee, nor, indeed, as worth bearing his name in public. But I, who am not so difficult, and who, besides, am not willing that these works, the only things of his I found in his library, which he left me by his will, should be lost, present them to thee; and, if I may trust my own poor judgment, I am inclined to hope that thou wilt find that some of the most eminent men of our time have made a clutter about things much less noticeable than these. I understand, from those who knew him earlier (for our acquaintance did not begin till about six years before his death), that, some time ago, he wrote a number of Latin and French verses, under the name of Gironde, and I have heard recited some rich specimens of these; among others, the gentleman who has just written the Antiquities of Bourges,[3] repeats some that perfectly recal my friend; but I know not what has become of these, or of his Greek poems. The fact is, that, as each sally came into his head, he put it down on the first piece of paper he came across, and

[2] Printed at the end of the letter to M. de Lansac, and serving as a preface to De la Boëtie's translations.

[3] Chaumeau published his *History* of Berry in 1566, four years before the date of this letter.

took no further care to preserve it. Be assured that I have done all I could, and that, during the seven years he has been lost to us, I have been able to discover nothing further of his than what thou seest, except a Discourse upon Voluntary Servitude, and some Memoirs of our Troubles, arising out of the Edict of January, 1562; the which two pieces I hold to be of a quality too delicate and refined to be exposed to the gross and heavy air of so ill a season. God be with thee. Paris, this 10th of August, 1570.

VII.[1]

To M. DE FOIX, *one of the King's Privy Council, and Ambassador from his Majesty to the Senate of Venice.*

Sir,—When about to recommend to you and to posterity the memory of the late Stephen de la Boëtie, incited thereto as well by reason of his extreme worth as of the singular affection he bore me, it came into my head how great a wrong it is, attended with weighty consequences, and worthy of the restriction of the laws, to deprive, as is commonly done, virtue of glory, her faithful companion, to bestow it, without selection and without judgment, on the first comer, according to our particular interests; seeing that the two principal reins that guide us, and keep us in order, are punishment and reward, which only affect us, as men, by the medium of honour and shame, inasmuch as these go direct to the soul, and are only appreciable by those sentiments and feelings which are internal and peculiarly our own, whereas beasts are more or less capable of every other kind of reward and punishment. Besides, it is well to note, that the custom of praising virtue, even the virtue of those that are dead, though it touches not them, yet serves to incite the living to imitate them: just as the extreme punishment is employed by justice, rather as an example to others, than as an act of vengeance on the sufferer. Now praise and dispraise, answering one another with such like consequence, it is difficult to save one's-self: our laws forbid us to injure the reputation of a man, yet offer no impediment to our injuring real merit by bestowing reputation where no merit exists. This pernicious license of distributing, at our fancy, praise where none is due, has formerly, in different places, been confined to particular classes; and, peradventure, it is this circumstance that erewhile brought poetry under the disfavour of the sages. But, at all events, it is not to be denied that it is a vice which greatly smacks of lying, and lying is a vice which ever unbeseems a well-descended mind, whatever pretext it assumes.

As to the person of whom I now speak to you, sir, there is no danger that I shall go beyond the limits of truth in commending him; his misfortune, on the contrary, is, that though he has furnished me, as much as man could do, with just and manifest occasions for praising him, I am far from possessing the capacity to do this as it ought to be done. Yet I am the only person to whom he disclosed himself in his real lustre, and who can answer for a million of graces, perfections, and virtues, that lay, thanks to the ingratitude of his fortune, fallow in his soul. It being in the nature of things, I know not why, that truth, however fair and acceptable in herself, hardly obtains credit with us unless infused and insinuated into us by dint of persuasion, I, finding myself ill provided with power to persuade, or authority to give warrant to my simple testimony, or eloquence to enrich and set it forth, had well nigh made up my mind to abandon the attempt altogether, not having any remains of his which worthily represent to the world his genius and his knowledge; the truth is, sir, that having been surprised by fate in the flower of his age, and in the enjoyment of full and vigorous health, he had never, as yet, thought of sending forth such works as might show posterity what he really was; and indeed, peradventure, even had the notion come across him, he was not a man to trouble himself much about the matter. But I have at last arrived at the conclusion, that it was more excusable in him to have buried with him so many rare favours of heaven, than it would be in me to permit the knowledge of what he has done to pass into oblivion. And, therefore, having so sedulously collected all I could find, complete in itself, amongst his loose papers, scattered here and there, the playthings of his studies and of the wind, it seemed to me best to distribute and divide these into as many separate portions as I could, in order the more effectually to recommend his memory to the greater number of people, selecting the most notable and worthy persons of my acquaintance, and whose testimony might do the author the greatest honour, such, sir, as yourself, who may have had some knowledge of him in his life-time, but too slight to enable you to appreciate his full value. Posterity may believe me or no, as it pleases; but I swear to it, upon my conscience, that, all things considered, he was, as I saw and knew him, a man whose like I never met with, and whom I can hardly, by the utmost stretch of my imagination, conceive a superior to.

I entreat you, sir, most humbly, not only to become the general protector of his name, but also to assume the especial patronage of these ten or twelve French poems, which place themselves, almost of mere pity, under the shelter of your favour; for I will not conceal from you, that their publication was delayed after

[1] Printed before the *Vers Francois* of La Boëtie, *Paris*, 1572. This collection, consisting of only 19 pages, contains: an Epistle to his Wife; a translation from the 33rd Canto of Ariosto; a chanson; and twenty-five sonnets, different from those already referred to, Essays, Book i. c. 28.

the rest of his writings, by reason that yonder they were not considered sufficiently polished to appear in print. You will see, sir, how far this is the case; and as it would appear that the result of the judgment in this matter affects the interest of all this part of the country, whence, as 'tis thought, nothing can proceed, that's writ in the vernacular, that does not necessarily smack of the barbarous and uncouth, it is especially your part, who to the dignity of representing the first family in Guienne, which you derive from your ancestors, have yourself added that of being the most eminent amongst us in all manner of capacity, —it is for you, I say, not only by your own example, but by the authority of your testimony in this matter, to show that such is not always the case; and that, though doing is more natural to the Gascons than saying, yet that they can sometimes manifest a power of the tongue as well as of the arm, of mind as well as of courage. For my part, sir, it is not my trade to judge of such matters; but I have heard competent persons say, that not only these verses are presentable, but that, regard being had to the beauty and richness of the invention, they are, for the subject, as fleshy, full, and marrowy, as any that have hitherto appeared in our language. Every workman naturally feels himself more apt in some particular part of his art, and those are the most fortunate who have got hold of the noblest; for all the parts, equally necessary to the erection of an edifice, are not equally valuable. Refinement of language, softness, and polish, peradventure, are less to be found here than elsewhere; but in graceful imaginings, flashes and sallies of genius, I think none other surpasses him; and 'tis, moreover, to be considered that he made of these things neither an occupation nor a study, and, indeed, scarcely put pen to paper once a year, as is manifestly proved by the little there is that remains to us of his productions, which yet is all, as far as I know, that he ever wrote. For you see, sir, rough and dry, all of his that has reached my hands, without selection or omission, even some pieces of his mere boyhood. In short, it would seem as though he had merely written them to show that he was capable of all things; for, as to the rest, a thousand and a thousand times, in his common conversation, he has said things far more worthy to be known, and far more admirable.

This, sir, is what reason and affection, meeting together by a rare conjunction, command me to say to you respecting this great and good man; and if the liberty I have taken in addressing myself to you, and in occupying your attention so long about him, offends you, you must, if you please, call to mind that the principal effect of greatness and eminence is to expose you to be troubled with the concerns of other people. Sir, I entreat you to accept my humble affection to your service; may God grant you a long and happy life.—Montaigne, this 1st of September, 1570.

Your humble servant,

MICHEL DE MONTAIGNE.

VIII.[2]

To Mademoiselle DE MONTAIGNE, *my Wife.*

My wife,—You know very well that, according to the fashion of gentlemen now-a-days, you are not to expect to be still courted and caressed; for they say that a man of parts may indeed take a wife, but that he is a fool if he marry her. Let them say as they list; for my own part, I keep to the plain fashion of the old time, of which I now wear the beard; and, in truth, novelty has cost so dear to this poor state (and yet I know not whether it may not still cost more), that in all cases and places I wash my hands of it. Let you and I, wife, live after the old French way. Now, you may remember how that dear brother and inviolable companion of mine, the late M. de la Boëtie, on his death-bed, gave me his papers and books, which have been since my most favourite furniture. I neither desire nor deserve that they should be applied solely to my own use; for this reason I have resolved to let my friends partake of them. And, because I think I have none more intimate than yourself, I send you his French translation of Plutarch's Letter of Consolation to his Wife; being very sorry that fortune has rendered this so suitable a present for you, and that though you have had no child but one daughter, after long expectation, after we had been married four years, you were forced to part with her in the second year of her age. But I leave it to Plutarch to console you, and to admonish you of your duty in this case, desiring that you would for my sake give him credit: for he will discover my intentions to you, and what may be urged upon this head, much better than I can. Whereupon my wife, I earnestly recommend myself to your favour, and pray God to have you in his keeping.—Paris, this 10th September, 1570.

Your dear husband,

MICHEL DE MONTAIGNE.

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[1] That is to say, *at Paris*, where Boëtie's posthumous works were then printing, and which Montaigne had probably left for a short time, in order to visit Perigord, and make the collection of his friend's writings as complete as possible. The present letter, of the 1st Sep. 1570, it will be seen, is dated from Montaigne, while the Advertisement to the Reader, of the 10th August, and the Letter to his Wife of the 10th Sept., are both addressed from Paris.

[2] Printed before De la Boëtie's translation of Plutarch's *Letter of Consolation to his Wife.*

IX.

To Mons. DUPRAY,[1] *Privy Counsellor to the King in his Court and Parliament of Paris.*

Sir,—The affair of the prisoner Sieur de Verres, which I am well acquainted with, is entitled, when you come to pass sentence upon him, to the exercise of your natural gentleness of disposition, if your sense of public duty will permit you to display it in this case. He did a thing which was not only excusable according to the laws of war received among us, but necessary, and, under the circumstances, praiseworthy; and I am sure that, had not his duty commanded him, he would not have done it. There is no other action of his life which has subjected him to reproach. I entreat you, sir, to give his case your consideration; you will find the facts of the matter to be of the character I have represented; the proceedings of those who have sought to damage him, on account of the act, is far more culpable than the act itself. If it will serve him, I would also state to you, that he is a man brought up in my house, is related to many notable families, has ever conducted himself honourable and worthily, and is a dear friend of mine. In preserving him, you will confer an extreme obligation upon me. I entreat you to take him under your care. Sir, I kiss your hands; may God grant you a long and happy life. From Castera, this 23d April.

Your affectionate servant,

MICHEL DE MONTAIGNE.

[1] One of the fourteen judges sent into Guienne, after the treaty of Fleix, in 1580, which was probably the occasion on which the present letter was addressed to him.

X.

To Mademoiselle PAULMIER.[2]

Mademoiselle,—My friends all know that, from the time I first became acquainted with you, I destined one of my books for you; for I felt you would do them honour. But the kindness of Mons. de Paulmier deprives me of the means of giving it you, he having since obliged me far more than my book is worth. You will therefore accept it, if you please, as being by right yours, before I owed you and him so much; and I pray you to have it in favour, either for love of him or for love of me. As for the debt I owe Monsieur Paulmier, I will keep it entire, and endeavour to pay it off by some more valuable service.

[2] Wife of Julien de Paulmier, born 1554, died 1599.

END OF THE LETTERS.

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